The Persian conquest of Jerusalem in 614CE compared with Islamic conquest of 638CE.

Its Messianic nature and the role of the Jewish Exilarch

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Abstract:

Explores the conquests of Jerusalem in 614CE and 638CE within the context of previous attempts at Jewish restoration. Discusses reasons for a Persian-Jewish alliance and later a Judeo-Arab alliance. In an attempt to reconcile contemporary sources, an account is given of Babylonian Jewish Exilarch Nechemiah ben Hushiel, his brother Shallum (Salmaan Farsi) and nephew Yakov (Ka'b Al-Ahbar) who played pivotal roles in these conquests. Proposes that the twelve men who went to Mecca to meet with the Prophet were Jewish refugees from Edessa, by way of Medina. Suggesting that the authors of Sefer Zerubavel and of the Prayer of Shimon bar Yochai were Jews from Medina.

Jerusalem and the Temple, attempts at restoration

After the destruction of the Jewish Temple (70 C.E) and subsequent Jewish Revolt (135 C.E.), Jerusalem passed into the hands of Rome. It's name was changed by the Romans to *Aelia Capitolina* and Jews were officially forbidden to live there.

Jerusalem, however, continued to serve as the focal point of Jewish national and spiritual aspirations. The hope of again making Jerusalem the capital of the Jewish Nation and rebuilding the Temple was kept alive among the Jews and Temple sympathizers dispersed in many countries[1].

It is estimated that about six million Jews lived throughout the Roman Empire and another two million lived under the Persian Empire.[2] The Jews living in the Persian Empire were wealthier and enjoyed a much greater degree of freedom than their co-religionists living in the Roman Empire. At times the Jews in Persia attained semi-autonomy, collecting taxes and managing their own small army.

Jews accounted for perhaps as much as 10% of the Roman Empire. The Roman government tried to influence its sizeable Jewish population, especially during it's many wars with Persia[3], by rewarding or punishing Jews through it's policies towards Jerusalem. It was in the interest of Rome to hint at promises of 'restoring Jerusalem' to try and sway its Jewish population from siding with Rome's long time enemy, or to

Roman Invitations and Jewish attempts to rebuild the Temple

70 C.E., Temple is Destroyed

100 C.E., Trajan gives Jews permission to rebuild the Temple which, however, they neither could nor would make any use.

118 C.E., Hadrian allows the Jews to return to Jerusalem and grants permission for the rebuilding of their Holy Temple, but soon reneges.

132 C.E., Rebel Bar Kochba re-institutes ritual sacrifice in Jerusalem. Aspirations of rebuilding Jewish Temple.

138 C.E., Antoninus Pius allows Jews to return to Jerusalem.

332 C.E., 'Bordeaux Pilgrim' reports that Jews anoint the "lapis perfusus" rock near Hadrian's statues on Temple Mount.

333 C.E., Edict of Milan, Jews start to build Temple.

362 C.E., Julian besieges the Persian city of Ctesiphon. Julian plans to rebuild the Temple and even begins construction.

438 C.E., Eudokia (wife of Theodosius II) gives the Jews permission to pray on Temple Mount.

443 C.E., Eudokia permits Temple reconstruction.

512 C.E., Jewish Exilarch Mar Zutra II tries to make Jewish State in Persia

525 C.E., Joseph Asher Dhu Nuwas, King of the Jewish Kingdom of Arabia, revolts against Rome with Persian help.

584 C.E., Maurice sent Jewish builders from Constantinople to Jerusalem to repair Julian's structure on Temple Mount.

614 C.E., Persian-Jewish alliance conquers Jerusalem, and attempt to construct a temple on Temple Mount

638 C.E., Judeo-Arab alliance conquers Jerusalem. Jews build wooden Temple on Temple Mount

691-692 C.E., Dome of the Rock is built by 'Abd al-Malik on site of Jewish Temple

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punish them for misbehavior by further desecration of the sacred place[4]. These policies inflamed Jewish nationalism and may have helped to keep it alive.

Rabbinic disregard and even opposition to Jewish attempts at restoration

Given the centrality and importance of the Temple in Jerusalem from Biblical times to period of the Herod's Temple, one would expect Jewish literature to carefully follow attempts at Jewish restoration. Instead one finds that the Babylonian and Jerusalem Talmuds, which were composed during this period, are almost devoid of any mention of Jewish nationalism or attempts to rebuild the Temple.

Missing Jewish History

Restoration Literature has been censured by leading Rabbinical figures. For example Ibn Ezra writes of *Sefer Zerubabel* that "[these books] were not compiled by prophets or sages, and that they contained ideas which run counter to an appropriate understanding of Torah."[5]

In fact, Rabbinic opinion actually discourages nationalistic attempts at restoration of the Temple. According to majority Rabbinic opinion, the Temple will be built not by man but by the Messiah and there is nothing to do but pray and wait.[6] Moreover, given that Jews are in a state of ritual uncleanliness in the absence of the "red heifer" it is forbidden to enter the area where the Temple was located. Further, in the absence of precise information as to where it was located, a blanket ban was imposed on access for Jews to the *entire* Temple Mount.

There always has been a small dissenting view, some Rabbis basing their view on a ruling of Maimonides.[7] However, these Rabbis are of the opinion that sacrifices would not take place in a rebuilt Temple because Maimonides seems to imply that God has moved Jews away from sacrifices towards prayer -- as a higher form of worship.

The vast majority of Rabbis have opposed any attempts of building the Temple. During the messianic claims of David Alroy (1160 C.E.), the Jewish Exilarch and the Rabbinic academies were expected by the authorities suppress and control any attempts at nationalism[8]. It is probable that this was the expected role of the Exilarch and the rabbinic academies throughout the entire period of Islamic rule.

In spite of numerous attempts spanning five hundred years to attempt reconstruction of the Jewish Temple, in the centuries following the Islamic conquest and the construction of the *Qubbat Al-Sakhrah*, Dome of the Rock in 692 C.E., there has been no further serious attempt on the part of Jewish leadership. Any attempt during the Islamic conquest and immediately thereafter to share the Temple mount is not mentioned in Rabbinic literature, and literature that hints at nationalistic restoration has been censured by leading Rabbinical figures. For example Ibn Ezra writes of *Sefer Zerubabel* that "[these books] were not compiled by prophets or sages, and that they contained ideas which run counter to an appropriate understanding of Torah."[9]

To gain insight as to why Rabbinic Judaism has adopted this counter-intuitive view, one must look closely at the two conquests of Jerusalem. The first conquest was in 614 CE by the Persians with the assistance of up to 20,000 Jewish soldiers. The second was in 638 CE by Islamic forces under the command of Khalif 'Umar, with an unknown amount of Jewish aid. These events were separated by only twenty-four years, and many of the factors that affected the first conquest were present during the second conquest. As will be explained below, the common thread throughout both of them was the nationalistic ambitions of the Jewish Exilarch, the secular leader of world Jewry.

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Origins of the Jewish Exilarch

Israel's first king[10] from the tribe of Judah was King David. His descendants ruled in Israel and Judah for approximately four hundred years until the destruction of the first Temple and the Babylonian exile.

Jehoiachin was the King of Judah when the Babylonians besieged Jerusalem in 598/597 BCE. During the siege King Jehoiachin decided to surrender. He gathered the royal family, and in an entourage of ministers and servants[11] rode out to meet the Babylonian Emperor Nebuchadnezzar. Nebuchadnezzar took him and his entourage captive to Babylon, where they lived in comfortable confinement for 36 years[12]. Nebuchadnezzar occupied Jerusalem, and sat the ex-king's uncle, Zedekiah, on the throne, and Judah became a Babylonian vassal-state.

King Zedekiah reigned for 11 years, when he and Judah's neighbor-states rebelled against Babylonian rule. Nebuchadnezzar responded by re-conquering the Middle East. It was at this time that Jerusalem and the First Temple were destroyed by the Babylonians, 587/586BCE, and the mass deportation of the Jews to Babylonia took place. Zedekiah's sons were executed by Nebuchadnezzar II, and he was carried away in chains to Babylon where he languished in prison until his death nine years later The Jewish prince Gedaliah was appointed governor of Judea by Nebuchadnezzar II, which now became a Babylonian province. But he was assassinated by Prince Ishmael, a descendant of King Rehoboam and a claimant to the throne. This plunged the country into chaos.

Meanwhile, in Babylon, Jehoiachin was still alive. It was the hope of the Jewish remnant in Judah who escaped the mass deportation of the country's population into Babylon that he would in time be restored to the throne of Judah. On the release and advancement of Jehoiachin at Evilmerodach's court[13], the former king established a residence in the city's Jewish quarter. He later moved his residence to Nehardea, a small town on the Euphrates with a large Jewish community. Since the Temple at Jerusalem had been destroyed, Jehoiachin built the first synagogue, "Shaf ve-Yativ",[14] which means "the Divine Presence was removed and settled in this place". The author of the "Seder Olam Zuta" regarded as the origin of the Babylonian Exilarch, the office of the Exilarch, who bore the title *Resh-Galuta* meaning King of the Exiles, who claimed lordship over the Jewish Diaspora.[15]

The Jewish population had brought with them advanced irrigation techniques with them to Babylon. Using this expertise, Jewish officials eventually came to control both the running and taxing of commerce on the canals.[16] Nehardea was strategically located at the junction of the Euphrates and the King's Canal, *Nahr Malka*, leading to the Capital. Nehardea was the stronghold of the Exilarch, and it grew in power. Josephus writes: "The city of Nehardea is thickly populated, and among other advantages possesses an extensive and fertile territory. Moreover, it is impregnable, as it is surrounded by the Euphrates and is strongly fortified."[17] In addition to storing taxes for the Parthian ruler, Nehardea was also the treasury of the Exilarch. Josephus writes: "Nehardea and Nisibis were the treasuries of the Eastern Jews; for the Temple taxes were kept there until the stated days for forwarding them to Jerusalem."[18] After the fall of the Temple in 70 CE, the Jews from Parthia, Armenia, Arabia, Israel and Syria, began to look to the Exilarch for military leadership. Years later, these factors played a critical role when Rome chose to invade Parthia.

From the Hasmonean Priest-Monarchs to Herod's Judeo-Arab Kingdom

For three hundred years Israel was a vassal state to Babylon, Ptolemy and then to the Seleucid monarchy. In 175 BCE Antiochus Epiphanes came to throne in Syria and within ten years the Maccabeans revolted and routed Syrian domination in Israel. Judah the Maccabee did not claim the title "king", only *Nasi* – prince, but in 141 BCE, his brother Simon accepted the dignity of high-priest and king. A large assembly "of the priests and the people and of the elders of the land,

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[declared] to the effect that Simon should be their king and high priest forever, until there should arise a faithful prophet".[19] Recognition of the Hasmonean dynasty by the Roman Senate soon followed and for the first time, Israel was ruled by a priest-monarch of the tribe of Levi. The Hasmoneans ruled by force, and several of the royal family were murdered by its own members to prevent rival claimants. This situation was unfavorable to the Davidic house, and a notice in al-Makrizi, seems to indicate the exodus of Davidic descendants from Israel to Babylonia at the beginning of Hasmonean rule.[20]

The rivalry between Hasmoneans, Hyrcanus and Aristobulus, brought about a civil war in 68-63 BCE. The war ended with the invasion of the Roman general Pompey and the forfeiture of the freedom of the Jewish people. Israel was forced to pay tribute to Rome and placed under the supervision of the Roman governor of Syria. From 63-40 BCE the government officially was in the hands of Hyrcanus, but in actuality the power rested with his Roman-Arab advisor Antipatris and his son Herod.

In an attempt to rid Israel of the house of Herod and claim the throne, Aristobulus' son Antigonus, through the mediation of the Babylonian Exilarch, obtained Parthian troops and aid. The Parthians troops defeated the Roman army and Herod fled to Rome. Hyrcanus was captured by the Parthians and held in the Exilarch's quarters in Nehardea, but not before Aristobulus cut off his ears to render him unfit for Hight Priesthood[21] Hyrcanus lived for a time under house arrest. The Exilarch, it seems, had the intention of founding a high-priesthood for Babylonia through marriage to the exiled Hyrcanus.[22] (As late as the third century certain inhabitants of Nehardea claimed their descent back to the Hasmoneans). After three years Herod returned with Roman troops to siege Jerusalem. Antigonus' supporters were slaughtered, and he was beheaded. Herod assumed supreme and total power. Herod proceeded to eliminated all his rivals, the aged Hyrcanus, his daughter Alexandra, and her two children, Miriam (whom Herod married) and Aristobulus (whom Herod drowned). This ended the Hasmonean house, with the exception of Herod's children.[23]

All the Hasmonean kings adopted a policy of territorial expansion. This led to the problem of what to do with the non-Jewish population in the newly annexed territories. Although opposed by the Pharisaic-Rabbinic leadership and without any historical precedent, an early Hasmonean king, Yochanan Hyrcanus, began a policy of forced conversion to a limited form of Judaism[24]. Sadduceean leadership, under Alexander Yannai began an active program of seeking and encouraging converts that was especially successful among other Semitic peoples.

According to Josephus, Herod – his mother an Arab princess[25] – actively sought to combine Jewish Israel with Arab trans-Jordan in one large Judeo-Arabic kingdom. Although he never succeeded territorially, his building enterprises in Jerusalem and elsewhere made a lasting impression on the entire region. Josephus says that just as Athens was the center of all things Greek, the Temple in Jerusalem had become the focal point for a vast Judaic nation consisting of Jews and Arabs, Parthians and Babylonians, Jews beyond the Euphrates and the Adiabeni or Assyrians.[26] Temple sympathizers arrived en mass for the Pentecost – *Succot* holiday. They included Parthians, Medes, Elamites, Babylonians, Egyptians, Cretes and Arabs.[27] Six hundred years before the Prophet, the Arabs and Jews were one nation with one common religion. A vast Judaic nation from the 'Nile to the Euphrates' that performed the Festival – *Hagg* pilgrimage and shared in the *Korban Shlamim* temple offering of which they were allowed to eat. They were called alternatively *Gerrim*, *Kenites*, *Nethinim*, and *Shlamai* (=*muslim*).[28]

The Talmud sheds an interesting light on the relationship of "Jews" in this Judaic Nation after the destruction of the Temple. Rabbi Akiva told this parable, "A fox [Herod, Idumean Arabs] was once walking alongside a river. He saw fish [Pharisaic Jews] swimming in groups from one place to another. The fox said to them, "From what are you fleeing?" They replied, "From the nets that fishermen [Romans] cast (to catch us)." He said to them, "Would you like to come up on the dry land so that you and I can live together *in the way that our ancestors did*? [When Jews and Arabs lived together]" They replied, "Aren't you the one that is called the cleverest of animals? You are

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not clever, but foolish. If we are afraid in the water where we live, how much more afraid we would be on the land where we would surely die!"[29]

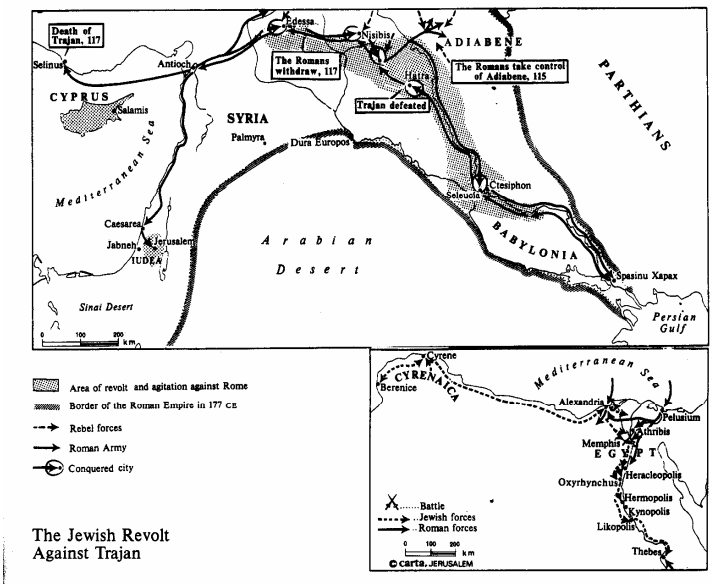
Trajans' war and the Exilarch's rise to power under the Parthians

The Parthian empire was large, tolerant and weak. How free a hand the Parthians permitted the Jews is perhaps best illustrated by the rise of a small Jewish outlaw state in Nehardea.[30] Still more remarkable is the conversion of the vassal kingdom of Adiabene to Judaism also in the 1st century C.E[31]. Yet the vastness of the Parthian empire was one of its strengths. Rome would be hard-pressed to hold such a large area, and would lay itself open to revolts in its own territories due to Roman troops being removed to the front lines.

During the first Jewish revolt which led to the destruction of the Temple in 70 C.E., the Babylonian Jews gave support, but few soldiers to fight together with their Israeli brethren against Vespasian.

Thirty years later, when Trajan was declared Emporer, it was a troubled time for Rome. Trajan spent two years settling affairs on the German frontier, delaying his first arrival in Rome after his appointment. Next he fought his first campaign against Dacia (Rumania), and returned victorious. Then Trajan conquered the Nabataean sandstone capital of Petra in the South Jordan, and made Nabataea a part of the new Roman province of Arabia; the Nabataean kingdom ceases to exist, although Petra is still a trading center, and the Aramaic-speaking Nabataeans later develop the Arabic script.

Having secured his position, and after a stunning set of victories, Trajan began to dream of greater conquests. Since Alexander the Great, no Emperor had been able to conquer the Parthian Empire. In 114 CE, Roman troops moved towards Armenia, turning It into a Roman province. The Parthian government was terrified and began to make plans to retreat beyond the Tigris river. The Babylonian Exilarch Shlomo ben Hunya (r 90-120CE) realizing that he had no ability to retreat and understanding the threat to the Jewish nation, and its sympathizers, of Roman rule in this region. First, he raised a Jewish militia to harass the Roman troops, boosting moral and rallying the Pathian forces. Second, he called for revolt in Jewish areas already under Roman rule.



The Jewish Revolt Against Trajan

From 115-117 CE, the Jews revolted. A revolt which was mainly led by Jews broke out in Cyprus, Egypt and Cyrene on the north coast of Africa. In Cyrene it was led by a Jewish "king" called Lukuas, and in Cyprus by Artemion. After almost a year of fighting, Trajan's General, Marcius Turbo, succeeded in putting down the rebellion. In all of the cities there was widespread slaughter including the capital of Cyprus, Salamis, much of Alexandria and most of the Island of Cyrene. In Alexandria, the great synagogue and library were destroyed as well. As a result, Jews were forbidden to live in Cyprus. This revolt was known to many historians as the second rebellion against Rome. Rome countered the revolt by destroying Jewish Alexandria over three years.

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In 115 CE Trajan occupied Adiabene and southern Mesopotamia. Trajan was the first Roman emperor to dare (after 167 years) to cross the Euphrates with a Roman army, and in the winter of 115-116 CE Rome conquered the capital of Parthia, Ctesiphon. Kitos War raged in Jerusalem, provoked by Roman procurator Lucius Quietus who set an idol up on the Temple Mount in Jerusalem. Abgar VII, ruler of Edessa with its large Jewish population switched from the Roman to the Parthian side. Trajan then sent Lucius Quietus, who captured Edessa, sacked it, and killed Abgar VII. Rome annexed Mesopotamia and Assyria and briefly made the Tigris river the eastern boundary of Roman Empire. At this point the Roman Empire reached maximum territorial expansion. In 117 CE, Trajan was struck with a serious illness. The emporer had to abandon the battlefield. He attempted to reach Rome, but died on the way in Selinius, a town in Asia Minor.

Hadrian, cousin of Trajan, was appointed Roman emperor. He was met with chaos and attempted to pacify the Empire. First he abandoned all the recent conquests beyond the Euphrates. He put ruthless Quietus to death and promised policies of peace and compromise to the regions. He even promised the Jews they could rebuild their Temple in Jerusalem. It was in a great measure owing to the revolt of the Babylonian Jews that the Romans did not become masters of Parthia.[32] In recognition of services thus rendered by the Jews of Babylonia, and by the Davidic house especially, the Parthian kings elevated the "princes of the Exile", who till then had been little more than mere collectors of revenue, to the dignity of real princes. [33]

The Coordinated Revolt of Bar Kochba

While the Jews of Babylonia were relatively safe, the Jews of Israel and the former Parthian provinces suffered under Hadrian. Originally attempting to be conciliatory to the Jews, Hadrian found himself continuing to suppress ongoing Jewish revolt. The Jews of Cyprus were annihilated. Hadrian reversed himself and decreed that the Jewish Temple may not be rebuilt and forbid circumcision of Jews and other Jewish practices throughout the empire. Rabbi Akiva journied from Israel to Nehardea and Gazaka[34] to meet with the Exilarch and others to make preparations for another revolt.[35] Adiabene quietly began sending arms and supplies to Israel.

In 131 CE, Bar Kokba raised the banner of revolt in a well planned attack on Rome in coordination with Parthia. For several years he succeeded in actually producing a short-lived independent Jewish kingdom. In *Sefer Yuhasin* it is maintained that Bar Kokba waged war with the Romans in Mesopotamia[36], but this is probably a reminiscence of the struggles under Trajan. It is known that Jews from Babylonia enrolled themselves under Bar Kokba[37] and the crushing of Bar Kokba revolt in 135 CE no doubt added to the number of Jewish refugees in Babylon and Arabia.

It is noteworthy to mention that Bar Kochba who led the revolt against the Romans fifty years after the Destruction of the Temple was considered by Rashi[38] to be a descendent of Herod. At the same time, we find that Rabbi Akiva considered him the Messiah[39]. It is well known that the Messiah must be descended from the House of King David[40] and that a king cannot be a slave.[41] To answer this difficulty some[42] suggest that there were Herod's descendants that married Jews and eventually were united by marriage with the descendants of King David. Others suggest that Bar Kochba was a descendant of Agrippa I who was Jewish according to Rashi.[43]

The Exilarchs under the Sassanids: Friends of the Rulers, Enemies of the People

Although Babylonia, or Iraq, was largely populated by Jews, the population was still a mixed one, and in the course of time the non-Jewish population grew to be in the majority. The religiously undeveloped Parthians could not exercise religious influence upon the Jews (Rav was the intimate friend of the last Parthian king, Artaban IV. r209-226); but it was otherwise with the Sassinids. The rulers at first retained close relations with the Jews, but due to pressure by the non-Jewish population, the relations became strained.

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In the winter of 226 CE, Artaxerxes I (Ardeshir I) destroyed the rule of the Arsacids, and founded the illustrious dynasty of the Sassanids.[44] Different from the Parthian rulers, who in language and religion inclined toward Hellenism, the Sassanids intensified the Persian side of life, favored the Pahlavi language, and restored with zeal the old religion of the Magi, founded upon fire-worship, which now, under the favoring influence of the government, attained the fury of fanaticism. Of course, both Christians and Jews suffered under this; but the latter, dwelling in more compact masses, were not exposed to such general persecutions as broke out against the more isolated Christians.

The Sassanids continued to recognize the Exilarch as a prince of a semi-autonomous ethnic state due to his contribution in preventing invasion from Rome and his continued role in managing a buffer zone against Rome.. Under the first Sassanid rulers, the intimacy of the Exilarch, Academies and Parthian leaders continued to grow. Ibn Daud says that in Ardeshir's days the Jews and Persians loved each other, as also in the days of King Sapor I. (240-271). S. Cassel believes that the Jews were favored by the Persians; and Graetz knows of no persecution under Ardeshir. King Sapor favored Samuel with such a degree of intimacy that the latter was sometimes also called "King Sapor" and "Arioch" (friend of the Arians),[45] and the people generally spoke of him with respect as "the Jewish sage".[46] But Samuel, too, liked the Persians. He was the author of the celebrated saying, "The law of the land is the law to go by".[47]

Under Sapor began the bitter contest with the Romans for possession of the rich lands of the Euphrates, thickly populated by Jews.[48] The Persians penetrated to the very heart of the Roman territory, until Odenath, prince of Palmyra, moved against them and took their booty from them in 261 CE. Jewish sources[49] refer to the calamity of the destruction of Nehardea. Samuel was then no longer alive; his daughters were taken prisoners; and his disciples fled to Shekanẓib, Shelhi, and Mahoza in the shadow of the capital Ctesiphon; Nehardea ceased to be the principal focus of Jewish life, although its academy still continued in existence. Many rabbis also escaped to Pumbedita, which city now became the seat for a thousand years of the most celebrated Babylonian Jewish college next to Sura.

Even though the Sassanids continued to recognize the Exilarch as a prince of a semi-autonomous ethnic state, due to the resentment of the local population, the role of Jews began to be eliminated from public office – and even their autonomy began to be dependant upon large payments to government. In *Seder Olam Zutra* records that "the Persians obtained dominion in the year 245 (233 CE) after the destruction of the Jerusalem Temple, and instituted a persecution of the Jews."

Contemporary Talmudic sources[50] corroborate this; thus, R. Kahana says: "Hitherto the Persians [Parthians] permitted Jews to exercise capital punishment; but now the Persians do not permit it"[51]. The Jews were no longer appointed to the wardenship of the canals *Reshe Nahare*, nor to offices of the court, which, however, the Jews regarded as an advantage;[52] Canal-wardens, who were also taxcollectors, were held in such dread[53] that the Jews were glad to be relieved from the duty. A prison-warder is mentioned *zanduḳna* in Ta'anit 22a, but he was probably in the employ of the Exilarch. When the news was brought to R. Johanan, the most esteemed *Amora* in Israel, that the *Guebers* (*Chaverin* = Magi) had overrun and conquered Babylonia, he feinted out of sympathy for his Babylonian brethren; but on being revived he reassured himself with the thought that the conquerors were open to money inducements.[54]

The Jewish Exilarch's relationship with the Rabbinical authorities

Even before the accession of the Sassanids a powerful impetus toward the study of the Torah arose among the Jews of Babylonia which made that country the very focus of Judaism for more than a thousand years. In 219 CE Rav returned from Israel. It would seem that Palestinian scholarship had exhausted itself with the compilation of the *Mishnah*; and it was an easy matter to

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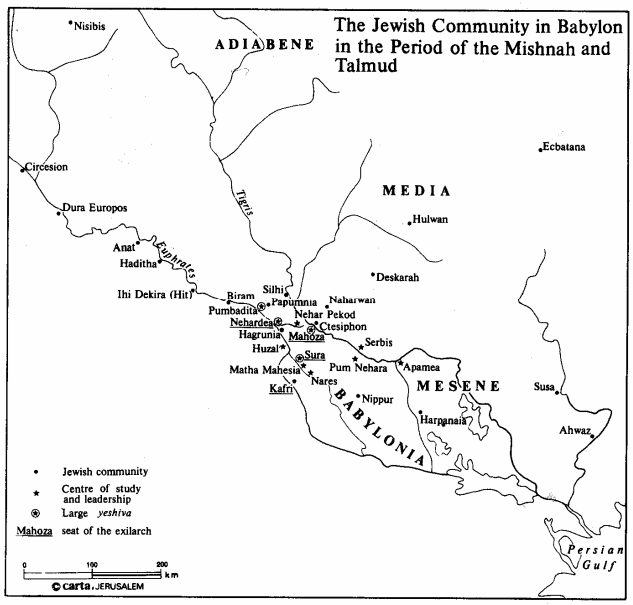
carry the finished work to Babylonia. When Rav returned, there was already an academy at Nehardea under the leadership of an R. Shila, who bore the title *Resh Sidra*. Upon the death of the latter it was but natural that the much more eminent Abba Arika—whose distinction is indicated by the title of "Rav"—should become head of the school. But, in his modesty, Rav resigned the academy at Nehardea to his younger countryman Samuel, while he himself founded a similar institution in *Sura* (known also by the name of an adjacent town, *Masa Mechasya*). Nehardea, a long-established seat of Jewish life in Babylonia, first attained flourishing eminence through this prominent teacher, Mar Samuel; and when, with the death of Rav (247 CE), the splendor of *Sura* vanished, Nehardea remained for seven years the only academy *metivta* in Babylonia.

While the Exilarch regarded the entire Judaic nation from the 'Nile to the Euphrates' as his dominion, the Rabbis passed judgment on his subjects – questioning the Jewish descent of most of them. They said "Babylonia is healthy [in Jewish culture and descent]; Mesene [southern Iraq] is dead [intermarried with the Arab bedouins]; Media [northwest Iran and southern Azerbaijan] is sick; and Elam [Kurzistan, the Iranian province on the Persian Gulf] is dying."[55] Although the Exilarch still retained hope of restoring the Judaic nation, he was also aware that his nation was slipping away from him, gradually loosing any loyalty to Judaism or the Land of Israel. Whole communities were converting to Christianity. To counter this, the Exilarch place great emphasis on the Rabbinic academies and Jewish learning.

Although the institution of the Exilarch evolved together with the Rabbinic academies and the Exilarch collected taxes to support the academies financially,[56] the Exilarch formed an independent institution which sometimes competed with or even oppressed the Rabbinical authorities. Under the Sassanids, the community functions of the Exilarch and the spiritual functions of the emerging rabbinic leadership were fairly well defined. He had executive powers and apparently enforced the decisions of the rabbinical court.[57]



The first recorded conflict was in the second century CE, between Exilarch Ahijah and the Israeli Rabbinic authorities. About 130 CE, Hananiah, nephew of R. Joshua, migrated to Babylonia before the Bar Kokba revolt, and founded a college in Nehar-Peḳod[58]. Upon the overthrow of the revolt and interruption of communication with Israel, Hananiah set about arranging the calendar, which hitherto had been the exclusive prerogative of the Israeli patriarch. Hananiah even considered the possibility of erecting a Jewish Temple in Nehardea, similar to the ones Onias IV had erected in Heliopolis in Egypt, and in Mecca in Arabia.[59] The former had been closed up by the Romans; the later had fallen into idol worship and superstition. Fearing that Babylon may fall the way of Arabia, the Israeli authorities replied: “If you persist in your intention, seek for yourselves another hill, where Ahijah [the Exilarch] can build you another temple, where Hananiah can play the harp for you [he was a Levite, who were the musicians of the Temple], and confess openly that you have no more share in Israel's God.”[60] This episode made such a strong impression upon the public mind that there are several accounts of it.[61]

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The changing of religious requirements especially for the Exilarchs and their households was characteristic of their relation to the religious law.[62] Once when observing the preparations which the Exilarch was making in his gardens for alleviating the strictness of the Sabbath law, Rava exclaimed to his pupils "They are wise to do evil, but to do good they have no knowledge."[63] The Talmud contrasts the Babylonian Exilarchs, ruling by force, with the Palestinian Patriarchs, Hillel's descendants, teaching in public.[64] Although that quote evidently intends to cast a reflection on the Balylonian Exilarchs, the politics of both offices were looked down upon. The Talmud goes on to explain: "the Messiah can not appear until the Exilarchate at Babylon and the Patriarchate at Jerusalem shall have ceased".[65]

In spite of the competition for authority, and the Exilarch's 'kingly' status, the Rabbis and the Exilarch functioned together as illustrated by the installation of the Exilarch in his office: "The members of the two academies [Sura and Pumbedita], led by the two heads [the *geonim*] as well as by the leaders of the community, assemble in the house of an especially prominent man before the Sabbath… The leaders of the community and the wealthy send handsome garments, jewelry, and gold and silver vessels… On Thursday and Friday the exilarch gives great banquets… A costly canopy has been erected over the seat of the exilarch… Then the Torah is read. When the 'Cohen' and 'Levi' have finished reading, the leader in prayer *carries the Torah roll to the exilarch*, the whole congregation rising; the exilarch takes the roll in his hands and reads from it while standing. The two heads of the schools also rise, and the gaon of Sura recites the *targum* to the passage read by the Exilarch."[66] Today, more than a thousand years later, prayers are still said for the Exilarch in the synagogue.[67]

The Politicization of Religion

As explained above, seeing the assimilation of his nation, the Exilarch joined in prevailing spirit of veneration for learning. Although even Rav endured harshness at the hands of the Exilarch's officers, from late second century on it would appear that the Exilarchs began to devote themselves to the acquisition of knowledge as well as of power, approaching thus the example of the Israeli patriarchs. However an event occurred which changed even the rulers of Rome and Parthia's opinion of the utility of religion.

Under the Parthians, the majority of the population in Armenia was an ally against Rome. In 162 CE, the Parthians declared war on Rome as the long-standing quarrel between Rome and the Armenians became violent. The Parthians succeeded in defeating the 4-legion Roman garrison, deposing King Manu VIII and installing their own ruler Wael bar Sahru. After the Sassanids took control in Persia, the Romans again tried to extend their influence. In 252 CE, the Persians under Shapur I attacked the eastern frontier in a dispute over control of Armenia, defeating the Romans at Barbalissos.

All this changed in 301 CE, after Armenia became the first nation to declare Christianity as its official religion. To the amazement of the Persians and the delight of Rome, in spite of repeated Persian military victories, the switch to Christianity turned Armenia from an ally of Persia to a steadfast ally of Rome. Conquest depends on logistics, and logistics depends on the local population, and the local population now had an influence every bit as potent as their military rulers: religion. The political power of religion became apparent to both rulers, and perhaps influenced Constantine when he declared Christianity the official religion of Rome in 312 CE.

In any event, the lesson was not lost on the Sassanid Persian rulers, and religious persecution and intolerance increased.

By Christian writers the Jews are accused without warrant of having instigated the slaughter of twenty-two bishops by Sapor II. (r310-382 CE) as part of his antagonism to the Christian predilection for Rome.[68] The "Small Chronicle" narrates that when Huna was exilarch, and Rabbah chief of the academy, Sapor went against Nisibis and conquered it. A persecution of the

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Jews is mentioned as taking place in 313 CE.[69] Rabbah b. Naḥmani, the head of the academy at Pumbedita (died 331), fell a victim to persecution. The charge was made against him that the 12,000 disciples who assembled for the usual twice yearly public study *kallah*, did so merely to avoid paying the tax. Rabbah fled and perished miserably.[70] His successors, R. Joseph the Blind and Raba (who followed Abaye), enjoyed the favor of the queen-mother Ifra Ḥormiz; which did not, however, prevent Raba from being imprisoned upon a baseless charge.[71] Rabbah and, still more, his pupils Abaye and Raba are considered as the founders of the acute Talmudic dialectics practised in Pumbedita. After the short presidencies of R. Joseph and Abaye, the renowned Raba became the head of Pumbedita; in his days it was the only remaining academy in Babylonia; for Sura had ceased to exist. R. Papa, however, presently founded a new school in Naresh near Sura, which later on was removed to that city, where, under R. Ashi, it attained to high eminence.

In 362 C.E, Julian waged a vigorous war in which Mesopotamia and Babylonia proper were involved. When Julian besieged the Persian capital of Ctesiphon, he announced plans to rebuild the Jewish Temple and even began construction. The Jews, in spite of the friendly attitude of the Roman ruler, sided with Persia. Birta was deserted by its inhabitants, Jews, who removed themselves to Jewish fortresses under the protection of the Exialrch. In retaliation the Romans burned the place.[72] The same fate befell the more important city Firuz Shavur (Pyrisabora), which also possessed a large Jewish population; Mahoza, too, near Ctesiphon, Raba's birthplace and the seat of his academy, was also laid in ashes, together no doubt with many other towns in which Jews dwelt. In all these cases, the Exilarch could not expect help from the Persia troops, but was free to defend itself – as long as the attackers were not Persian.

The Mazdakite Revolution and reduction of the power of the Nobles

Of Sapor's successors, Yezdegerd I. (r397-417 CE) had friendly relations with the Jewish people; Yezdegerd I had a Jewish wife for queen[73], who became the mother of Bahram V. To this ruler belongs the story where Huna b. Nathan's girdle was adjusted by the Persian monarch. This story is cited as an example of Jewish-non Jewish relations after the coming of the Jewish Messiah (i.e. military might will show due respect for learning). This incident must have taken place in this monarch's earlier years; later on he became a strong religious fanatic, and in 414 ordered a bloody persecution of the Christians.

Bahram V (r420-438 CE) was forced by his counselors to initiate a new war against the Roman Empire. In the settlement both sides agreed to allow each other's religious functionaries freedom of action in both countries. Thus Christianity, which had been denied access to Babylonia until then, began to penetrate that country. He left the Jews in peace, but the success of the Christian missionaries inflamed the Magi. Hs successor Yezdegerd II. (r438-457 CE) in an effort to standardize religion instituted a persecution of the Jews which transcended in cruelty all that they had hitherto experienced in Iran, and was a forerunner of still severer sufferings. In 456 CE, (in which both the principals of the Sura and Pumbedita died (R. Naḥman b. Huna and R. Neḥumai) the king issued a decree forbidding all observance of the Sabbath and reading of the *Shema* prayer. The persecution was probably instigated by the Magi; the Christians and Manicheans having been persecuted five years earlier. His early death prevented further persecution. (Also at this time, the Jews of Arabia publicly differed with their Babylonian co-religionists by declaring that the *Shema* prayer must be performed at rising and going to bed – not as part of the morning and evening prayers. This raised the number of prayers in Arabia from three to five times a day).[74]

Yezdegerd's second son and successor, Firuz, (r459-486 CE), continued the persecution on a larger scale. The Jews of Ispahan were accused of having flayed two Magi alive;[75] and one-half of the Jewish population was slaughtered and their children delivered over to the fire-worshipers. In Babylonia too the persecution gained foothold; When the Exilarchs insisted on their right of autonomy and tried to defend themselves against attacks as they did against the Romans, Firuz "the wicked" put the Exilarch Huna V and his brother Exilarch Nosson II to death (470 CE).[76] This

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was the first time a Persian ruler had tried to wipe out the Exilarchate. Huna V's daughter and some of the Exilarchs entourage managed to escape to Arabia – an event of historical significance: the introduction of Jewish noble blood (*sherif*) into Arabia.

The Jews, coming under immediate Persian domination, underwent a year of suffering, which in the Talmud is called "the year of the destruction of the world". From this year to 474 a series of violent acts followed, such as the destruction of synagogues, prohibition of the study of the Law, the forcible delivery of children to the Fire Temples, the imprisonment and execution of Amemar b. Mar Yanuka and Meshershiya. The destruction of Sura also took place at this time.[77] Firuz suffered a violent death in 486 CE. In 501 Rabina, the last of the *Amoraim* (quoters) died and the Talmud was closed; succeeding teachers were called *Savoraim* (explainers).

With the reign of Balash, the Mazdakite movement gained momentum. All indications show that Mazdak was of Iraqi origin, seeing that his doctrines made most headway there. The Mazdakite, "communists" proclaimed the doctrine of community of property, including women. At the time he gained much popular support, especially from the poorer sector of the community. The Zarthusti clergy, the Jews and the Church at this time were enormously wealthy. And there was great disparity between the nobles and rulers and the common people. This movement was looked favourably by the Sassanids rulers as it directly attacked the rich nobles, reducing their power.

Fortunately for the Jews, Exilarch Huna VI (r 484-508 CE) obtained from King Balash the right to bear arms to protect his citizens. He succeeded to some extent in protecting his coreligionists against the Mazdakites. But, King Kobad, to break the pride of the Persian nobles, embraced the new religion, and although deposed by them for a period, he remained a devotee of the new faith.

War between the Exilarch and the Mazdakites

Huna VI had a daughter who married Mar Hanina (the head of the academy) and they had a son, Mar Zutra II. But when Huna VI died without a son, a rival claimant Pachda was appointed to the Exilarchate. A power struggle ensued. In the end it was agreed that Mar Zutra II would marry the daughter of Pachda. When Pachda had no male heir and it became apparent that Mar Zutra II would be the next Exilarch, Pachda resisted. He was removed four years later by King Balash through the exertions of Mar Hanina. In the interval seems the conflict between the Mazdakites and the Jews took on the nature of an armed conflict.[78]

The new exilarch, Mar Zuṭra II, did not obtain the right to autonomous self defense from King Kovad (r488-531 CE). He raised an army including an elite group of four hundred soldiers for the defense of Jewish community. Being denied autonomy, he declared independence. He succeeded in maintaining an independent state for seven years (513-520 CE), collecting revenue even from the non-Jewish population of Iraq. Active measures by the king Kovad put an end, at length, to the Exilarch's state: Mar Zuṭra, only twenty-two years of age, and Mar Hanina were crucified (520) on the bridge of Machoza,[79] his capital; and his infant son, Mar Zuṭra III., was carried to Israel, where founded a new line of *Nasiim*, Patriarchs. The charge against the Exilarch: misuse of tax money for his person use.

The "Temple tax" collected by the Exilarch was taken over by Kovad, and applied to both Jews and Christians between the ages of 20 and 50,[80] no doubt after Roman example. The Exilarch's army was absorbed into Kovad's army, and were allowed to desist from active operations on the Passover.[81]

Large-scale changes in the pattern of Jewish settlement took place. Many decided to leave Babylonia altogether; and since the Roman Empire was not a safe alternative, the direction of the emigration was at first southward to Arabia and eastward to India and even China

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Waves of Israelites to Arabia bringing Judaism in various stages of development

The traditional view of Arabian history centers on Yemen. It is assumed that a fairly developed civilization grew in the south of the Arabian Peninsula. For several hundred years it grew rich by exporting gold, frankincense and myrrh to the Roman Empire; as well as controlling the overland routes to India and the East. The first collapse of the Marib dam around 450 CE; the decline of the use of frankincense due to the Christianization of Rome; and the Rome success bypassing the desert by using a sea route led to the collapse of southern Arabian society. This in turn led to waves of immigration from the *South to North*, from the city to the desert.

Dr. Günter Lüling proposes an alternative paradigm.[82] He proposes a "more historical picture of Central Arabia, inundated throughout a millennium by heretical Israelites". He envisions waves of Israelite refugees headed, *North to South*, to Arabia bringing with them Judaism in various stages of development. Linguistic and literary-historical research in the Qur'an tends to support the notion of a more northerly origin for linguistic development of Arabic.[83] Here is a brief summary of three of these waves of Judaic immigration: Herodian, Sadducean and Zealot (explained in more detail elsewhere).[84]

During the time of Ptolemy, the native population of *Cush* originally inhabited both sides of the Red Sea: on the east, southern and eastern Arabia; and on the west, Abyssinia (Ethiopia-Eritrea). During the reign of Ptolemy VI *Philometor* (r 181–145 BCE), the Jewish High Priest Onias IV built a Jewish Temple in Heliopolis, Egypt and also one in Mecca, Arabia. He did this to fulfill his understanding of the prophecy of Isaiah 19:19, "In that day shall there be an *altar to the Lord* in the midst of the land of Egypt, and a *pillar at the border* thereof to the Lord." The border of Ptolemy's empire was in Arabia.

The first wave of immigrants came with the success of the Maccabean, later Herodian, Judeo-Arab kingdom. Romanized Arabs (and Jews) from the trans-Jordan began migrating southward. The Tobiads which briefly had controlled Jerusalem, extended their power southward from Petra and established the "Tubba" dynasty of kings of Himyar. Yathrib was settled during this period.

The second wave of immigrants came before the destruction of the Temple, when refugees fleeing the war, as well as the Sadducean leadership, fled to Arabia. Khaibar was established as a city of Sadducean Cohen-Priests at this time.

The third wave of immigrants were mostly refugees and soldiers from Bar Kochba's revolt – fighters trained in the art of war and zealously nationalistic – sought refugee in Arabia.

This last wave of immigrants included people who are known in Islamic literature as the Aus and the Khazraj. Around 300 CE, they were forced out of Syria by the rising strength of Christian Rome, and the adoption of the Ghassan leader, Harith I, of Christianity. At first the Aus and

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Khazraj lived on the outskirts of Yathrib. According to Islamic sources, the Khazraj, headed by Malik ibn Ajlan, sought and obtained military assistance from the Bani Ghasaan; and having enticed the principal chiefs of Yathrib into an enclosed tent, massacred them.[85] Then the citizens of Yathrib, beguiled into security by a treacherous peace, attended a feast given by their unprincipled foes; and there a second butchery took place, in which they lost the whole of their leaders.[86]

The introduction of Persian Rabbinism into Sadducean Arabia

In any event, by the close of the fifth century, the Bani Aus and Khazraj had became masters of Yathrib. During these events, or possibly in coordination with them, Yathrib was host to a noble visitor. In 470 CE, Persian King Firuz was attempting to wipe out the Exilarchate. The Exilarch Huna V's daughter and some of the Exilarch's entourage managed to escape to Arabia and were living in Yathrib.

Around 500 CE, Yathrib was unexpectedly attacked by the King of Himyar, Abu Karib[87]; but whether to punish the Aws and Khazraj for their attack upon the natives, or for what other cause, is not very apparent. The invader sent for the four chief personages of the Bani Aus[88]; and they, expecting to be invested with the command of Yathreb, went to his camp at Uhud[89], where three were put to death. The fourth escaped to his fortified house, and there defied the efforts of the Abu Karib. This Ohaiha became chief of the Bani Aus, as Malik was of the Bani Khazraj. Abu Karib attacked, destroyed the date plantations, and brought his archery to bear upon the fortified houses[90], in which the stumps of the arrows then shot were visible in the early days of Islam.

The siege was about to drag on when Abu Karib fell severely ill. Two of the Exilarch's entourage residing Yathrib, Ka'b and Assad by name, hearing of their enemy's misfortune, called on the king in his camp, and used their knowledge of medicine to restore him to health. While attending the king, they pleaded with him to lift the siege and make peace. They proposed marriage with the daughter the Exilarch to Abu Karib.[*] The appeal persuaded Abu Karib to call off his attack and also declared alliance to the Persia along with his entire army. At his insistence, the two officials of the Exilarch accompanied the Himyarite king back to his capital and there tried to convince

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[*] Syed Abu-Ala' Maududi in his "The Meaning of the Qur'an" points out that the Jews of the Hejaz "In the matter of language, dress, civilization and way of life they had completely adopted Arabism, even their names had become Arabian ... They even inter-married with the Arabs". This intermarriage between Jews and Arabs, for example between the families of Quraish ('Abd Manaf) and Jewish women is well documented. Michael Lecker of Hebrew University in his article "A note on early marriage links between Qurashis and Jewish women", in. Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam 10 (1987)," says that there are three choices:

1. The women gave up Judaism and embraced paganism.
2. The women didn't care about intermarriage with non-Jews
3. The men embraced Judaism

Due to various supporting evidence he gives, Dr. Lecker discounts the first two and is left with possibility of the third choice. Yet Maududi claims "there is no historical proof to show that the Jews ever engaged in any proselytizing activities in Hejaz, or their rabbis invited the Arabs to embrace Judaism like the Christian priests and missionaries." Instead we propose that the Arabs (particularly around Yathrib) considered themselves as keeping a limited form of Judaism. Although *not* considered Jews by Babylon and other "orthodox" communities, they saw no problem with intermarriage and no need to convert.

Maududi says that the Bani Al-Nadir and Bani Quraizah were tribes made up of *Cohenim*. It is known that the Bani al Nadir and the Bani Quraizah were the clients of the Aus, and the Bani Qainuqa were the clients of the Khazraj. In this context we propose they were not just the "clients", but the *Cohenim* or Priests of their associated tribes. As *Cohenim*, they performed teaching, religious, judicial and semi-governmental services. This would also explain why they - more than any other tribe in Yathrib - would have opposed the Prophet.

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many of his subjects to submit to Persia. There remained, however, many who preferred Rome to Persia.

Abu-Kariba's reign did not last long after his conversion to Judaism. His warlike nature prevented him from maintaining peace and prompted him to engage in bold enterprises. It is uncertain how Abu-Kariba met his death, although some scholars believe that his own soldiers, worn out by constant campaigning, killed him. He left several sons, all of whom were minors at the time. By his wife, the Jewish princess and daughter of the Exilarch, he had Yussuf 'As Ar Yath'ar Dhu-Nuwas.[91] The title *Dhu Nuwas* means Lord of Sidelocks. He was given this name because the kingdom of Himyar was not accustom to the Persian Rabbinite custom to wear *Peot* – Sidelocks. Islamic histories claim that this was the introduction of Judaism in Arabia, although it is not ever actually said that Abu Karib converted to Judaism. A more accurate statement would be that this was the introduction of Persian Rabbinism into Sadducean Arabia.

After Abu-Kariba's demise, a pagan usurper named Dhu-Shenstir seized the throne. Dhu-Shenstir's successor, (and according to some versions) the slayer of the tyrant, was Yussuf 'As Ar Yath'ar Dhu-Nuwas (r517-525 CE).[92] It seems the rule of Dhu-Nuwas did not go uncontested. Hints of this resistance can be found in a fantastic story related by Tabari. He writes that when the Himyarite king returned to his capital after becoming a Rabbinite Jew, some of the townspeople shut the gates, would not let him in, and prepared to rebel against him for having abandoned the faith of his ancestors. However, Dhu-Nuwas was able to prove to them that the religion of the Rabbinites was the true faith. It appears that in the capital, there was a cave in which a person who did not speak the truth would die immediately upon entering. His body would burst into flames and be totally consumed. According to al-Tabari, idols and their priests, as well as sages with scrolls of the Torah were then brought into the cave; the fire destroyed the idols and the priests, but did not touch the Rabbinites at all[93]

Declaration of Jewish Independence, first in Persia then Arabia

With its elements of magic removed, al-Tabari's tale touched on a real incident. In 517, the enthronement of a Persian Rabbinite king led Christians to seize a major town of the Himyarite kingdom. After mustering an army, Dhu-Nuwas inflicted a costly defeat on the rebels, taking many prisoners, and destroying their church. In imitation of his cousin Mar Zutra II[94] who had declared his independence from Kovad in Persia, Dhu-Nuwas carried out some rash acts that eventually involved him in difficulties and brought misfortune to him and the kingdom of Himyar.[95]

News of this deed soon reached Byzantium, a challenge of this sort could not go unpunished. But the Roman emperor, Justin I, was embroiled in a war with the Persians and a Samaritan revolt in Israel. He decided to write to the Christian king of Ethiopia, who was a good deal closer to Himyar, to act as Christendom's avenger. The Ethiopian king was more than anxious to oblige the emperor's request. In 518, when Ethiopian troops landed in Himyar. Dhu-Nuwas's forces soundly defeated the invaders. Flushed with success, he now saw himself as the champion of Arabian Jewry. It has been suggested by some scholars that Dhu-Nuwas's ultimate objective was the creation of a Jewish empire stretching from Babylon to the Red Sea.[96]

In the meantime, a revolt in the northern Himyarite center of Najran (c. 523), which was inhabited chiefly by Christians, led to many casualties. The town's governor, a Christian named Harith (Aretas) ibn-Kaleb, although a feudatory of Dhu-Nuwas, resented his status as a vassal to the Rabbinite king (he may also have not performed his feudal duties in the war against Aidug). In any case, the governor's feelings were paralleled by the town's Christian population, which also refused to obey the king's orders. When the Najran rebels spurned Dhu-Nuwas's peace terms, he besieged the town and reduced its inhabitants to such straits as they were forced to capitulate. Harith and several hundred of the rebels were executed, and burned in a great trench.[97] A heavy tribute was also levied on the remaining Christians in the kingdom in reprisal for the persecution of Jews in Christian countries[98]

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The Roman emperor, although anxious to eliminate the Rabbinite king, was still engaged in a conflict with Persia and preferred that his Ethiopian ally undertake the task. The Ethiopian Negus (ruler), Kaled Ella Asbaha, required little persuasion to go to war, for Himyar had expelled many of his nation (*the Cushites*) from Arabia. Dhu-Nuwas did not remain idle. He endeavored unsuccessfully to secure allies. The Arab tribes distrusted him because of his foreign lineage and Kavad I of Persia, in spite of predecessor's promises of assistance, did not like the idea of autonomous armed Jewish kingdoms.[99] In Mahoza, he crucified Mar Zutra and Haninai on charges of misuse of the king's revenue, and now found it easy to simply ignore Dhu Nuwas' pleas.

By the year 525 CE, the Ethiopians and the Romans were ready to strike. The Negus of Ethiopia had put together and equipped a powerful army, and the Roman emperor had provided his ally with the necessary fleet to transport the troops to Himyar. Dhu-Nuwas took measures to prevent the landing of the Ethiopian army by barring the most likely invasion points with chains.[100]

His efforts, however, proved fruitless, and the Ethiopian troops were able to disembark near Zafora (Thafar) on the Red Sea coast. Asbaha had taken steps to inform the Christian Arabs of the region of his plans, and they attacked the Himyarites as Dhu-Nuwas deployed his army to meet the invasion force of the Ethiopians. In the ensuing battle, the Rabbinite king fell back on his faithful, courageous cavalry to repel the invaders, but they were overwhelmed by the larger army of the enemy. The capital of Dhu-Nuwas fell into the hands of the enemy, along with his wife, and all the treasures of his kingdom. Realizing that all was lost, and unwilling to be taken alive, the impetuous king charged his steed over a great rock jutting over the sea. The waves swept his body out to sea. So died the first and last Rabbinite king of Himyar.[101] But the royal family did not die out, we will revisit them when we explore the marriages between the Jews and the Quraish, the family of the Prophet.[102]

After-effects of the Failed Attempts at Jewish Independence

In Arabia, Eriat was granted rulership over Yemen by Abyssinia, a position he held until he was assassinated by one of his army leaders, Abraha. Abraha, after reconciliation with the king of Abyssinia, took rulership over Yemen and built a Cathedral in San'a to advance Christianity in Arabia. Some of the leadership in Mecca, the Quraish, defiled this Cathedral by going to the bathroom in its halls. In Arabia, where laws of purity were derived from the Temple laws of *Tumah and Taharah*, this invalidated the house of worship for prayer and was the greatest insult. Abraha commanded his soldiers to demolish the Ka'bah in Mecca. In 570 CE, Utilizing a massive attack on war-elephants which failed, he and his soldiers came to be known as the "Men of the Elephant". This is the traditional year when the Prophet Muhammad is born.

After the "Elephant" incident, the people of Yemen, under the leadership of Ma'dikarib bin Saif Dhu Yazin Al-Himyari, and through Persian assistance, revolted against the Abyssinian (Ethiopian) invaders, restored independence and appointed Ma'dikarib as their king. However, Ma'dikarib was assassinated by an Abyssinian. About this time, the Ma'rib dam again collapsed, the main irrigation infrastructure was destroyed. In 575 CE, Khosrau, the Persian king, appointed a Persian ruler over San'a and thus made Yemen a Persian colony. The family of Dhu Yazin was thus deprived of royalty forever, as the Persian rulers maintained rulership of Yemen.

This had the effect of bringing Arabia in direct contact with Persia, and Bedouins were now seen encamped on the western bank of the Euphrates river. 581 CE, Hormisdas IV king of Persia, tyrannized the Jews, forcing many to flee, including the leaders of the academies; Roman Emperor Maurice defeated Hormizdas after a 4-year campaign. During this time there were many marriages between the Quraish and Jews in Arabia. The daughter of 32nd Exilarch Hofnai married Asad ibn Hashim, and Fatima the mother of the future Khalif, 'Ali abu Talib was born.

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In 591 CE, Khosrau II became the Sassanid king of Persia. He followed Khosrau I's liberal policy towards the Jews. Within the Persian royal circles, the Jews had recognized rights and privileges, but due to the fanaticism of the people they were unable to exercise them. The doors of the academies remained shut and there remained much hatred between the Jewish and non-Jewish population. Khosrau considered the idea of relocating the some of the Jews, but the opportunity had not presented itself.

The failure of Persia to come to the aid of the Jews had lasting effects in both Babylon and Arabia. The Arabs blamed the Persians as untrustworthy, and felt the Jews of Persia had abandoned Dhu Nuwas.[103] Arabia was split between those who were for Persia and those for Byzantium. The role of Rabbinite Jews as teachers and judges in Arabia began to be resented; anger at their claims of superiority and "pure" blood inflamed certain Arab tribes. The Exilarch, for his part, vowed revenge on the treachery of Kovad at Mahoza. Still others of the royal family, like Hushiel ben Hofnai, took to the study of Jewish Mysticism and angels. Hushiel distained the materialism of the previous Exilachs, and locked his children in his palace safe from riots, pogroms and politics. Hushiel had two sons, Nehemiah and Shallum – who destiny would be intertwined with the future of the Prophet.

Phocas and the Final Persian-Roman War

In 603 CE, In the 14th year of the Persian king Khosrau and in the 20th year of the Roman Emperor Maurice's reign, the Byzantine army which was in Thrace rebelled from the emperor and enthroned as their king a certain man named Phocas. Going together to Constantinople, they killed the emperor Maurice and seated Phocas on the throne of the kingdom.[104] Phocus had the Emperor's five sons executed in front of him, and then had the Emperor also killed and hung their heads in a thoroughfare in Constantinople. A few days after this he had the Empress and her three daughters also put to death.[105]

Now a rumor spread throughout the entire country that one of Maurice's sons, Theodosius, had escaped and gone to the Persian king. Thus there was no small agitation throughout the Romans dominions: in Constantinople, in Alexandria in Egypt, in Jerusalem and Antioch and in all parts of the country, people took up the sword and killed one another. Emperor Phocas ordered all the rebels who wavered in their loyalty to his rule to be killed. Many were slain there in the capital. He dispatched a certain prince Bonos with troops against Antioch, Jerusalem, and everywhere there was rebellion. He went and struck Antioch and Jerusalem and indeed the entire multitude of cities in that country were consumed by the sword. Phocus was a ruthless Emperor and is said to have spent more time killing his own subjects then the Persians.[106]

General Heraclius, who was in Alexandria, rebelled from Phocas along with his own troops. He forcibly detached the country of Egypt from Roman control. In Syrian Mesopotamia general Nerses also rebelled. Together with his troops he entered and took the city of Edessa. But a Byzantine force came against him and besieged the city and Nerses' troops.[107]

The event provided Khosrau a good moral excuse to attack Byzantium. For Emperor Maurice had been his benefactor; with his help he had regain the throne of Persia after he had lost it. Khosrau declared that he would avenge his godfather's and his children's murder upon Phocus, the usurper. He assembled the entire multitude of his troops, went to the West. He reached the city of Dara which he invested and besieged and started battling with. In the regions of Armenia, troops were assembled. Then king Khosrau divided his forces into two parts: one part he left around the city; with the other he himself went against those forces which were besieging Edessa. Byzantine general Nerses dressed a youth in royal garb, placed a crown on his head and sent him to Khosrau, saying: "This is Theodosius, emperor Maurice's son. Have mercy upon him, just as his father had mercy on you."[108]

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King Khosrau received him with great delight, departed, and went to the city of Dara. He kept Theodosius with him in royal honor. Khosrau besieged Dara for one and a half years. He dug beneath the city walls, demolished the wall, and took the city, putting everyone to the sword. He looted the city, then went to Ctesiphon, since his troops were worn and wasted from battle. But another force from Byzantium came upon Edessa, fought with and took the city. The Romans seized and killed the rebel general Nerses, and shed blood there. [109]

Nehemiah ben Hushiel and The Jewish Crusade

Khosrau on the plea of avenging the death of his father-in-law, the emperor Maurice, who had been murdered by the usurper Phocas invaded Asia Minor and Syria at the head of a large army, but in reality Khosrau had his eye on Egypt. Egypt was in rebellion against Phocas, and if Khosrau could manage to conquer Egypt, he could probably come to terms with Phocas. All that remained between Persia and Egypt was Syria-Palestine. Khosrau developed a plan: he could gain Egypt, settle his domestic problems, and gain a powerful ally behind the lines of Roman troops if he declared the Jews be entitled to all their hereditary rights; more than this they could reclaim their ancestral homeland. The Jews may or may not succeed, but they would keep the Romans busy as he concentrated on Egypt.

In 608 CE, Khosrau placed the son of the Exilarch de Jure, Nehemiah ben Hushiel as the symbolic leader of Persian troops. Nehemiah was a mystic so Khosrau feared little interference in military affairs. Promising to re-enact the military feats of bygone years, the Exilarch drafted a Jewish army said to have consisted of 20,000 men. In return Khosrau allowed the reopening of the leading Jewish academies Pumbedisa (607) and Sura (609); Later Khosrau would write to the Emperor: "Do not deceive yourself with your vain hopes, for how can that Christ who was unable to save himself from the Jews [but was crucified instead] save you from me [and my Jews]? For [even] if you descend to the bottom of the sea, I shall stretch forth my hands and seize you. And then you will see me under circumstances which you would rather not." [110]

Hearing news of the Exilarchs' march in full spender, at the head of the combined Judeo-Persian forces, Jews fully expected nothing short of the miraculous. In Antioch the Jews rioted, killing the Christian Patriarch.[111] In Arabia, they rioted and killed the Christian representative in Yemen.[112] In Sefer Zerubavel, both these events are attributed to the miraculous work of the prophetess Hefzibah. Within a few years, Phocus' armies were put to rout in succession, Khosrau reached Edessa (modern, Urfa) in Asia Minor, on the one hand, and Aleppo and Antioch in Syria, on the other. In the 20th year of king Khosrau [610], Persian general Shahen raided through the western areas, going to Cappadocian Caesarea. Now while the Christian inhabitants of the city arose and departed, the Jews went before Shahen and submitted. He remained in that city for one year.[113] Everything was going according to plan: Persia would conquer Egypt. Persia would make peace with Phocas. Then the unexpected happened.

When the Roman ministers saw that Phocas could not save the country, they sought the help from the African governor, the powerful Exarch of Carthage. He sent his son, general Heraclius, who was currently in rebellion against Phocas. Heraclius had been one of East Roman Emperor Maurice's key generals in the 590 war with Persia. Heraclius was sent to Constantinople with a strong fleet. With the support of Priscus, one of Emperor Phocas' top military leaders, the patriarch Sergius and the Green political faction, Heraclius overthrew Phocas and personally executed him. On October 5, 610, Heraclius I was crowned Emperor (r610-641). Now the leader of the rebel province had become the Emperor of Rome.[114] This was not according to Khosrau's plan. According to Islamic historians, this happened the year the Prophet was appointed to Prophethood.

When Heraclius took power, the Empire was in a desperate situation and he considered moving the capital from Constantinople to Carthage. Now as soon as Heraclius ruled, he dispatched messengers with great treasures and edicts to king Khosrau, requesting peace with great

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entreaties. King Khosrau, however, did not want to listen. He said: "That kingdom belongs to me, and I shall enthrone Maurice's son, Theodosius, as emperor. [As for Heraclius], he went and took the rule without our order and now offers us our own treasure as gifts. But I shall not stop until I have him in my hands." Taking the treasure, Khosrau commanded that his envoys be killed and he did not respond to his message.[115]

The moral excuse for which Khosrau had started the war was no more valid after the deposition and death of Phocus. Had the object of his war really been to avenge the murder of his ally on Phocus for his cruelty, he would have come to terms with the new Emperor after the death of Phocus, but Persia continued to fight. In 612 CE, to counter the Persian choice of the Exilarch, Heraclius summoned a certain priest P'ilipikos to military service. This P'ilipikos was the son-in-law of Emperor Maurice and had been in the military for a long time, triumphing in battle. But then, during Maurice's reign, he took it into his head to cut his hair and to wear priestly garb, becoming a soldier in the covenant of the Church.[116] Heraclius forcibly made him a general and dispatched him to the East with a large army. This gave the war the color of a crusade between Jew and Zoroastrian against Christianity.[117]

Heraclius was a brilliant general and he ranked among the greatest of the Byzantine emperors. His reforms of the government reduced the corruption which had taken hold in the disastrous reign of Phocas, and he reorganized the military with great success. He developed the idea of granting land to individuals in return for hereditary military service. This arrangement ensured the continuance of the Empire for hundreds of years and enabled Heraclius to reconquer lands taken by the Persians, ravaging Persia along the way.[118]

Conquest and Disaster at Jerusalem

After the conquest of Caesarea, the entire country of Israel willingly submitted to Khosrau. The remnants of the Hebrew people took in hand their native zeal [The translation is uncertain: perhaps "manifesting desire for their homeland"] wrought very damaging slaughters among the multitude of believers. Going to the Persians, the Jews united with them. At that time, the army of the king of Persia was stationed at Caesarea in Israel. [119] The Jews and the Persians were joined by Benjamin of Tiberias, a man of immense wealth, who enlisted and armed additional soldiers. The Tiberian Jews, with those of Nazareth and the mountain cities of Galilee, marched on Jerusalem with the Persian division commanded by Shahrbaraz (Rhazmiozan[120]). Later they were joined by the Jews of southern Israel; and supported by a band of Arabs, the united forces took Jerusalem by storm (July, 614 CE).[121]

Shahrbaraz spoke with the inhabitants of Jerusalem so that they submit voluntarily and be kept in peace and prosperity. Now at first the citizens of Jerusalem submitted, offering the general and the princes very great gifts, and requesting that a loyal *ostikan,* governor, be stationed with them to preserve the city.[122] Five years after his appointment to lead the conquest of Israel, and the "ingathering of the Jewish nation", the Exilarch Nehemiah was made ruler of Jerusalem.[123] The Exilarch was a strong young man, handsome and adorned in royal robes.[124] He began the work of making arrangements of the rebuilding of the Temple, and sorting out genealogies to established a new High Priesthood.[125] The Jews were exuberant, but an uneasy, explosive, tension was in the air.

Several months later a riot occurred in the city. A mob of the young Christians united and killed Nehemiah ben Hushial and his "council of the righteous".[126] They dragged their bodies through the street and dumped them over the city wall.[127] Then the Christians rebelled from Persian service. After this a battle took place among the inhabitants of the city of Jerusalem, Jew and Christian. The multitude of the Christians grew stronger, struck at and killed many of the Jews. The remainder of the Jews jumped from the walls, and went to the Persian army in Caesarea.[128]

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Then Xorheam assembled his troops and went and encamped around Jerusalem and invested it, warring against it for 19 days. Digging beneath the foundations of the city, they destroyed the wall. On the 19th day of the siege, the Judeo-Persian forces took Jerusalem. They put their swords to work for three days they slaughtering almost all the people in the city. Stationing themselves inside the city, they burned the place down.[129]

According to Christian sources, the troops were then ordered to count the corpses; the figure reached 57,000. Thirty-five thousand people were taken alive, among whom was a certain patriarch named Zak'aria who was also custodian of the Cross.[130] Later sources would claim that the Jews purchased Christian slaves in order to slaughter them.[131] The Jews sought for the Staff of Aaron, the "Rod of Hefzibah"[132], which they assumed to be what the Christians called "the remnant of the Holy Cross". They began to torment the clerics, executing some. Finally the clerics pointed out the place where it was hidden. The Persians took it into captivity and also melted the city's silver and gold, which they took to the court of the king.[133]

In conjunction with the Persians, the Jews swept through Israel, destroyed the monasteries which abounded in the country, and expelled or killed the monks. Bands of Jews from Jerusalem, Tiberias, Galilee, Damascus, and even from Cyprus, united and undertook an incursion against Tyre, having been invited by the 4,000 Jewish inhabitants of that city to surprise and massacre the Christians on Easter night. The expedition, however, miscarried, as the Christians of Tyre learned of the impending danger, and seized the 4,000 Tyrian Jews as hostages. The Jewish invaders destroyed the churches around Tyre, an act which the Christians avenged by killing two thousand of their Jewish prisoners. The besiegers, to save the remaining prisoners, withdrew.[134]

The immediate results of these wars filled the Jews with joy. Many Christians became Jews through fear. A Sinaitic monk embraced Judaism of his own free will, and became a vehement assailant of his former belief.[135] The Judaic Nation was free from the Christian yoke for about fourteen years; and they seem to have deluded themselves with the hope that Khosrau would resign Jerusalem and a province to them, in order that they might establish a Jewish commonwealth. [136]

The Pivotal Years

The Roman response was swift, to counter the Jewish insolence there was the largest ever meeting of Merovingian Bishops, the Fifth Council of Paris in Gaul (France), They decided that all Jews holding military or civil positions must accept baptism, together with their families. Massive Jewish persecutions began to occur throughout Roman Empire.

When news of the sack of Jerusalem reached Khosrau, he was terrified. He did not intend it to go this far. Now regarding those who had been arrested, an order was issued by the king to have mercy on them, to build a city and to settle them there, establishing each person in his former rank/profession. He commanded that the Jews be driven from the city, and the king's order was quickly implemented, with great urgency.[137] The Jewish troops were stationed outside the Eastern Gate of the Temple Mount.[138]

The distrust between the Jews and Khosrau reached its lowest point, as the Jews said that Khosrau had acted treacherously and plotted the assassination of Nehemiah.[139] There arose great discord between the allies, which ended in the deportation of many Jews to Persia.[140] Shallum, Nehemiah's brother was sold into slavery, until his redemption ten years later.

Within a year after this victory the Persian troops over-ran Jordan, Israel and the whole of the Sinai Peninsula, and reached the frontiers of Egypt. Arabia was split between those who were for Persia and those for Byzantium. In Mecca, the followers of the Prophet, who had declared his support for Rome, were being fought under the command of the chiefs of the Quraish. The conflict had reached such a stage that in 615 CE, a substantial number of the Muslims had to

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leave their homes and take refuge with the Christian kingdom of *Habash*, Abyssinia, which was an ally of the Byzantine Rome.

The Romans were losing more and more ground every next day. In Asia Minor the Persians beat and pushed back the Romans to Bosporus, and in 617 CE, they captured Chalcedon (modern, Kadikoy) just opposite Constantinople. As a gesture to Rome, Khosrau issued an order to grant amnesty to prisoners. He orders Jewish soldiers to leave Jerusalem and forbade Jews to settle within a three mile radius of the city.[141] The Persians placed a certain Christian archpriest named Modestos over the city as governor.[142] Disillusioned with Persian promises, the Jewish soldiers did not heed Khosrau and continued to encamp outside golden gate.

By 619 CE, the whole of Egypt had passed into Sassanid hands and the Persian armies had reached as far as Tripoli. The Emperor sent an envoy to Khosrau, praying that he was ready to have peace on any terms, but he replied, "I shall not give protection to the emperor until he is brought in chains before me and gives up obedience to his crucified god and adopts submission to the fire god." But Khosrau, as a gesture to the Romans, allowed Heraclius to attack the Jewish troops outside the Golden Gate. The Persians withdrew all support. Trapped, the Romans violently slaughtered the Jewish regiment outside Golden Gate and left bodies to rot.[143] As many as 20,000 were killed. The Golden Gate was sealed. In Arabia, the year it was called "the Year of Sorrow".[144] It was during these events that the Prophet had his "Night Journey" vision, flying from Mecca to Jerusalem on a winged animal.

Heraclius, unsatisfied with Persian gestures, went on a rampage killing every Jew found in Israel. Men, women and children are killed without mercy, sparking the author of "The Prayer of Shimon bar Yochai" to bemoan how quickly the Priests grant forgiveness to the soldiers after committing such attrocities. By 622 CE, the Roman Emperor Heraclius had assembled an international army against the Persians. He had retaken Judea from the Sassanid Persians and the Jewish cause looked hopeless.

Signs of the Coming of the Prophet

With the death of Nehemiah ben Hushiel, the Judaic nation tried to grapple with the meaning of these events in terms of their literary heritage. They would come to the Golden Gate to pray.[145] According to Jewish tradition, the Messiah of Joseph would die.[146] So Nehemiah must have been the Messiah of Joseph. This meant that the King Messiah was sure to follow. However, before the King Messiah would appear, he would be preceded by Elijah the Prophet. Their leaders said "A Prophet is about to arise; his time draws near. We shall follow him; and then we shall slay [our enemies] with [divine] slaughter…" [147] As the common people became aware of the Prophet, "they spoke one to another – surely know that is the same Prophet whom the Jews [*Cohenim*, Priests] are warn us about ." [148]

Daniel had prophesied that there would be seventy weeks of years until the Temple would be rebuilt. And 490 (70x7) years had passed from the destruction of Bar Kochba's armies until this year (622 CE). Bar Kochba was a failed Messiah, now would come the true warrior Messiah. "A warrior with 'the helmet of deliverance on His head' and clad in armor".[149] "He will don garments of vengeance (as his) clothing and will put on a cloak of zealousness".[150] "He will fight the battle of Gog ha-Magog and against the army of Armilos (Heraclius)".[151] Although rare, even in Arabia, parents hoping that their child might be this Messiah might name him after Daniel, *Ish hamudot*,[152] Man of Delights – *Muhamud*.

In 620 CE, the Prophet Muhammed overcome by despondency at these successive developments, and by the renewed opposition of the Quraish, set out for Tayif (sixty or seventy miles to the east of Mecca). The Prophet was working hard to turn the hearts of the Arabian tribes from their fallacies. Against the Sadducean traditions, he stressed resurrection from the dead, and the importance of prayer five times a day.

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After being unsuccessful in trying to convince them of his message, he was met by the Prophet Addas at the outskirts of the city. Here he received a vision of concerning the souls of those slaughtered at the Golden Gate. These "souls of the Garden" or *Jinn*, Genii[153], accepted the Prophets message. The Qur'an puts it: "And when [the Lord] turned towards you a party of the Jinn who listened to the Quran; so when they came to it, they said: Be silent; then when it was finished, they turned back to their people warning (them). They said: O our people! we have listened to a Book revealed after Moses verifying that which is before it, guiding to the truth and to a right path".[154] In short the Jewish souls were willing to accept his message.

The Jews seek a New Leader

The "council of the righteous", i.e. twelve people representing the tribes of the Jews convened at the city of Edessa. When they saw that the Persian troops had departed and left the city unprotected, they closed the gates and fortified themselves. They refused entry to Roman troops. Heraclius gave the order to besiege it. When the Jews realized that they could not resist militarily, they promised to make peace. Opening the city gates, they appeared before Heraclius. Heraclius ordered that they should go and stay in their own place [Yathrib]. So they departed, taking the road through the desert to Tachkastan to Arabia.[155]

The Jews called the Arabs to their aid. Their situation was desperate. They tried to support their arguments through quotes from the Torah. Although the Arabs were agreed that they were similar in faith, they were unable to achieve any commitment on military support, for they were divided from each other by their form of religion.[156] The Romans had blocked all *Hagg* pilgrimages to Jerusalem, and so many were making the *'Umra*, the minor pilgrimage to Mecca instead. The people of Yathrib had traveled to Mecca to ask questions of the Prophet, and a few converts had already been made. During the *Hagg* pilgrimage of 620 CE, six or seven people of the Judaic tribe of Khazraj had declared allegiance to the Prophet.

During the *Hagg* pilgrimage of 621 CE, the "council of the righteous", met with the Prophet together with representatives of the Khazraj and the Aus. The Prophet ordered them all to assemble together and to unite in faith. He set out the principles of religious coexistence between Jew and non-Jew, the *seven laws of Noah*.[157] As far as Israel and its re-conquest by Rome, he said: "God promised that country to Abraham and to his son after him, for eternity. And what had been promised was fulfilled during that time when [God] loved Israel. Now, however, you are the sons of Abraham, and God shall fulfill the promise made to Abraham and his son on you. Only love the God of Abraham, and go and take the country which God gave to your father, Abraham. No one can successfully resist you in war, since God is with you".[158] So pleased with this response, the council pledged their allegiance to the Prophet in what is called "the first pledge of Al-Aqabah ".

During the Hagg pilgrimage of 622, seventy residents of Yathrib pledged their lives to support the Prophet. This was "the second pledge of Al-Aqabah." They invited the Prophet to Yathrib to be their king. On June 20, fleeing the pro-Persian persecution of the Quraish, the Prophet and Abu Bakr traveled from Mecca southward to the cave of Thaur. On Yom Kippur, September 24, 622CE, the Prophet arrived safely in Yathrib, being announced from the rooftops by a Jew.[159] Being an urban dweller of Mecca, the Prophet kept the lunar calendar of the Sadduceans who did not accept Hillel II's mathematical calendar.[160] When he arrived in Yathrib he was surprized to find the Jews fasting. He ordered his followers to immediately begin to fast, even midday. For 18 months, the Prophet took apon himself the Rabbinite traditions. Not since Dhu Nuwas, had such a Rabbinite ruler tried to unite the diverse tribes of Arabia.

The Prophet was officially elected king of Yathrib (Medina), by the council of elders. The charter of Medinah was drawn up declaring the rights and mutual military obligations of the Jewish and Judaic followers of the Prophet.[161] A Mosque for the Prophet was built on the ruins of an ancient

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Synagogue.[162] As Heraclius was attacking both Jew and heretic, the economy of Yatrib was strained by Jewish and Christian refugees. The Prophet consolidated the strength of his followers, and the kernel of an Islamic state was formed. The fame of the Prophet had grown, even Shallum ben Hushiel, the brother of Nehemiah, heard of the Prophet's fame as he was picking dates for his slave master in the outskirts of the city.

In general, Arabs trace their roots to one of two major tribes Qahtan (Zealots) and Adnan (Sadduceans). When the two tribes joined in Medina to create what became the first Islamic society led by the Prophet, those related to Qahtan were named al-Ansar (Helpers) who were the residents of Medina at that time; and those from Adnan and their allies who traveled to Medina and were called al-Muhajireen (Immigrants). The Byzantine called them Ishmaelites and Hagarenes.

Meanwhile the Persians were beginning to loose. Heraclius had retaken Judea from Sassanid Persians, and marched as far as Ecbatana, the ancient capital of the Medes. Heraclius had set off quietly for Trabzon from Constantinople via the Black Sea and started preparations to attack Persia from rear.[163]

Changing of the Qiblah

For four years, Heraclius had declared absolute and total war on the Jews. The Persians had abandoned them as well. In the years after the slaughter of the Jewish troops at the Golden Gate, Heraclius sought other ways to punish the Jews for the insolence. In addition to the first forced conversions in history to be sanctioned by the imperial government occurring throughout the Roman Empire, Heraclius sought to strike at the heart of their faith. In an affront reminiscent of the defiling of the Cathedral of Sana, he ordered the Temple Mount to be used as the city's latrines. Some aqueducts were rerouted to the Temple Mount at a slightly lower elevation, to allow a flow of water to the Temple Mount. This was not hard to do because in ancient times the water had been used to wash the blood of sacrifices away from the Temple mount. Heraclius also installed a beautiful statue of an unclothed lady, which according to Sefer Zerubavel, inspired further immoral deeds on the Temple Mount.[164]

In the literature of the time, the Temple Mount was referred to as "House of filth near the market."[165] The filth, "which was then all about the holy sanctuary, had settled on the steps of the gates so that it even came out into the streets in which the gate opened, and it had accumulated so greatly as almost to reach up the ceiling of the gateway."[166] Years later, the Muslims would call the Church of the Anastasis *al-qumamah*, the Dungheap, because of the disrespect of the Christians towards the Temple Mount.[167]

To the Judaic Nation, this was an insult. To the Sadduceans of Arabia this was a crisis. The Sadduceans were particular in cleanliness, equating cleanliness with the biblical concepts of *Taharah*, purity. Arabs traditions said that the ancient Israelites would cut off their skin, should any waste fall on it. The Arabs would not pray in the direction of a bathroom, nor go the bathroom while facing the holy places of Jerusalem or Mecca. The Rabbinites however continued to pray towards Jerusalem. This troubled the Prophet. In the end he was answered by a divine revelation which indicated that the faithful should not pray towards Jerusalem, only towards Mecca. Further, this would be the mark of distinction between his followers and others.

Dhu Nuwas was born of foreign descent; he adopted foreign customs and tried to unite the Arab tribes under a foreign banner, and failed. The Prophet Muhammed was an Arab. He was of the tribe of the Quraish; and they had been resident in Arabia for over six hundred years. Their version of Sadducean Judaism was closer to the heart of the Arabian tribes than any Persian custom. The Sura Al-Baqara (the sacrificial cow) was given at this time. It is a Sura written primary to a Jewish audience, yet the laws of *Salat*, Prayer; *Zum* Fasting; *Zakat*, Charity; *Haj*, Pilgramage and *Jihad*, Religious War reflect an intention to back away from the Prophets original

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embrace of Rabbinite custom and return to Sadducean custom. For example, the laws forbidding wine, and of mourning during *Ramadhan (Sefirah*) to include complete fasting during the day.

The Prophet envisioned an *Umma* (Judaic Nation) of the faithful that had different modes of religious worship. The non-Jews would follow the Mesanî[168], the seven laws of Noah. The Jews would keep the Sabbath and Kosher laws: "The Sabbath was appointed only for those who were distinguished by it, and the Lord will judge them on the Day of Resurrection according to their distinction."[169]

As there was a change of Qibla, there was a change in the war. Heraclius started his counter attack in 623 CE. from Armenia. Next year, in 624 CE, he entered Azerbaijan and destroyed Clorumia, the birthplace of Zoroaster, and ravaged the principal fire temple of Persia. This was the same when the Muslims their first victory at Badr.[170]

The Battle of Badr, 'Uhud and Khandaq; the Expulsion of the Priestly Tribes

As mentioned above, the Bani Qainuqa, Bani Al-Nadir and Bani Quraizah were tribes made up of *Cohenim*, Priests. The Bani Qainuqa were the priests of the Khazraj and the Bani al Nadir and the Bani Quraizah were the priests of the Aus.[171] Because of their *Cohen* status and careful marriages; they had a certain prestige as the only native population the Rabbinite Jews still considered "Jews". As *Cohenim* they performed teaching, religious, judicial and semi-governmental services to their client tribe. When the Prophet began to become more than a Prophet, and function as judge, ruler and military chief, these "Jews" – more than any other tribe in Medinah – began to oppose the Prophet. In addition, Khaibar was settled by the remants of the Sadducean High Priesthood, and at one time they had controlled the Ka'aba. They held a particular animosity to the Quraish, the Prophet included, who had taken back religious control from them.[172]

In 624 CE, Mecca attacked Medina without success at the battle of Badr. The three tribes mentioned above had actually hoped that the pro-Persian Quraish would have won. Three Sadducean "prophets" who predicted the future success of the Persians, were assassinated by the zealous followers of the Prophet.[173] The Bani Qainuqa openly and collectively broke their covenant. Descendants of the fighters of Bar Kochba, they were proud of their bravery and valor. Being blacksmiths by profession even their children were well armed and they could instantly muster 700 fighting men from among themselves. They were also arrogantly aware that they enjoyed the protection of the the Khazraj. Abdullah bin 'Ubbay (Abbaya), the chief of the, Khazraj, was their chief supporter. The Prophet laid siege to their quarters. The siege had hardly lasted for a fortnight when they surrendered and all their fighting men were tied and taken prisoners. Abdullah bin 'Ubayy came in support of them and insisted that they should be pardoned. The Prophet conceded his request and decided that the Bani Qainuqa would be exiled from Madina leaving their properties, armor and tools of trade behind.[174]

In 625 CE, the Quraish met the Prophet's army at 'Uhud. They resolved to avenge their defeat at Badr. The Bani Nadhir would not prophecy in support of the Prophet. With poor morale, only a thousand men had marched out with the Prophet against three thousand men of the Quraish, and three hundred Jews under Abdullah ibn Ubayya returned. During the battle of Uhud the Prophet was wounded and his followers suffered reverses. The opponents of the Prophet in Medina were further emboldened. The chief of the Bani Amir treacherously slaughtered seventy followers o fthe Prophet. Afterwards, Amr bin Umayyah Damri slew by mistake two men of the Bani Amir in retaliation. These two actually were actually allies, and had been mistaken for the enemy. Because of his mistake their blood money became obligatory on the Prophet. Since the Bani an-Nadir were the priests of the Bani Amir, the Prophet went to them to ask for their help in paying the blood money. While he was there, he received a divine revelation that the Bani Nahdir were going to assassinate him. He left suddenly and ordered their expulsion from Medina. Meanwhile Abdullah bin Ubayy sent them the message that he would help them with two thousand men and

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that the Bani Quraizah and Bani Ghatafan also would come to their aid; therefore, they should stand firm and should not go. On this false assurance they responded to the Prophet's ultimatum saying that they would not leave Madinah. The Prophet laid siege to them, and after a few days of the siege they agreed to leave Madinah on the condition that they could retain all their property which they could carry on thee camels, except the armor.[175]

In 627 CE, the battle of Khandaq (Battle the Trench) took place. The Meccans had left 'Uhud, without despoiling the people of Medina. The Prophet foresaw that they would return again to attack Medina. Steps were immediately taken to protect the city. The Prophet was joined by Shallum ben Hushiel, after freeing him from slavery. Although only in his late twenties, Shallum was knowledgeable in many tactics of war. He suggested to the Prophet to build trenches around the city, something that had never been seen in Arabia before. There was a combined raid by many of the Arab tribes, who wanted to crush the power of Madinah. It had been instigated by the leaders of the Bani an-Nadir, who had settled in Sadducean *Cohen*-City Khaiber after their banishment from Madinah. They went round to the Quraish and Ghatafan and Hudhail and many other tribes and induced them to gather all their forces together and attack Madinah jointly.[176]

An unprecedentedly large army of the Arab tribes marched against the small city of Madinah. From the north came Bani an-Nadir and Bani Qainuqa who after their banishment from Madinah, had settled in Khaiber and Wad il Qura. From the east advanced the tribes of Ghatafan, Bani Sulaim, Fazarah, Murrah, Ashja, Sa'd, Asad, etc. and from the south the Quraish, along with a large force of their allies. Together they numbered from ten to twelve thousand men. They laid siege to Medina without success. They succeeded partially to incite the *Cohen* tribe of Bani Quraizah, who inhabited the south eastern part of the city, to rebellion against the Prophet. Meanwhile the Prophet went on the offensive and routed the combined armies. After discovering the aborted treachery of the Bani Quraizah, he dispatched Ali with a contingent of soldiers as vanguard towards the Quraizah. This was followed by the whole of the Muslim forces. In the end, unlike any previous treatment of the *Cohenim*, all the male members of the Quraizah were executed, their women and children were taken prisoner, and their properties were distributed among the Muslims.[177]

Christian followers antagonistic to Jewish followers of the Prophet

Up to 624 CE, there is little allusion to Christianity in the Qu'ran. Early reference to *nasaara*,[178] Christians had been to the *sabioona*, Judaic Sabians, who were also called *nazoreans*.[179] They were descendants of Temple Sympathizers who were rejected by Sadducees and Rabbinites, and had begun to accept Christianity. As far as the Prophet was concerned they were all part of the Judaic Nation, descendants of Abraham, and People of the Book. But the Heraclius' persecutions of Jews and heretics had brought many Syrian Christians to Medinah, *ansar*. Though differing in doctrine, all these Christians had one thing in common, their hatred for the Jews.

The Prophet had been influenced in his early years by a Sabian prophet Bahira[180] who had recognized in him the "mark of prophethood". Although the Prophet's first experience of Christianity was the Sabian variety, few in number, and some of which were astrologers. After 622 CE, the numbers of more traditional Christian followers who declared their submission began to swell. The Prophet had bitterness towards the Sadduceen *Cohenim*, because they had not aided him in his campaigns according to his expectation. He wished to purge Arabia of these false prophets and priests. The Christians converts wanted to enlarge on this. They wanted to make the war between Muslim and non-believer, to one of Muslim against Jew.[181] After seeing the results of this resentment – the slaughter of the Quraizah – Shallum, son of the Exilarch Hushiel, perceived the dreadful predicament, went to Prophet, and offered him his submission.[182]

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Shallum ben Hushiel (Salmaan Farsi) finds the Prophet

Shallum was the son of the Exilarch Hushiel, who had turned to mysticism during some of the worst persecutions of Persian King Kovad.[183] Shallum was the second son, after Nehemiah. While Nehemiah was groomed to be the next Exilarch, Shallum was kept hidden in the Exilarch's palace, a virtual prisoner, to protect him from the Mazdokite riots.[184] Shallum's learning and position increased over the years, until he obtained the position of custodian of the academy, where his duty was to see that the learning was continuous and did not stop for a single hour, day or night.[185] One day the Exilarch was very busy with his duties and he said to Shallum: "My son, as you see, I am too busy to go out to the estate now. Go and look after matters there for me today."

On the way he crossed the Euphrates river and saw the camps of Arabian Bedouin which attracted his attention. They spoke about the wars in *Ash-Sham*, Syria-Palestine, and Shallum felt drawn to their cause.[186] He was stirred by the feelings of nationalism then current, and felt no great loyalty to the Persian ruler. Several times the Persians had betrayed the Jews, and even tried twice to wipe out the Exilarch. They had even crucified his great-grand father Mar Zutra III and Mar Haninai on the bridge of Mahoza on charges of misuse of funds.[187]

After his father found out about his nationalistic intentions, he reprimanded Shallum. He became upset and afraid that Shallum would leave. So he kept Shallum locked up in the palace and put a chain on his feet.[188] After the passing of Hushiel in 608 CE, Nehemiah was appointed by Khosrau as the symbolic leader of the Persian troops. Shallum accompanied his brother's caravan to Israel. He admired his brother, who was an ascetic who longed for the Hereafter and engaged in worship day and night.[189] After Nehemiah's violent and tragic death and the decree for all Jews to leave Jerusalem, Shallum attached himself to a band of soldiers who revolted from Persian command. The Persians cruely suppressed the revolt and Shallum was sold into slaverly. He was taken to Wadi al-Qura (between Madinah and Syria) and sold as a servant to a Jewish resident there. Eventually Shallum was sold to the Jew's nephew belonging to the tribe of Banu Quraizah. This nephew took Shallum with him to Yathrib.

At that time the Prophet was inviting his people in Mecca to Islam but Shallum did not hear anything about him then because of the harsh duties which slavery imposed upon him. When the Prophet reached Yathrib after his *hijrah* from Mecca (*in 622*), Shallum was in fact at the top of a palm tree belonging to his master doing some work. He took dates to the Prophet as a gift, and was impressed by the Prophet's scrupulous honesty, especially compared to the house of the Exilarch which was mired in dubious fiscal policies. Shallum declared his submission to the Prophet.[190]

Although Shallum tried to keep his background a secret, it turned out that Prophet's foster brother, Ali ibn abu Talib, was related through his mother Fatima to the Exilarch line. Learning of the royal descent of Shallum, in 624 CE, Ali encouraged the Prophet to release Shallum from slavery by paying his Jewish master.[191] When word began to spread about Shallum, it led to rumors among the Jews that Nehemiah ben Hushiel had been resurrected from the dead, and in the presence of the Prophet Elijah.[192]

Shallum began to play an important role in the struggles of the growing Muslim state. He was known as Salman al-Farsi, Shallum the Persian. At the battle of Khandaq, he proved to be an innovator in military strategy. He suggested digging a trench or khandaq around Madinah to keep the Quraish army at bay. When Abu Sufyan, the leader of the Makkans, saw the ditch, he said, "This stratagem has not been employed by the Arabs before." Shallum became known as "Salman the Good". He was a scholar who lived a rough and ascetic life.[193]

In 625CE, the Persians were defeated by Romans in attack on Constantinople. The Byzantine forces continued to press the Iranians hard and in the decisive battle at Nineveh (627 CE) they

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dealt them the hardest blow. They captured the royal residence of Dastagerd, and then pressing forward reached right opposite to Ctesiphon, capital of Iran in those days. In 628 CE. in an internal revolt, Khosrau Parvez was imprisoned and eighteen of his sons were executed in front of him and a few days later he himself died in the prison. This was the year when the peace treaty of Hudaibiya was concluded, which the Quran has termed as "the supreme victory", and in this very year Khosrau's son, Kovad II, gave up all the occupied Roman territories, restored the True Cross and made peace with Byzantium. In 628 CE, the Emperor himself went to Jerusalem to install the "Holy Cross" in its place, and in the same year the Holy Prophet entered Makkah for the first time after the Hijrah to perform the `Umra-tul-Qada'.[194] Meanwhile wholesale persecution of the Jews continued, in 629CE, Dagobert orders the Jews of the Frankish empire to accept baptism or to emigrate.[195]

In 629 CE, there was the battle of Khaibar. The *Cohenim* of Khaibar had not shown any hostility toward the Muslims until the leaders of Banu al Nadir settled among them. The most prominent leaders of Banu al Nadir who settled in Khaibar were Salam ibn Abu al Haqiq, Kinanah ibn Abu al Haqiq, and Huyayy ibn Akhtab. When they came to Khaibar, the people accepted their leadership.[196] The leadership of these three men was enough to drag the *Cohenim* of Khaibar into conflict aimed at retaliation against the Muslims. During the Battle of Khandaq, the *Cohanim* of Khaibar, led by the leaders of Banu al Nadir, hoped to regain control of the Ka'aba. They played a significant role in the incitement of Quraysh and the desert Arabs against the Muslims. The Prophet sent a letter to them, via Ali and Shallum (Salmaan Farsi), calling them to submit to the Prophet and reminding them of what their own Scriptures said about his coming.[197]. Ali managed to convince the guards to open the fortress gate. Ali took a lead role in the siege. Shallum also was awarded lands in Khaibar for his role in the battle.

In spite of the Muslims' desperate need before Khaibar, the Prophet would have preferred the *Cohen*'s submission to receiving their booty, as is made clear by his command to Ali. Nor did he want to destroy or expel the *Cohenim*; for this reason he accepted the peace agreement which the *Cohenim* of al Qamus, al Watih and Salalim offered. After the agreement – according to which the *Cohenim* accepted expulsion from Khaibar – had been made, he agreed to let them stay in Khaibar according to their request, an indication of tolerance and justice. Prophet allowed the *Cohenim* to stay in Khaibar on the condition that they work in agriculture and spend their own money on it, and that the Muslims would receive one half of their crops.[198] Unlike the Banu Quraiza, the men of Khyabar were not executed and their women and children were not made slaves. This was directly due to the mediation of Ali and Shallum (Salmaan Farsi). There were many followers of the Prophet who were not happy at this state of affairs, particulary the Christian followers of the Prophet, and the tension between the groups threatened to come to a boil.

To Save the Jews of Israel from Byzantine slaughter

In 628, After the defeat and death of Khosrau, Heraclius came as victor into Jerusalem. The Jews of Tiberias and Nazareth, under the leadership of Benjamin of Tiberias, changed sides and joined him as allies. It is said that the Emperor would have kept peace with them had not fanatic monks instigated him to a massacre. Only a few Jews escaped into Egypt or sought refuge in caves and in forests.[199] In atonement for the violation of an oath to the Jews, the monks pledged themselves to a fast, which the Copts still observe.[200] Heraclius is said to have dreamed that destruction threatened the Byzantine Empire through a circumcised people. He therefore proposed to destroy all Jews who would not become Christians; and he is reported to have counseled Dagobert, king of the Franks, to do the same.[201] In the Tiburtine Sibyl said that the Jews of the Byzantine Empire would be converted in one hundred and twenty years (by 628 CE).[202]

In 630 CE, the Prophet, with 10,000 Islamic warriors, captured Mecca without resistance. After claiming the religious center of the Ka'aba, the Prophet was now the spiritual and military leader of all Arabia and all muslims. For the first time, the various militias of Arabia were able to gather

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together under one leader, not even under Dhu Nuwas was there this amount of unity. It might have ended here, but with increased pressure from the Judaic tribes of Arabia, and constant assurances from Shallum, that the Exilarch's people would come to the aid of the Prophet, the horizons of Islam began to grow.

The first goal outside Arabia was to save the Jews of Israel from Byzantine slaughter.[203] Shallum may also have dreamed of Jerusalem as his capital. The troops assembled "from Havilah to Shur."[204] All the remnants of the sons of Israel assembled and united with the Arabs and became a large force. Under the command of Ali and Shallum, they entered the Sinai, opposite Egypt. The Byzantine army was encamped in Arabia (trans-Jordan). The Muslims fell upon them suddenly, struck them with the sword and put to flight Emperor Heraclius' brother, Theodosius. Then the Muslims turned and encamped in Arabia (trans-Jordan).[205] After this first victory against an international army, the Prophet sent letters to all rulers of the world explaining Islam. In his letter to Heraclius, he demanded that he relinquish Israel. He dispatched a message to the Byzantine emperor, saying: "God gave that country as the inherited property[206] of Abraham and of his sons after him. We are the sons of Abraham. It is too much that you hold our country. Leave in peace…" The Emperor rejected this. He did not provide a fitting response to the message but rather said: "The country is mine. Your inheritance is the desert [Arabia]. So go in peace to your country."[207] Just before he fell sick, the Prophet had given orders for an expedition to Israel. Usama ibn Zeid led a contingent of soldiers as far as Yavneh near modern day Tel Aviv.[208]

Death of the Prophet, Abu Bakr's Appointment, and Shallum's Rebellion

In 632 CE, the Prophet Muhammed passed away. The council of Medina tried to elect a successor, Sa'd ibn 'Obada of the Khazraj, but the Muslims were bitterly divided, they even considered appointing two leaders: Judaic (Khazraj) and Sadducean (Quraish). A small number of companions of the Prophet chose Abu Bakr as *Khalif*, replacement. The followers of 'Ali did not approve of this, because it meant that the government would be controlled by the family of Quraish. 'Ali himself delayed in doing homage to Abu Bakr. Shallum attempted to rally some Bedouin tribes to depose Abu Bakr. Judaic and disaffected Sadduceans joined forces against Abu Bakr and his general Khalid. Khalid's forces were made up of many Christian converts to Islam. At least five *kahanah*, cohens, prophets had appeared in Arabia who claimed to be prophets along with Muhammad: a Judaic prophet in Medina and the prophetess Hefzibah (Sajah); and three Sadducean prophets al-Musaylimah al-Kathib, al-Aswad and Tulayha ibn Khuwaylid.

Some of the prophets had been assassinated during Muhammed's lifetime, but now the Judaic prophetess Hefzibah arrived from Mesopotamia at the head of a great host and joined Musaylamah in Yamamah.[209] Musaylamah's army of forty thousand achieved a degree of success against the first troops sent against him by Abu Bakr. Musaylamah's forces retreated into a garden surrounded by high walls. This garden later became known in history as the garden of death. The Muslims had never experienced this amount of fighting among themselves before. There were many deaths and much destruction. Many "readers", Muslims who recited the Qur'an by heart, were killed on both sides.[210] The rebellion was crushed, and Shallum fled to Al-Bahrein.[211] This group of Judaic zealots would later be called the Kharajites.[212]

Abu Baker did much to try and unite the faithful. He brought the mutinying tribes back under his control and he began to collect the fragments of what would become the Qur'an. But the struggle for unity of Islam brought about the codification of Islam, and the diversity that was once apparent under the Prophet was lost. Islamic tradition ascribes the preservation of Islam to Abu Bakr: "On the death of Mohammad, in a little bit the Faithful would have perished utterly. But the Lord strengthened the heart of Abu Bakr, and established us in the resolve to give place not for one moment to the *Kafir*;—giving answer to them but in these three words *Submission, Exile*, or *the Sword*."[213] In reality one form of Islam was being raised above the others, the Quraish'

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Sadducean variety as espoused by a major influx of Christian converts to Islam. But for now, there was peace between all the factions for the sake of the new faith.

The Conquest of Persia and Shallum's Return

Chaldea and southern Syria belong geographically to Arabia. The Judaic tribes inhabiting this region, partly (at least in name) Christian, formed an integral part of the Judaic nation and as such fell within the immediate scope of the new faith. Four years previously (627 CE), Heraclius had marched from the Black Sea and decisively routed the Persians on the field of Nineveh.[214] He advanced triumphantly to the gates of the Persian capital. The Persians troops mutinied and killed Persian king Khosrau in November, 628 CE. In the space of four years afterwards, the royal title was assumed by nine candidates, who disputed, with the sword or dagger, the fragments of an exhausted monarchy.[215] Being informed of the chaos in Persia and the threat to Jews in Babylon, Shallum (Salmaan Farsi) longed to go there. Seeing rebellion and discord Shallum began to regret his opposition to Abu Bakr.

In 633CE, after helping helped to reclaim Al-Bahrein, Shallum traveled with Al-Muthanna along the Persian Gulf to reduced Al-Katif, and carried his victorious arms into the delta of the Euphrates. Al-Muthanna was of the Bekr tribe which lived in that area. Al-Muthanna's column swelled to 8000 men. But Abu Bakr, anticipating opposition, sent his general Khalid was to subdue Chaldea. When Al-Muthanna was overwhelmed by Persian troops by the by the Great Canal (a branch of the Tigris which runs across the Peninsula), Khalid, joined him and routed the enemy. Khalid scoured the country, killing all the men fit for war and taking their women captive. But the Jewish peasants he left unharmed. Shallum was chosen to send tidings of the victory of the Battle of Ulleis to Abu Bakr, afterwards he returned to the field of battle. By "conquering sixty places", Shallum's became reconciled to Abu Bakr, and was received in favor.

The Arab kingdom Hira was besieged and capitulated to Khalid, while Persia was paralyzed by internal troubles. Siege was laid to Al-Anbar, a fortress on the Euphrates some eighty miles above Babylon. The army attacked 'Ain at-Tamr, the Spring of the Date palm, a fortress on the desert border three days' journey farther west. The Persian troops were here supported by a great gathering of soldiers, and among them the same Jewish Taghlib which had followed the prophetess Hefzibah (Sajah) to Al-Yemama. They met Khalid as he approached, but were repulsed. The Persian governor seeing the route from the ramparts, fled and left the fugitives to defend themselves as best they could. Khalid beheaded their leaders in front of the city walls, and every adult male of the garrison led forth and put to death; while the women and children were made over to the soldiers or sold into slavery.

In 634 CE, Abu Bakr passed away, but before his death 'Umar was nominated to be the next Khalif. For Khalid's many acts of cruelty, 'Umar recalled him to Arabia. Shallum was placed in command of the troops.[216] In a Jewish academy nearby, forty students joined the invading forces. Amongst them were progenitors of several distinguished men, such as Ibn Ishak the historian, and Musa the conqueror of Spain.

Shallum, the brother of an Exilarch betrayed by the Persians, rose up to overthrow the Sassanian Dynasty. He commanded a zealous army of Kharajites and trained them to achieve two aims: Get the Paradise of the Earth (Iran) or die for the paradise of heaven. Shallum using his accumulated knowledge, wisdom, and culture, adapted the teachings of the Prophet into a universal religion that included Jews and Persians. [217] He supported the Jewish academies in Pumbedita and Sura. He translated the Qur'an into Persian, something that until now had been strictly limited to Arabic. In 637 CE, Shallum, defeated the Persian army of 20,000 soldiers in the battle of Qadisiya. He went on to capture the Persian capital Ctesiphon and occupy all of Iraq. Shallum established his capital in Mahoza, the ancient seat of the Exilarch. By this time he had two children Heman (Abdullah ibn Saba) and Yaakov ('Ka'b al-Ahbar). Heman he sent to the 'Umar's court and Yaakov was sent to the Yeshiva in Pumbedita to undergo rabbinical training. Two and

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half years, Shallum died and was buried in Mahoza. The city is now called Salman Pak, in honor of Shallum.

After his death, his zealous followers misused the opportunity and put the country under military rule. The Zoroastrians reported that they burned their libraries and books. They destroyed castles and forced their followers to believe nothing but Islam. No one was allowed to say: this is my land and I am an Iranian in my country, but one only could say: I am a Moslem, and I am a servant to my Arab masters. Shallum (Salman Farsi) was recognized by Arabs and Jews as a hero, his name even appears in the Qur'an, while to Iranians Salman Farsi was a traitor.

Conquest and Victory at Jerusalem

'Umar decided to return to the aborted conquest of Israel. What was originally a mission of mercy became a mission of conquest. The Muslim army was in three divisions of 5000 men each, the commanders being 'Amr ibn al-'As, Shurahbil ibn Hasana, and Yezid. To each of these divisions one of the districts of Syria-Palestine was assigned as its field of operations. 'Amr and his Jewish troops were to make for Ayla, at the head of the Gulf of Aqaba, and thence invade southern Syria or Israel. Shurahbil and his Sadducean troops were to make first for Tebuk, whence the latter was to invade central Syria, while Yezid and his formerly Christian troops pushed on towards Damascus. Mu'awiya, the future Khalif, bore the standard of his brother Yezid. Hebron (with its tombs of the Jewish patriarchs) fell to 'Amr, but a greater battle awaited.

In 635, Battle of Yarmuk occurred. Convinced that the Rome was at war with the Jews, Emperor Heraclius decreed forced baptism on North African Jewish communities. Heraclius started organizing an international force[218], as many as 70,000 troops. The Muslims reached Damascus, but were forced to withdraw to Yarmuk. Heraclius ordered that his troops were to persue the Muslims, stipulating that they were not to engage them in war, but rather to keep on the alert until he could assemble his other troops and send them to help. Now the Byzantines reached the Jordan and crossed into Arabia [trans-Jordan]. Leaving their campsite on the riverbank, the Byzantines went on foot to attack the Muslims' camp. The Muslims, however, had placed part of their army in ambuscades here and there, lodging the multitude in dwellings around the camp. Then they drove in herds of camels which they penned around the camp and the tents, tying them at the foot with rope. Such was the fortification of their camp. The beasts were fatigued from the journey, and so the Byzantines were able to cut through the camp fortification, and started to kill the Muslims. But suddenly the men in the ambuscades sprung from their places and fell upon them. The Byzantine troops turned in flight before them. There was great anxiety caused by the heat of the sun and the enemy's sword was upon them. All the generals fell and perished. More than 2,000 men were slain. A few survivors fled to a place of refuge.

After defeating the Byzantines, they marched onward to capture Damascus. In 636 CE Gaza was conquered. 'Umar visited Syria to begin to develop governmental policies. In 637 CE, Caesarea was under siege for seven months until a Jew named Joseph led the Moslem attackers through a tunnel to capture the city. Later that year Damascus fell.

After the capture of Damascus, the Muslims crossed the Jordan and encamped at Jericho. Then dread of them came over the inhabitants of the country, and all of them submitted. That night the chief citizens of Jerusalem took the "Cross of the Lord" and all the vessels of the churches, and fled with them by boat to the palace at Constantinople. The Jerusalemites requested an oath from the Arabs and then submitted, but only if the Khalif would come in person to confirm the treaty.[219]

'Umar arrived from Damascus. After finalizing the Pact of 'Umar with the leaders of Jerusalem, he requested to see the Temple mount. When 'Umar reached the old ruined gates of the Temple he was horrified to see the filth, "which was then all about the holy sanctuary, had settled on the steps of the gates so that it even came out into the streets in which the gate opened, and it had accumulated so greatly as almost to reach up the ceiling of the gateway." The only way to get up

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to the platform was to crawl on hands and knees. Sophronius went first and the Muslims struggled up behind. When they arrived at the top, the Muslims gazed appalled at the vast and desolate expanse of Herod's platform, still covered with piles of fallen masonry and garbage. The shock of this sad encounter with the holy place whose fame had reached them in far-off Arabia was never forgotten: Muslims claimed that they called Anastasis al-qumamah, "the Dungheap," in retaliation for the impious of the Christians on the Temple Mount.[220]

'Umar does not seem to have spent any time on this occasion examining the Sakhrah rock, which would later play such an important part in Islam in the future – but rather concentrated on cleaning the Temple mount of filth.[221] Once he had taken stock of the situation, he threw handfuls of dung and rubble into his cloak and then hurled it over the city wall into the Valley of Hinnom. Immediately his followers did the same.[222]

When 'Amr and his Jewish soldiers arrived in Jerusalem, they planned to [re]build the Temple. [223] At the time they enjoyed full support from the Sadducean Muslims (Hagarenes). Locating the place called the holy of holies; they constructed a wooden building with a pedestal[224], to serve as their place of prayer. But the Christians objected, and the Christian converts to Islam (Ishmaelites) envied the Jews. They expelled the Jews from that place[225], and named used the same building their own place of prayer. The Jews built another temple for their worship, elsewhere, on the southern side of the Temple Mount. This segmentation of Jerusalem along religious lines seemed to be part of 'Umar's policy towards Jerusalem. It was during this early Muslim period that Jerusalem was divided into different quarters for each religious community.[226]

The area on the Temple Mount which now contains the *Qubbat Al-Sakhrah*, Dome of the Rock was never venerated by Christians during all the centuries of Byzantine rule. When the Jews tried to build a house of prayer there, the Christian converts to Islam "out of jealousy" claimed it for their own. Its use as Christian-Islamic shrine from that point on is seen in the content of the inscriptions on the *Qubbat Al-Sakhrah*, Dome of the Rock, which are almost exclusively written to Christians. Benjamin of Tudela, writing during the crusades, says "our ancient Temple, [is] now called *Templum Domini*. Upon the site of the sanctuary Omar ben al Khatab [actually 'Abd al-Malik] erected an edifice with a very large and magnificent cupola, into which the Gentiles do not bring any image or effigy, but they merely come there to pray."[227] The *Qubbat Al-Sakhrah*, Dome of the Rock was never made properly a mosque. It remained a shrine for Muslims and non-Muslims (particularly Christians) to enter and pray.

The Temple of Shallum (Solomon) and the Messianic Age

Khalif 'Umar entrusted Shallum's son, Heman, to erect a wooden mosque on the southern side of the Temple Mount to replace the temporary structure built by the Jews. It is to this structure that Arculphus, about 680CE, appears to allude in describing a rude square house of prayer on the site of the Temple, raised with planks and beams on old foundations, and large enough to hold 3,000 men. This structure was for Jews, Jewish converts to Islam, and Muslims to pray together facing Mecca.[228] This mosque was restricted such that other than Jews and Muslims were not allowed. It was refered to as "their private place of prayer."[229] Shallum had remained in Persia, but in honor of his valiant conquests, the mosque was named in honor of him. When the wooden mosque was subsequently' removed and rebuilt as a more permanent structure, the name remained. Centuries later when the crusaders came, they mistoook the *Masjid as-Salman,* Mosque of Salmaan for the Temple of Solomon. Today this building is called *Masjid al-Aqsa*, Al-Aqsa mosque.

Khalif 'Umar encouraged all Jews from Arabia to move to Israel, Babylon or Egypt, although later historians would say that 'Umar expelled them.[230]

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As a scholar, Shallum was noted for his vast Rabbinite knowledge and wisdom. Ali said of him that he was like Luqman the Wise. The Prophet pointed at Ali and Salman Farsi and said:- Ali and his lovers and followers like Salman and his Persian followers: If knowledge clings to the ceiling of heavens, some of the Persians will pull it down."[231]

Shallum had knowledge of both the Quran and his earlier Rabbinic training. Shallum in fact translated parts of the Quran into Persian during the life-time of the Prophet. He was thus the first person to translate the Quran into a foreign language. He had two sons, Heman and Yaakov, who we identify in Islamic literature as 'Abdallah ibn Saba and Ka'b al-Ahbar. The former was trained to become the next Exliarch, and the later was sent to Pumpedita to be trained in Rabbinic studies. Ka'b al-Ahbar, would later say of his father: "Salman is stuffed with knowledge and wisdom--an ocean that does not dry up."[232]

As mentioned above, Shallum had created a integrated system of belief between Judaism and Islam. The belief systems did not merge, but Sadducean and Rabbinite custom existed side by side. Shallum was treated with great respect by Khalif 'Umar. The Khalif commanded concerning him and his descendants; and he ordered that every one, whether Muslim or Jew, or belonging to any other nation in his dominion, should rise up before him (the Exilarch) and salute him, and that any one who should refuse to rise up should receive one hundred stripes.

In addition to building the common mosque, Heman also pursued a strictly Rabbinite agenda, he invited seventy Rabbinic families from Tiberias to form the new Sanhedrin. Omar agreed that seventy households should come to Jerusalem from Tiberias. After that, he asked: "Where do you wish to live within the city?" They replied: "In the southern section of the city, which is the market of the Jews." Their request was to enable them to be near the site of the Temple and its gates, as well as to the waters of Shiloach, which could be used for immersion. This was granted them by the Emir of the Believers. So seventy households including women and children moved from Tiberias, and established settlements in buildings whose foundations had stood for many generations.[233] These buildings to the south of the Temple Palace were eventually replaced by an Umayyad Palace built by Khalif al-Walid in 715 CE. The immersion pools they built were still visible in during the visit of Benjamin of Tudela.[234]

Archeological evidence suggests that this corner, near Robinson's Arch, was the original location of the archives of Jerusalem as mentioned by Josephus.[235] It seems that Heman also ordered that genealogical records be assembled in preparation for a new high priesthood. The records they started to collect were remembered in later years by Jews inscribing their names on the wall.[236] The Jews remembered the slaughtered Jewish troops, whose bodies were left to rot by Heraclius. To this period belongs an inscription on the western wall, "You shall see, and your heart shall rejoice; their bones like the grass", the text is from Isaiah 66:14, but the words "your bones" has been changed to "their bones".[237]

Mujir al-Din relates that "And among the servants of the sanctuary, too, was another company of Jews, who made the glass plates for the lamps and the glass lantern-bowls and glass vessels and rods. No poll-tax was demanded of them, nor from those that made wicks for the lamps."

For the Muslims, Jewish converts to Islam, and even some Rabbinite Jews, they were now living in the Messianic Age. The *Masjid al Aqsa*, Al-Aqsa Mosque was the reconstructed Third Temple. Heraclius was Armilos, the anti-Christ, and he had been vanquished. A nation of the faithful which included Jews, and those who kept the seven laws, the Muslims, were now creating a new order. There were problems between the various followers, but it was assumed that they would soon be worked out. To the Christians converts to Islam, the Jews were a throw back to a previous age. The Jews were resisting the message of Islam, and were inviting revolt and rebellion. To the Khalif, the commander of the faithful, the Jewish converts to Islam were a little of both.

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Heman ben Shallum (Abdullah Ibn Saba)

In 640CE, two and half years after Shallum ben Hushiel defeated the Persian army, he died and was buried with his fathers in Mahoza.[238] Although Shallum was Exilarch de Jure, it is not apparent that he ever functioned politically as an Exilarch. Shallum was a ascetic who sought truth and good governship and not the trappings of a ruler. It was different with his son, Heman, also known as Abdullah ibn Salaam.[239]

Assuming that Shallum was not married when he was sold into slavery, Heman must about ten years old when he was introduced to the Prophet. The following story is related concerning Heman and his relationship to the Prophet. Shortly after the Battle of Khandaq, a Jew and a Jewess were brought to the Prophet on a charge of having illegal relations. The Prophet asked them. "What is the legal punishment (for this sin) in your Torah?" They replied, "Our priests have innovated the punishment of blackening the faces with charcoal and *Tajbiya*." 'Abdullah bin Salam said, "O Allah's Apostle, tell them to bring the Torah." The Torah was brought, and then one of the Jews put his hand over the verse of the *Rajam*, stoning (Leviticus 20:27) and started reading what preceded (Leviticus 20:10) and what followed it. On that, Ibn Salam said to the Jew, "Lift up your hand." The verse of the *Rajam* was under his hand. So the Prophet ordered that the two (sinners) be stoned to death, and so they were stoned. In this quote, Heman is taking a literalist, Sadducean, approach to the punishment for adultery. He ignores the Rabbinic requirement of witnesses, and that even if convicted, strangulation is proscribed being regarded as a more humane form of execution than stoning. Until this point, Heman would have been raised as the child of a slave. So his views on Judaism would have been formed by the Sadduceans around him. His brother Yaakov, however, was sent to Pumbedita for Rabbinic studies after these events.

Some early Shi'ite scholars attributed the origin of Shi'ism to Heman (Abdullah ibn Saba), or at least the belief of the Imamate. These scholars asserted that Heman, like his father, was a close follower of 'Ali. After 'Ali was passed over for selection as Khalif, Heman started voicing his opinion of the *wilayat*, divine appointment of 'Ali as the successor of the Prophet. According to them, Heman propounded the notion that just as Joshua was divinely appointed to succeed Moses, 'Ali was divinely chosen to succeed the Prophet. Whether Heman felt the codification of Islam was to the detriment of the Jews within Islam, or perhaps Heman still felt resentment to the Christians (even those who had become followers of the prophet, and were fast becoming the majority) for the savage acts the Byzantines had done to the Jews and his uncle Nehemiah, Heman played a major role in founding the rebel Khawarji movement.

At one time the Jews had been looked upon with great respect in Arabia. The movement launched by Heman aimed at the uniting the disaffected Muslims who had been denied a role in the Islamic state due to ethnic race or past actions. Islamic histories suggested that Heman sought to restore of the glory of the Jews, and the power of the Exilarch, by preaching rebellion among Muslims. Heman came to Medina and presented himself as a champion of Islam. His father, Shallum, had been greatly respected by the Muslims as an ascetic. Heman too sought to live a life of piety according to the injunctions of Islam. He claimed the title of Exilarch and began to collect the fund that had not been collected since Nehemiah. There were considerable funds collected by the Jews at his disposal and this money he distributed among the poor. Within a short time Heman became as popular with the Muslims as he was with the Jews.

In 642 CE, after being Exilarch for two years, Heman felt that preaching alone would not get him anywhere. Judaism was taking more and more of a back seat in the Islamic state, and the Christian converts were fast becoming the majority. They had robbed the Jews of their place of prayer by the Sakhrah rock, and were reducing the role of the Exilarch. It was then that Exilarch's men (al-Julati) became extremists (al-Ghulat) and came up with a plan to rid Jerusalem of Christian leadership. Three of the Exilarch's men, slaughtered two pigs and put them in *Masjid al-Aqsa*, Al-Aqsa mosque, which at that time was still used by both Jews and Muslims but not Christians. Now it happened that there was a certain grandee Ishmaelite who went to worship In

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their common house of prayer. He encountered the Exilarch's men as they were coming out of the mosque. Blood was running down the walls and on the floor of the mosque. As soon as the man saw them, he stopped and said something or other to them. They replied and departed. The man at once went inside to pray. He saw the sight, and quickly turned to catch the men. When he was unable to find them, he was silent and went to his place. Then many Muslims entered the place and saw the evil, and they spread a lament throughout the city. The Jews told Heman that the Christians had desecrated their place of prayer. Heman issued an order that all the Christians leaders were to be gathered together. Just as they wanted to put them to the sword, the man came and addressed them: "Why shed so much blood in vain? Order all the Jews to assemble and I shall point out the guilty ones." As soon as they were all assembled and the man walked among them, he recognized the three men whom he had previously encountered. Seizing them, the Arabs tried them with great severity until they disclosed the plot. Heman was implicated along with the Jews, It was ordered that six of the Exilarch's men be killed, but the other Jews were allowed to return to their places.[240]

When Khalif 'Umar heard of this incident, he reacted swiftly. 'Umar immediately deposed Heman as Exilarch. Another member of the Exilarch's family, Bustenai[241], was living in Jerusalem as part of the re-formed Sanhedrin. Bustenai was well known for his progress in his studies, and acquired a knowledge of Torah, Mishnah, Talmud, and halachah, as well as general wisdom and understanding. 'Umar ordered that the young man be brought before him. It is said that "God bestowed upon Bustenai a portion of the grace and favor that had been King David's". The king and his counselors were much impressed with this youth. Now, it came to pass during this audience that Bustenai stood erect and unmoving during the whole of that day until evening. In the course of that time, a fly alighted on his forehead, stinging him until blood flowed from his wound. When the king saw this, he asked the young man, "Why did you not drive the insect away?" Bustenai replied, "This is a tradition in our family since the time when we lost our throne: that when we stand in the presence of a king we neither speak nor laugh nor lift a hand without obtaining permission first". This noble behavior found great favor in the king's eyes, and he appointed Bustenai Exilarch.[242] This incident is probably a veiled reference to Bustenai's lack of involvement in Heman's coup.

The power to appoint judges for both Islamic and Jewish courts was granted to Bustenai as it had been to Heman before him. Bustenai was to lead the academies of Sura and Pumbedisa, who were empowered to render judicial decisions for throught the Islamic state. This custom carried on for a long time, until the advent of Umayad Caliphate, who appointed judges for the population, so that Jewish judges were no longer needed. But the office of Exilarch still continued for many generations. Bustenai was a scholar, not a military man, so he had no chance of commanding the respect of the Khawarji. To boost his prestige 'Umar gave him other honors, see the section below "Khalif 'Umar's Selection of Rabbinic Judaism as 'true' Judaism"

Heman fled to Basra. There he stayed with Hakim b Jabala, a brigand. He preached that those who robbed the rich were not outlaws; they merely aimed at narrowing down the differences between the rich and the poor. He insinuated that the Government which depended upon the support of the rich was a tyranny. The common men came to feel that Abdullah b Saba was their well-wisher. From Basra, Heman came to Kufa. where he led the life of an ascetic and the people were attracted to him. In Kufa, most of the people favored Ali. Heman exploited this position in a subtle way. By his subtle talks he exhorted the people of Kufa to rise and overthrow Uthman and install Ali as the Khalif. He would argue, "O Muslims, under the circumstances it is not for you to undertake Jihad across the borders of the Muslim dominions; the real Jihad lies against the Khalif who has stolen Islam".

Heman was known among Jews as the messiah of Pumbedita. Around 645 CE, a Christian Syrian chronicle mentions a Jewish man who declared that he was the messiah in Pumbedita. At the beginning of the Arab conquest, when Iraq was not yet the center of the Caliphate, during the unstable reign of the Khalif Uthman, the messiah of Pumbedita and about four hundred armed

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men, rose up, burned three unspecified houses of worship, and killed the local ruler before they were stopped by a garrison of the Khalif. They, their wives, and their children were killed.

Heman fled Kufa, and came to Syria. Here he came across Abu Dhar Ghifari. Abu Dhar Ghifari was an eminent companion of the Holy Prophet who was held in high esteem by the people. He, however, propounded ultra socialist doctrines, and vehemently denounced the luxurious way of living of the rulers. That made him very popular with the poor. Heman exploited this position in Syria, and posed himself as a devoted follower of Abu Dhar Ghifari. Meeting Abu Dhar Ghifari, Heman said, "Look Sir, the Governor calls the 'Baitul Mal', the property of Allah. That is a device to avoid its distribution among the people." The argument appealed to Abu Dhar Ghifari, and when he saw Muawiyah he was critical of the amassing of funds in the treasury; he wanted the immediate distribution of available funds among the people.

From Syria Heman went to Egypt. There he found the atmosphere more congenial. Muhammad b Abu Bakr and Muhammad b Hudhaifa were already carrying on hostile attacks against Uthman. Heman took advantage of this position. The common men who listened to him came to regard him as a staunch Muslim and felt that there was considerable weight in what he said. By such activities the Heman tried to wage a war against Islamic leadership on the intellectual plane. Heman sent emissaries to major towns in the Muslim empire.

Heman appears from reports by al-Ash'ari, al-Sama'ani and al-Maqrizi; to have claimed leadership of the ancient race of the Sabeans, and took the title al-Saba'i. The Sabeans did not exist as a race anymore but came to mean all disaffected and lower class Muslims. Later it was called the *Khawarji*. Heman is called in Islamic literature as Abdullah bin Wahab al-Saba'i, head of the Khawarij, who opposed Imam Ali; Abdullah Ibn al-Sawda' to those who reported from Sayf. He was the creator of the Saba'iya clan/group who believed in successorship to Ali, who agitated against Uthman and then they started the war of Jamal (Camel); Abdullah Ibn Saba who established the Saba'iya clan/group which believes in the deity of Ali. He and his followers were burnt with fire shortly after.

In 660CE, when 'Ali became Khalif, Heman approached 'Ali to try and regain the position of Exilarch. A narration attributed to Abu Ja'far says: "Abdullah Ibn Saba used to claim being a prophet and claimed that The Commander of Believers, Ali is God. Allah is Higher than such (claim). This news reached to The Commander of Believers, so he called him and questioned him. But he repeated his claims and said: 'You are Him, and it has been revealed to me that you are God and I am a prophet' So The Commander of Believers said: 'How dare you! Satan has made a mockery of you. Repent for what you said. May your mother weep at your death! Quit (your claim).' But he refused, so (Imam Ali) imprisoned him and asked him three times to repent, but he didn't. Thus he burnt him with fire and said: "Satan had taken him into his whim, he used to come to him and to induce these (thoughts) in him."[243] Within a year, Khalif 'Ali was assassinated by a Khawarji.

Yakub of Syria (Ka'b al-Ahbar) Last Jewish Attempt at Islamic Leadership

Yakub ben Shallum was a scholar, and he was educated in Pumbedita. He continued to follow Rabbinic tradition such that later Islamic historians questioned whether he ever "converted" to Islam. Yaakov was known as Ka'b Ibn Mati' Al-Himyari, also nicknamed Abu Ishaq, from the clan of Dhu Ru'ayn came to Medina during the time of 'Umar. He was a prominent Rabbi and became known as Ka'b Al-Ahbar. He declared his Islam and resided in Medina during 'Umar's reign. He stayed in Medina until the days of 'Uthman.

Yakov reported based on Rabbinic teachings and Jewish mysticism[244], which sounded strange to Sadducean literalist ears. For example a companion named Qays Ibn Kharshah Al-Qaysi reported that Ka'b Al-Ahbar said: "Every event that has taken place or will take place, on any foot of the earth, is written in the Torah, which Allah revealed to His Prophet Moses."[245] To one

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unaccustomed to Rabbinic parable and analogy such a report is inconceivable. The earth contains billions of square miles, and each part of the earth may have thousands of events. Yet, Yaakov (Ka'b al-Ahbar) claimed that all these events are recorded in the Torah, which is not more than 400 pages. Recording all the events of the world, between the time of Moses and the Day of Judgement, could take millions of pages. Furthermore, Sadduceans did not believe in the reuse of prophecy, thus the pages of the Torah could not record future events.

Many companions knew him because he resided in Medina and was looked upon with high prestige by the Khalif 'Umar and 'Uthman. He narrated many stories, claiming that they were from the Torah. Many famous companions, such as Abu Hurayrah, Abdullah Ibn 'Umar, Abdullah Ibn Amr Ibn Al-As, and Mu'awiyah Ibn Abi Sufyan reported his stories. Ka'b was with Khalif 'Umar when he entered Jerusalem.

In 642CE, After the debacle with the pigs[246] implicated Heman and resulting in Heman's removal from the Exilarch, 'Umar he summoned Yaakov (Ka'b al-Ahbar) to find his thoughts on the matter.

'Umar summoned Yaakov and said to him: "Where do you think better to build the *musalla*, oratory? " Ka'b replied: "Beside the rock". In another narration: "If you seek my advice, I prefer to pray behind the rock, i.e. the rock would be the *qiblah*." 'Umar said: "O Jewish person [son of a Jewish woman], you are mixing your Jewishness [with Islam]. I shall build it at the forefront of the mosque, as to us belong the forefronts of the mosques, and I saw you and the way you took off your shoes." He said: "I liked to conduct it with my foot."

'Umar observed that Ka'b took off his shoes. This was not in accordance with Rabbinic custom[247], rather Islamic – specifically Khawarji – custom. It appears to 'Umar that Ka'b was adopting Islamic custom. He also appeared that he was requesting that the *qiblah* be changed back to Jerusalem.

When 'Umar started to make repairs on the *Bayt al-Maqdis,* Temple Mount, from the trash which the Romans buried it in, 'Umar heard the *takbir,* God is Greater, announced from behind him. 'Umar was averse to evil do anything of showy false piety. He said: What is this? They replied: Ka'b said God is Greater and people repeated after him. 'Umar said: Bring him here. Ka'b said: O Amir al-Mu'minin, a prophet foretold of what you did today five hundred years ago. He asked: How is that? He replied: The Romans attacked Banu Israel and buried it (Bayt al-Maqdis), till you were appointed a ruler, when Allah delegated a prophet over the sweepings who said: O Jerusalem, I have good tidings for you, *al-Faruq,*[248] has come to cleanse you of that which inside you. In another narration: *Al-Faruq* came to you with obedient soldiers, who will retaliate and take vengeance of your people upon the Romans.

This Haddith seems to show Yaakov's true intentions. Perhaps with the liberation of Jerusalem by the Muslims, Yaakov began to be interested for the first time in mixing Judaism and Islam to push Muslims to achieve "Jewish goals", as it says "take vengeance .. upon the Romans". This is exactly what happened in 614 CE during the Persian conquest of Jerusalem. The Jews & Persians took vengeance on the Romans and it is said that several tens of thousands of Christians died. This turned the war against the Persians and brought about the fall of the Persian empire. So it obviously would have been unwise for 'Umar to take up this cause. 'Umar ordered Jews removed from *Masjid al-Aqsa* to a synagogue outside the Temple Mount, outside its south western corner[249];

Jews prayed in synagogues in the south western corner until the early Sixteenth Century. At that time the Islamic Ottoman empire forbade them to pray in the synagogues and destroyed them. They sent the Jews to pray near the Western Wall and the history of this wall as a temporary place of prayer and a bridge to the Temple started at this time. This tradition is referred to also in an anonymous Hebrew letter[250] and by Isaac Helo (1333), who says that the place was pointed out by an old Jew to the Mohammedan conqueror on condition that he preserve the western wall.[251] The event of the Sakhara rock is reported by a number of Arabic writers who says that the original position of the Temple was pointed out to 'Umar by the Ka'b.[252]

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Yaakov's reply, "I liked to conduct it with my foot" seems to imply that Yaakov's actions were strictly personal and he had not thoughts of rebellion like his brother Heman. This settled any grievance that 'Umar had with Yaakov, although it probably further increased 'Umar's distrust of Islamic Jews. Khalif 'Umar is reported as seeking Yaakov's advice about the future of the caliphate. Ibn Abbas reported that 'Umar said to Yaalov, in the presence of Ibn Abbas: "I would like to name my successor because my death is near. What do you say about Ali? Give me your opinion and inform me of what you find in your books, because you allege that we are mentioned in them." Yaakov said of 'Ali, "As to the wisdom of your opinion, it would be unwise to appoint Ali as a successor because he is very religious. He notices every deviation and does not tolerate crookedness. He follows only his own opinion in Islamic rules and this is not a good policy."

Islamic historians claim that Yaakov predicted the death of Khalif 'Umar. "Amir Al-Mu'minin, you ought to write your will because you will die in three days." 'Umar asked, "How do you know that?" Yaakov replied "I found it in the Book of God, the Torah." In three days, 'Umar came to lead the prayer at the mosque and was assassinated.[253]

The influence of Yaakov continued to grow after the death of 'Umar. During the reign of the Third Khalif 'Uthman, Yaakov was able to give verdicts in Islamic law. The Khalif often agreed with him, and no one among the attendants of the Khalif's meetings would oppose him. During Mu'awiyah's sojourn at Medina on the occasion of his visit to Khalif 'Uthman, Mu'awiyah asked Yaakov how the prevailing Khawarji disturbances against 'Uthman would end. Ka'b predicted that 'Uthman would be murdered and that in the long run the Grey Mule (meaning Mu'awiyah) would succeed in rising to power.

Islamic literature says Yaakov obtained a prominent position with Mu'awiyah. It is said that Yaakov moved from Medina to Damascus during the reign of 'Uthman. There he lived in the shadow of Mu'awiyah who befriended him and made him one of his closest associates. Mu'awiyah directed Ka'b to report anything that he considered advantageous to him. Mu'awiyah ordered Ka'b to narrate to the people of Damascus anything that puts Syria-Palestine (Israel) and its people above other provinces.[254]

In 658CE, during the hostilities between 'Ali and Mu'awiya for control of the Caliphate, the Battle of Siffin occurred, as many as 70,000 muslims died fighting each other. Yaakov (Ka'b al-Ahbar), allegedly foretold the battle of Siffin; the Banu Israel (Jewish troops of Nehemiah), he said, fought nine times at that very place until they destroyed one another. The Arabs, Ka'b added, would conduct the tenth battle at the same place, until they slaughtered one another and hurled at each other the same stones hurled by the Banu Israel. He also reported as saying: "One killed by the Khawarij, has ten lights, eight lights more than the light of the martyrs (*nur al-shuhada*). Ka`b is reported as enlisting in the summer expedition and joined it although he had fallen ill. He said: "I would rather die in Harasta than in Damascus, and die in Duma rather than in Harasta (meaning that he travel only a few miles towards battle), and thus forward in the Path of God (*ha-kadha quduman fi sabili llah*).[255]

But perhaps only Yaakov's name is being used based on teachings he gave previously, because it is unlikely that Yaakov would have joined Mu'awiya, given his anti-Jewish stance – and the fact that the rebel Khalif Zubair had appointed Yaakov's son Ishak as Exilarch after Bustonai's passing.

Rabbinic literature says Yaakov was executed in 643CE. Islamic histories mention that around this time Abu Dharr, a strict ascetic, became incensed upon hearing Ka'b giving verdicts in Islamic law. Yaakov had justified 'Uthman's withholding State funds from being distributed to the poor. Abu Dharr struck and perhaps killed Yaakov with his rod, saying "Son of a Jewish lady, are you trying to teach us our religion?"

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Saba'iya, Khawarij, the Exilarch's men: a Question of Islamic Leadership

Khawarji, or Kharajites[256] is derived from the root word 'kharaja' which means 'to go out'. In literal terms, the word Khawarij may refer to any group, which has separated themselves from the majority or any group who rebels against the government. From a letter sent by Ibn-Ibad to the Khalif 'Abd al-Malik'. Montgomery Watt writes: "According to this the Khalif seems to have meant by the term 'Khawarij' all those groups actively engaged in risings against the government".

The first group of Kharijites emerged in the time of 'Ali' the fourth Khalif. They were a group of people who were supporting Ali in the fierce battle that erupted between Ali and Mu'awiyah. The battle they say was due to a political reason. Some say that Mu'awiyah didn't recognize the leadership of Ali and for this reason didn't pledge allegiance to him. On the other hand, some say that the war took place because Mu'awiyah, a kinsman of 'Uthman and also the governor of Syria during his leadership wanted to take revenge on those people who took part in the killing of the previous Khalif, 'Uthman. Whatever the case, this battle took place in 'Siffin' on the upper Euphrates. The war occurred because there was a difference of opinion on the killing of 'Uthman as to, was it just or unjust. There was no result to the war except the fact that both parties agreed to send one man from amongst them who will try to end the dispute according to the principles of the Qur'an. It was on this occasion that the Kharijites emerged saying that there is no reason to have men making the decision. Only the Book, i.e The Qur'an will decide. These were people who were from the supporters of Ali.

Shahrastani writes: "The Khawarij themselves were the ones who initially prepared Ali to send a person from amongst them to try and end the dispute. When Ali appointed Abdullah Ibn Abbas these people were not pleased. They said, "He is from your family." Then they persisted to send 'Abu Musa Ash'ari'. Even though Ali was not pleased with this decision the matter settled on his sending. Due to the unhappiness of Ali, the Khawarij left claiming 'No judgment but Allah's'. Then they left the battle and gathered at a place called 'Nahrawan'."

When separating from Ali, the leader of the Kharijites was 'Abdullah Ibn al-Kawa' but the first leader they appointed upon themselves was Abdullah Ibn Wahab al-Rabisi al-Azdi. Some of the early famous Kharijites were: Ikrimah, Abu Harun al-Abdi, Abu Sha'saa, Ismail Ibn Samee'. From the later famous Kharijites were: Al-Yaman Ibn Rabab, Abdullah Ibn Yazeed, Muhammad Ibn Harb and Yahya Ibn Kamil.

The Khawarji contained at their core Judaic zealots, trained in war, descendants of Bar Kochba's legions.[257] The reason for their separation was that they believed that Ali and Mu'awiyah were making men as the authority to make judgments and to do so while the Qur'an is present is not permissible. Therefore, both Ali and Mu'awiyah are wrongdoers in the eyes of the Kharijites. They also believe that a person who commits a major sin termed 'Kabira' in Arabic immediately leaves the fold of Islam. He no longer remains a Muslim and instead enters into disbelief.

Also one of their beliefs is that one must claim that he is free from the actions of Uthmaan and Ali. This is also a condition for getting married according to them. They also believe that if the Ruler is opposing the 'Sunnah' in any of his rulings then to leave him and oppose him openly is an obligatory right.

The Azaariqa are one of the major groups from amongst the Khawarij. Shahrastani has outlined their beliefs. He writes: Their belief is that Ali had committed an act of disbelief. Also, Uthmaan, Talha, Zubair, Aaisha and Abdullah Ibn Abbas and all the other Muslims with them are non-believers and therefore will stay in the hell-fire forever. It is allowed to kill the children and wives of the people who oppose them from amongst them. An adulterous person shouldn't be pelted to death due to the fact that there is no mention of this in the Qur'an and also the children of the Polytheists that die before reaching the age of puberty will be with their parents in the hell-fire. Also, to sit and ignore war is an act of disbelief.

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Khalif 'Umar's Selection of Rabbinic Judaism as "true" Judaism

When the Exilarch Heman fled to Basra in 642CE, Khalif 'Umar installed Bustenai as Exilarch. The Jewish converts to Islam had become too extreme, and yet the Khalif wished to retain the careful balance between Judaism and the Muslims as espoused by the Prophet, and confirmed by his relationship with Shallum (Salmaan Farsi). Rabbinical Judaism was chosen to be the form of Judaism that would not pose a threat to the stability of the Islamic state. But Bustenai was a scholar, not a military man, so he had no chance of commanding the respect of the Khawarji or other disaffected Jews. To boost his prestige 'Umar gave him many honors. The Rabbinic academies reciprocated by pledging their allegance to Bustenai, and indirectly, to the Caliphate.

'Umar gave him Dara, the daughter of the Persian king Khosrau II, for a wife.[258] Bustenai was treated with great respect by Khalif 'Umar. The Khalif commanded concerning him and his descendants; and he granted him a seal of office over all the congregations that dwell under his rule, and ordered that every one, whether Muslim or Jew, or belonging to any other nation in his dominion, should rise up before him (the Exilarch) and salute him, and that any one who should refuse to rise up should receive one hundred stripes.

When Bustenai went to pay a visit to the great Khalif, horsemen, Gentiles as well as Jews, escort him, and heralds proclaim in advance, "Make way before our Lord, the son of David, as is due unto him," "*amilu tarik la Saidna beg Daud*" He would be mounted on a horse, and attired in robes of silk and embroidery with a large turban on his head, and from the turban is suspended a long white cloth adorned with a chain upon which the cipher of Prophet is engraved. Then he would appears before the Khalif and kisses his hand, and the Khalif rises and places him on a throne which the Khalif[259] had ordered to be made for him, and all the Islamic princes who attend the court of the Khalif rise up before him. The Exilarch was seated on his throne opposite to the Khalif, in compliance with the command of Mohammed to give effect to what is written in the law--"The sceptre shall not depart from Judah nor a law-giver from between his feet, until he come to Shiloh: and to him shall the gathering of the people be."

The agreement between the Caliphate and the Academies of Babylon was complete. The Khalif would recognize Rabbinic Judaism as the only sanctioned form of Judaism (it was even at that time in the minority) throughout the lands of Islam, and the Rabbinites would prevent any Messianic claims, or attempts at making a presence on the Temple Mount, from destabilizing the Caliphate. Rabbinic opinion actually discourages nationalistic attempts at restoration of the Temple. During the messianic claims of David Alroy (1160 C.E.), the Jewish Exilarch and the Rabbinic academies were expected by the authorities suppress and control any attempts at nationalism[260]. It is probable that this was the expected role of the Exilarch and the rabbinic academies throughout the entire period of Islamic rule, as it is today.

Absorption of Islamic Christians under Mu'awiyah

TBD

As for Jerusalem's being an Arab capital - the closest it ever came to that status was during the caliphate of of Abd al-Malik Ibn Marwan (685-705). During his reign, while the anti-caliph Abdullah Ibn Zubayr briefly controlled Mecca, Ibn Marwan forbade Moslem pilgrims to go to Mecca, declared the Rock of the Foundation to have been Mohammed's takeoff point on his flight to Heaven, built the Dome of the Rock over it, and made Jerusalem his seat till Ibn Zubayr was defeated in 692 (l)

In Sebeos Chapter 30, It is interesting to note that the word Hagarene and Ishmaelite are used in the same chapter and may not refer to the exactly same group of people. Also there is a

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connection drawn between the Ishmaelite usurpation of the "Temple on the Holy of Holies" (Dome of the Rock) and Jewish rebels plans to exact revenge on the Christians. This would lead one to think that it was the Christians, not the Muslims, who frustrated the Jewish design. Further evidence that the Dome of the Rock is a shrine built by Muslims for Christians is the wording of the inscriptions on the Dome of the Rock which although prefaced with "to the People of the Book" deal almost exclusive with doctrinal issues that would concern Christians. Even more interesting is the wording of the "incident of the pigs" that follows. If read carefully, it seems to indicate that the incident happened in a common house of prayer that was used by both Jews and Muslims –the Al-Aqsa mosque. This is supported by archaeological research6 which seems to 6 Temple Mount Excavations, B. Mazar, indicate the small Jewish community located outside the southern end of the Temple Mount had direct access to the Al-Aqsa mosque. A synagogue was found in the south western corner of the residential complex that had the unusual characteristic being oriented towards Mecca – not the Temple Mount.

An interesting *midrash* sheds light on these years:

> Israel (=Yaakov ='Kab Ahbar?) will say to the king of the Arabs ('Umar?), "Take silver and gold and leave the Temple." The king of the Arabs will say, "You have nothing to do with this Temple. However, if you want, choose a sacrifice as you did in the past, and we will also offer a sacrifice, and with the one whose sacrifice is accepted, we will all become one people."
>
> The Jewish people will offer theirs, but it will not be accepted because the Satan will lay charges against them before The Holy One, Blessed is He. The descendents of Keder will offer theirs, and it will be accepted...
>
> At that time, the Arabs will say to Israel, "Come and believe in our faith," but Israel will answer, "We will kill or be killed, but we will not deny our belief!" At that time, swords will be drawn, bows will be strung and arrows will be sent, and many will fall.[261]

The acquisition of large numbers of Christian subjects (and converts) made the privileged position of the Islamic Jews and their leaders untenable, resulting in a conflict over the construction of Temple and the deposition of the reigning militant Exilarch in favor of academic Bostanoi (coincident with many royal privileges on the new Exilarch and the Rabbinic academies). During the ensuing civil war the Islamic Jews backed the loosing side.

Jewish nationalism, more than Jewish messianism, drove Judeo-Islamic politics. It led the Jews in search of a leader, and led an Exilarch to overreach his power and seek confrontation with the Christians. The increasing numbers of Christian converts to Islam led to the reduction of both the power and privileges of the Exilarchate. Caliph 'Umar is seen in this context as simply trying to keep war from breaking out, trying to prevent another catastrophe similar to what lead to the sack of Jerusalem in 614 and the turn of the war against the Persians. For this reason both Caliph 'Umar and later Caliph 'Ali supported a double strategy of distancing the militant extremists and heaping great honors on the non-militant Rabbinical academies, declaring Rabbinic Judaism the only authorized form of Judaism within the growing Islamic empire, leaving the dethroned Islamic Jewish leaders like Abu-Issa and Yugdan to fade into mysticism.

Khalif 'Ali' Attempts to bring back "authentic" Islam

TBD

Abraham ibn Daud in his "Sefer ha-Ḳabbalah" says Khalif 'Ali gave the daughter of the that it was the last Sassanid king, Yezdegerd (624-651/2), who gave his daughter to Bustenai's son Hisdai.[262]

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R' Sherira Gaon (*Iggeres*, Levine ed., p. 101) writes of the encounter between the Moslem caliph, Ali (see above, ch. 36), and the head of the Yeshivah of Peroz-Shavur. "It was he [R' Yitzchak Gaon] who was in Peroz-Shavur when Ali ben Abutaleb conquered* the city, and Mar Yitzchak of Peroz-Shavur went out to him and welcomed him with great friendliness. At that time, there were in Peroz-Shavur ninety thousand Jews, who were received by Ali ben Abutaleb with great friendliness."[263]

The circumstances of this event are noteworthy. R' Yitzchak was the senior of the Babylonian Geonim, having taken office earlier than R' Rava and R' Huna. Now, R' Yitzchak found himself received "with great friendliness" by the ruler of the Moslem Empire, and yet he did not use this opportunity to request any special advantages for his own yeshivah over the other two, nor to achieve any personal gain. Thus, this incident furnishes eloquent proof that in addition to their outstanding scholarship, the Geonim as exemplified by R' Yitzchak Gaon were true successors and disciples of the Sages of the Talmud in the purity of their motives, righteousness, and lack of personal greed or ambition.

R' Yitzchak and his colleagues seem to have been convinced by the friendship displayed by Ali, who "honored and elevated [R' Yitzchak]" (*Ravad, Sefer HaKabbalah*; see *Seder HaChachamim* Part 1, p. 62; Ravad gives the date of this event as 640 CE / 4400), that Pumbedisa and Sura were no longer in danger, and that Peroz-Shavur was no longer needed as a potential place of refuge. They therefore disbanded this central yeshivah, and its members were absorbed into Pumbedisa. In this way they restored the situation of Talmudic times, when Sura and Pumbedisa, either jointly or in turn, had reigned supreme.

R' Yitzchak Gaon died sometime after 660 CE (4420). A few years earlier, both Sura and Pumbedisa had inaugurated new Geonim: in Pumbedisa, R' Bustonai, and in Sura, R' Sheshna, whose full name as inscribed on his seal was "R' Mesharsheya Tachlifa" (*Iggeres of R'Sherira Gaon*, p. 102). R' Bustonai Gaon was succeeded by R'Chana Mari bar R' Yosef, who became Gaon of Pumbedisa in 689 CE (4449), thus completing the first hundred years of the Geonic Era.[264]

'Ali was buried in Kufa Persia, next to the grave of King Jehoiachin, the *first* Exilarch.

Hussein's attempt to recreate the Prophet's entry into Medinah

TBD

In 681 CE, Hussein, the second son of Ali and thus a grandson of the prophet Mohammed, challenged Yazid's right to the caliphate. Encouraged by factions that opposed Yazid I, Hussein marched to Kufa, expecting to be received with honor and enthusiasm. However, Yazid I sent a strong military force that killed Hussein and all his family on October 10, 680 the 10th of Muharram coincided with Yom Kippur. Hussein was fasting.

When trapped from reaching Kufa, he headed to Nehardea or Pumbedita to receive protection from the Rabbinites.

679 CE, 60 AH, The people of Kufah sent their letters to Imam Husain (peace be upon him) while he was in Mecca. This was in year60 A.H. in which they were asking him to come to Kufah. 680: Death of Muawiyah. Accession of Yazid. Tragedy of Kerbala and martyrdom of Hadrat Hussain. (IH)

* The word "conquered" here does not refer to a military conquest, but simply to the acceptance of Ali's authority, for Ali only became caliph in 656 CE (4416), while the conquest of Babylonia had taken place under Caliph Omar around 640 CE (4400)

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A Mohammedan author reports a conversation that took place in the eighth century between a follower of Islam and the exilarch, in which the latter boasted; "Seventy generations have passed between me and King David, yet the Jews still recognize the prerogatives of my royal descent, and regard it as their duty to protect me; but you have slain the grandson [Ḥusain] of your prophet after one single generation" (R. E. J." viii. 122 et seq. p. 125). The son of a previous exilarch said to another Mohammedan author: "I formerly never rode by Kerbela, the place where Ḥusain was martyred, without spurring on my horse, for an old tradition said that on this spot the descendant of a prophet would be killed; only since Ḥusain has been slain there and the prophecy has thus been fulfilled do I pass leisurely by the place" (ib. p. 123). This last story indicates that the resh galuta had by that time become the subject of Mohammedan legend, other examples also being cited by Goldziher. That the personage of the exilarch was familiar to Mohammedan circles is also shown by the fact that the Rabbinite Jews were called "Jaluti," that is, those belonging to the exilarch, in contradistinction to the Karaites (ib.). In the first quarter of the eleventh century, not long before the extinction of the exilarchate, Ibn Ḥazam, a fanatic polemicist, made the following remark in regard to the dignity: "The ras al-jalut has no power whatever over the Jews or over other persons; he has merely a title, to which is attached neither authority nor prerogatives of any kind" (ib. p. 125).

Fading into Mysticism, the last Messiahs

Saura ben Ishak[265] (713-721) was the grandson of Yaakov (Ka'b Al-Ahbar) and the son of the Exilarch Ishak, Serenus, In 720CE, Serene promised to recapture the Holy Land. He also urged that the Talmud be abolished. Khalif Yezid, Omar's successor, arrested this "Messiah" and handed him over to the Jews in Pumpedita for punishment. Natronai ben Nehemia (Gaon) urged the Jewish community to readmit their brethren into the fold. They eventually did so, though they were initially reluctant. He claimed to some that he was the messiah and that he came to liberate the Jews or to return them to their ancient land. To others he claimed that he was the emissary of the messiah or the son of God. Active at the time of the Muslim conquest of Spain, he attracted followers as far away as Spain and Gaul, chronicles reports that all the Jews abandoned their property and left Spain to join him in Syria. One of the Geonim, Natronai I, accused Saura of leading his followers to sectarianism, abandoning prayer, enjoying non-kosher food and drink, doing work on the second days of holidays, and writing marriage contracts that were not in accordance with Jewish law. The Calif, Yazid II ibn adb-al Malikh (720-724), ordered him to be killed. His followers then sought rabbinic permission to return to Judaism and asked the Gaon Natronai whether they needed ritual immersion again upon their return. Although some rabbis wanted to turn them away because they did not follow the proper laws of divorce and marriage, especially the proper rules of consanguinity, too closely related by blood. Natronai ruled that even though they were sinners who went out to an evil culture, denied the teachings of the rabbinic sages, desecrated the Jewish holidays and commandments, and contaminated themselves with unkosher food, it would be better to receive them than to reject them. Natronai urged that Saura's followers be flogged and fined by the Jewish court, then after they were afflicted they should stand in the synagogues and agree that they would never rebel again. Natronai also warned that their marriages should be investigated and any that were in accordance with Rabbinic law should be annulled and the children declared mamzers, children of a forbidden union, not allowed to marry in the Jewish community. Their marriage contracts should also be examined to make sure that they were proper and if not, they should be rewritten. Accounts of Saura circulated for many centuries.

Ishaq (Abu 'Isa) al-Ra'i al-Isfahani was the son of Yakuv Ovadiah, and the grandson of the Exilarch Ishak. He preached in Isphahan[266], from about 680 or 740, depending on whether the Khalif mentioned was the Marwan I or II, both of whom reigned during struggles between the Umayyids and the Abbasids. He declared that he was an elevated prophet established by God and the final one of the five emissaries of the messiah, perhaps also the messiah as well. His followers confessed belief in Muhammed and Jesus. According to the twelfth century account by Maimonides, he was of the davidic line and attracted hundreds of thousands of followers,

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medieval code for a lot, and that he and his followers went out armed and killed anybody who bothered them. According to legends, he drew a line with a myrtle branch to protect his followers when they fought, he cured a leper, banned divorce completely, despite the generous provisions of Jewish and Islamic law, required prayer seven times a day, based on Psalms 119, forbade eating meat and drinking wine based on the behavior of Rechabites in Jeremiah 35:5, and used a solar calendar while the rabbis used a combined solar-lunar calendar. After he attacked the government, the governmental forces launched a war against him, killing him at Rai. Nevertheless, some of his followers claimed that he had not been not killed, and was only hiding in a cave. Reports about this movement continued for many centuries, some, as mentioned, reached Maimonides who reported them in his letter to Yemen, written at the end of the twelfth century (Stillman, 242).

Judah of Hamadan, (Yudghan al-Ra'i), about 720 or 756-785 was the son of Isaq abu Isa. He attracted disciples, the Yudganites, who called him, Ro'i, usually interpreted as my shepherd, but it also could be connected with Rai, the place where Abu Isa died since the Yudganites claimed that Yudgan was chosen leader after of Abu Isa. Yudgan declared himself to be a prophet; the Yudganites, believed he was the messiah. Various sources attributed to Yudgan practices such as asceticism, excessive prayer, a ban on meat and liquor, a belief in transmigration of souls or reincarnation, a relaxation of Sabbath and holiday observance, and the complete negation of all the commandments for Jews in the diaspora. Finally, Yudgan and nineteen followers were killed in battle. Yudgan's teachings later reached the attention of Saadia Gaon who attacked them in his Book of Beliefs and Opinions, the earliest Jewish philosophical work of the middle ages (Emunot vedeot 6:7) and Abraham ibn Ezra, the famous Spanish Jewish scholar, who also attacked them.

These movements show a high level of syncretism between Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, highly political and militant tendencies among groups of Jews, a passionate connection between Jews throughout the world with the land of Israel, and the attempt of Rabbinites to maintain stability. These movements are proof that the Jews of the Middle East had not been repressed by Christianity, Islam, or even Jewish leaders. These movements did not arise at times of acute distress or trouble; they seem to have come at times of change, times of rising expectations. In fact, going against the conventional wisdom which associates messianic figures with times of deprivation, it can be argued on the basis of much evidence from Jewish history that messianic movements do not arise at times of great distress but at times when hope is rising. Reports about these movements continued to circulate among Jews for centuries providing opportunities for both subsequent inspiration as well as for polemics against them.

The question remains what happened to all their followers. The Judaic followers of the Prophet who lost any Jewish identity merged with the majority of Muslims. Those who, for ethnic, or religious reasons were unable to merge with the Muslims became the Karaites, The Karaites trace their heritage to the Jews of Arabia, and before that to the Sadducees. They were not one group, but consisted of several, some of which were called Ananites, Baalei Mikra, and Benai Mikra. At the same time that Jewish messianic movements arose under Islam, Rabbinic Judaism was severely threatened by Karaism. Like Khawarjites, and perhaps because of them, Karaites, from the Hebrew verb *Qara*, meaning the Readers or literalists. These literalists claim to have retained the true meaning of the Bible (and for some the Qur'an). This group challenged rabbinic authority, and until the Saadia Gaon, it appeared that they might succeed.

The Karaites were given a boost by the nephew of the sixth Exilarch of the Bustenai line, Anan ben David. Documents written much after his own time, sometimes by rabbis, describe much of what was known about his life.[267] He born in the middle of the eighth century to a learned and aristocratic Jewish family. His uncle was the Exilarch, and, when he was denied the position of Exilarch in favor of his own younger brother Hananiah, he tried to set up a rival Exilarchate, but he was jailed by the Khalif, Abu Jaafar Abdullah al-Mansur, 754-775. In jail he met and received advice from a Muslim cleric, also under arrest, to do what was necessary to obtain an audience with the Khalif and declare that he represented a new religion that, like Islam, determined the new

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month by observing the moon, unlike rabbinic Judaism which did it on the basis of calculations. This Muslim cleric, identified as al-Numan ibn-Thabit Abu Hanifah (699-767), the founder of one of the major schools of Sunni Islamic jurisprudence, the Hanafis, a school that was dedicated to using judgment and reason in determining the law. Many studies of the Karaites focus on the profound similarities of the development of their legal procedures alongside those of the emerging schools of Islamic jurisprudence. The similarities of Anan to the Hanifis, if not due to direct influence, represented only the first stage. In Anan's name the contradictory principles were put forth, "Forsake the words of the Mishnah and the Talmud and I will compose for you a Talmud of my own. Search throughouly in the Torah and do not rely upon my opinion." This statement reflected the view of Muhammed ibn Idris al-Shafi'i (769-820), founder of another school of Islamic jurisprudence, the Shafiites, who believed that his opinion should not be accepted without question.

Four hundred years later, about 1160, David Alroy or Al-Rai, who was born in Kurdistan, declared himself a Messiah. By taking the title Al-Rai he claimed his authority from the "true" Exilarch line of Abu Isa. Taking advantage of his personal popularity, the disturbed and weakened condition of the Caliphate, and the discontent of the Jews, who were burdened with a heavy poll tax, he set out upon his political schemes, asserting that he had been sent by God to free the Jews from the Moslem yoke and to lead them back to Jerusalem. For this purpose he summoned the warlike Jews of the neighboring district of Adherbaijan and also his coreligionists of Mosul and Baghdad to come armed to his aid and to assist in the capture of Amadia. From this point his career is enveloped in legend. His movement failed, and he is said to have been assassinated, while asleep, by his own father-in-law. A heavy fine was exacted from the Jews for this uprising. After his death Alroy had many followers in Khof, Salmas, Tauris, and Maragha, and these formed a sect called the Menahemists, from the Messianic name "Menahem," assumed by their founder.

The last of the Exilarchic Messiahs was Shabbatai Zvi, the son of a wealthy merchant from Smyrna. He gave the boy the best Jewish education possible. Shabbatai possessed a captivating personality but he was easily influenced by others. He grew up to believe that he had a special calling by God to perform great deeds. He set out on an attempt to capture Turkey. The Jews there awaited his arrival excitedly. Many muslims came to believe in him too. When he arrived he was immediately arrested. The Sultan did not kill him however and was treated quite well. This favor by Turks only fanned the flame of enthusiasm further. Jewish communities all over the world sent emissaries with proclamations of Shabbatai's messiahship. A Polish kabbalist came to visit Shabbatai and debate Torah with him. He denounced Shabbatai for fomenting sedition. Shabbatai was taken to the Sultan, where he denied that he was the messiah. He was given the choice of death or conversion to Islam. On September 15, 1666, Shabbatai, the messiah, converted to Islam. The Jews reeled in shock at these events. While some accepted the fact that they had been misled, others clung to their Messiah, believing somehow that the conversion as part of his messianic mission. In a form of self censure, they destroyed all the records relating to what had happened. They went underground with their hopes, as other leaders tried to take his place.

Concluding Remarks

With Shabbatai Zvi, great hope was followed by deep disappointment, leading to a censoring and an attempt to forget events. This appears to be what happened with Nehemiah ben Hushiel and his hopeful conquest of Jerusalem in 614CE that ended in tragedy. Almost all record has been destroyed or has been censured by the Rabbis. On the one hand this non-political position has allowed the Rabbinic Jews to flourish among their enemies without being perceived as a threat, unlike the Khawarij. On the other hand it has led to a history of Islam that appears to stand isolated, unrelated to outside events, incomprehensible and seemingly contradictory.

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The flight of Hussein to Babylon, and his assassination along with his whole family at Kerbala, was not just a tragedy for the Shiites. It was a tragedy for the Jews and Judeo-Islamic relations as well.

For Muslims, we must recognize the debt to the many brave converts from Judaism who fought valiantly, and gave their lives for the cause of the Prophet. It was not just a few Jews (and Judaic peoples) who declared their wholehearted submission to the Prophet. Perhaps at least some of the current antagonism of Islam towards Judaism can be seen as misplaced. Surely, Judaism is not the "enemy" of Islam.[268] Perhaps given the context of the wars between the Rome and the Jews from Hadrian to Heraclius, Jihad can be seen in its original light.

For Jews, we must recognize that Rabbinic Judaism exists today, and flourishes in the study of the Talmudic writings, largely because of the Islamic Caliphate. If Heraclius had succeeded in conquering Persia, it could have been that all the Jews of world would be converted or slaughtered in "one hundred and twenty years."[269] Also, at a time when the Judaic nation was getting swept away in prophetic and Messianic furvor, Islam chose Rabbinic Judaism to lead a way out of the confusion.

It is possible that the future of Islamic-Jewish relations, may be with our past.

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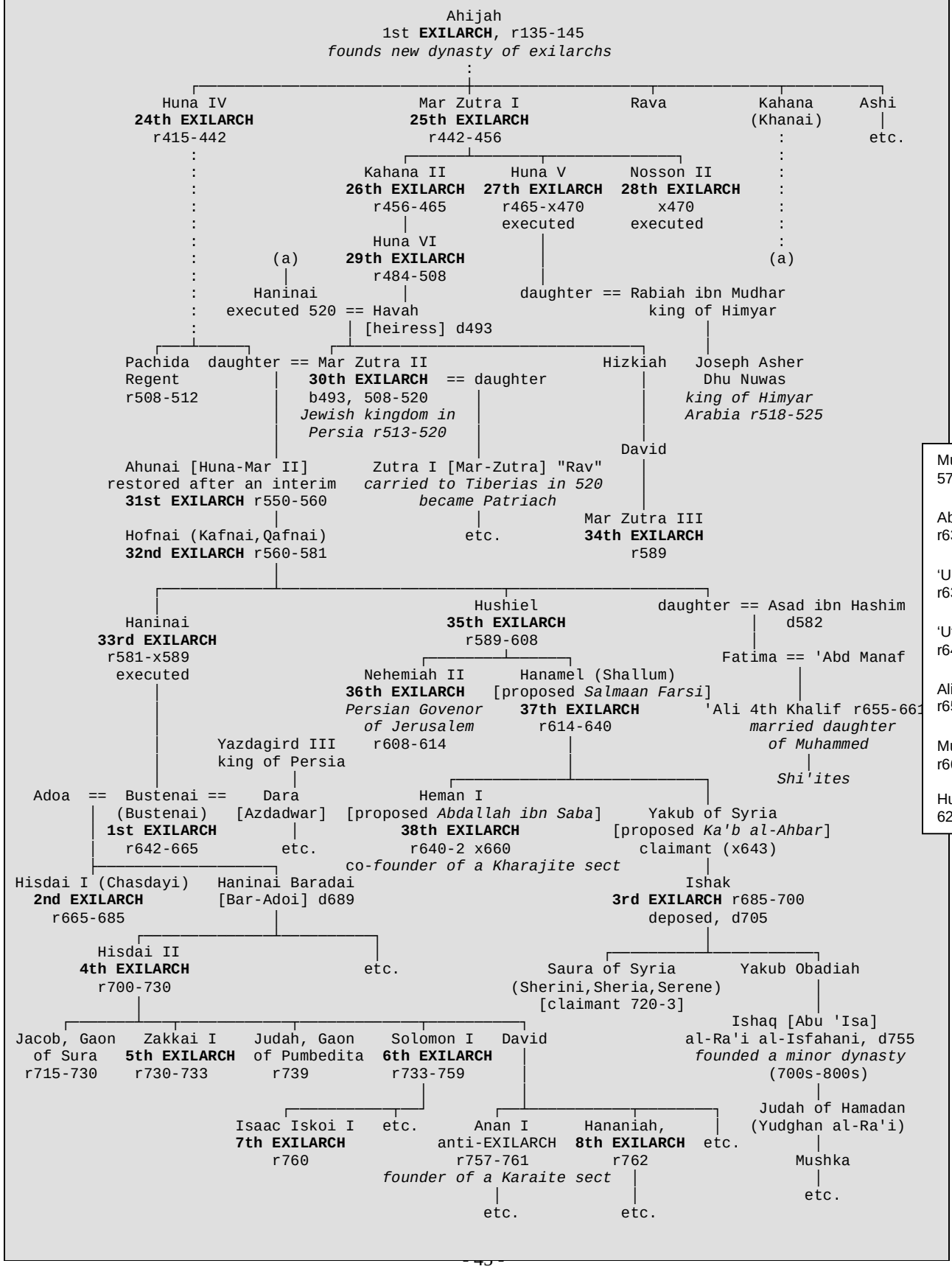
Table 1. Babylonian Exilarchs



Muhammed
570-632

Abu Bakr
r632-634

'Umar
r634-644

'Uthman
r644-655

Ali
r655-661

Mu'awiyah
r661-680

Husayn
623-681

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Appendix A
Joseph Schwartz quote on Shallum ben Hushiel (Salmaan Farsi)

Shallum son of the Exilarch

Originally published as part of the historical sketch of the "History of Palestine: 614-1096 C.E".in the book "Descriptive Geography and Brief Historical Sketch of Palestine" by Rabbi Joseph Schwartz, translated from the Hebrew by Isaac Leeser. Published by A. Hart, Philadelphia, 1850.

In the year 4374 (614) there lived in Medina, in Arabia, Muhammed ibn Abdallah, descended from Keder, son of Ishmael (Gen. 25:13), who had taken possession of Arabia and the neighboring countries. Muhammed had two secret counselors, who assisted him in the construction of his new system of doctrines and belief; these were **Allman Mam Ali**, of **Jewish descent**, and Turchman, a Christian; hence it resulted that the Koran contains many rules bearing analogy to Jewish ideas, for they were derived from Mam Ali.

Muhammed had an **astrologer** at his court called **Bucheran**, who was a very great enemy of the Jews, and urged the prophet constantly to **persecute and exterminate** them entirely, so that Muhammed at length listened to the proposition, since he had without this already a hatred towards them, because they had not aided him in his campaigns according to his expectation; wherefore the whole Jewish population under his rule, ran great danger of being **entirely cut off. Rabbi Shallum**, son of the then Resh Gelutha, in Babel, perceiving this dreadful predicament, went to Muhammed, and offering him his submission, friendship, and services, endeavoured to enter with him into a friendly compact. Muhammed accepted his proposition with pleasure, conceived a great affection for him, and took his daughter, a handsome young girl, for wife; he made him also a **general in his army**, and gave him the name of **Abu Bachr** al Chaliva al Zadik, literally: The father of the **maiden**, the descendant of the righteous; this means, that of all his wives, who were either widows or divorced women, this one was the only one who had never been married before, and then she was the **granddaughter of the celebrated chief of the captivity**; therefore, the descendant of the righteous. This occurrence induced Muhammed to give up his terrible intention to destroy the Jews in his country, and thus did Rabbi Shallum save his people.

***Shallum* and Aliman** now resolved among themselves to remove the dangerous enemy of the Jews, **Bucheran**. One evening Muhammed, Bucheran, Aliman, and *Shallum*, were drinking together; the latter two soon saw that Muhammed and the astrologer were strongly intoxicated, and lay stretched out in a deep and profound sleep. *Shallum* thereupon **drew the sword** of Muhammed from its scabbard, cut off therewith Bucheran's head, and put the bloody sword back into its receptacle, and both then lay themselves down quietly near Muhammed to sleep. When Muhammed awoke and saw his friend lying decapitated near him, he cried out in a fury: "This terrible deed has been done by one of us three in our drunkenness!" *Shallum* thereupon said quite unconcernedly: "Let each one draw his sword,

Allman Mam Ali is Ali abu Talib, the fourth Khalif, of **Jewish descent** through Fatima's mother the daughter of 32nd Exilarch Hofnai

Bucheran is Bahira, traditionally a Nestorian monk, here presented as a Sabian **astrologer**.

persecute and exterminate, Christian converts wanted to make the conflict one between Jews and Muslims

entirely cut off, the execution of 800 men of the Banu Quraizah

Rabbi Shallum Shallum ben Hushiel, known as Salmaan Farsi

general in his army, Shallum showed great military prowess in the batlle of the Trench, and al-Iraq.

Abu Bachr, mistake. Shallum revolted against Abu Bachr's appointment as Khalif, in favor of 'Ali. *Shallum* is used in the rest of the text in place of Abu Bachr

Maiden Ayesha

granddaughter of the celebrated chief of the captivity, refers to Fatima, mother of 'Ali

***Shallum* and Aliman**, keen friendship between Salmaan Farsi and 'Ali

Bucheran, Christians converts

drew the sword, Shallum Farsi led revolt against election of Abu Bachr over 'Ali as second Khalif.

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and he whose weapon is stained with blood, must needs be the murderer!" They all drew their swords, and **that of Muhammed** was completely dyed with fresh blood, which proved thus clearly to his satisfaction that he had murdered his friend. He was greatly grieved at this discovery; cursed and **condemned the wine** which was the cause of this murder, and swore that he never would drink any more, and that also no one should do so who wishes to enter heaven. This is the cause why wine is prohibited to the Muhammedans. At a later period, Muhammed **learned the whole transaction**, and that his father-in-law was the perpetrator of the bloody deed; wherefore, he lost his favour, and he would not permit him to come before him. *Shallum* went thereupon and **conquered sixty places**, which had not yet submitted to Muhammed, and presented them to him, through which means he became again reconciled to him, was **received in favour**, and remained thereafter at court. Muhammed urged his conquests to the north and west; made war against Heraclius and his son Constantine, captured the country around Antiochia, Armenia, a part of Asia Minor (Anatolia), and Palestine. Jerusalem, however, continued in possession of the Greeks. Muhammed reigned 11 years, and died in 4385 (625); he was succeeded by his father-in-law, Abu Bachr, but he survived him but two years, when he also died. In 4387 (627), another father-in-law, Omar ibn Kataf, ascended the throne. In the tenth year of his reign (4397) he appeared before Jerusalem with a large army. He besieged it, and after producing great distress thereby in the city, it surrendered to his arms. He then made a treaty with the Greek inhabitants of the city, that they should pay him a ransom for their lives, and send an annual tribute. **He commanded to rebuild the temple**, and appropriated several **pieces of ground**, the proceeds of which were destined to defray the expenses and keep it in repair, which is continued to be done to this day. He built, accordingly, the great Mosque al Sachara, of which I have spoken above. He also conquered the whole country around Damascus and Ispahan, which is a part of Persia.	**that of Muhammed**, Shallum was only saved because of special favor he had under the Prophet **condemned the wine**, wine was first forbidden after the battle of 'Uhud, when Salmaan Farsi first joined the Prophet. **learned the whole transaction**, Shallum fled to Iraq **conquered sixty places**, Al-Iraq in 633 CE and Mesopotamia in 640 CE. **received in favour**, Shallum was made governor of Bavel. **He commanded to rebuild the temple**, he allowed the Jews to build a house of prayer on the rock. **pieces of ground**, this shows the *wakf* lands were originally for support of a rebuilt Jewish Temple.

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[1] The Jewish passion for the Holy City sought expression in the writings of King David: "If I forget you O Jerusalem, Let my right hand forget her cunning. If I do not remember you, Let my tongue cling to the roof of my mouth If I do not exalt Jerusalem above my chief joy." Psalm 137:5-6

[2] Estimated eight million Jews throughout the Mediterranean Basin and Middle East: More than two million live in Judea, with a million each in Egypt, Syria, Asia Minor and Babylonia and throughout the Parthian Empire. Jewish settlements found in Rome, Tarracina, and Puteoli in Italy, with settlements in Tarraco, northern Spain, see Ben Keshet,

[3] More accurately, the Parthians.

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[4] The Muslim historian Mujir al-Din, reporting when 'Umar reached the old ruined gates of the Temple, he was horrified to see the filth and excrement, “which was then all about the holy sanctuary, had settled on the steps of the gates so that it even came out into the streets in which the gate opened”. He claimed that they called Anastasis *al-Qumamah*, "the Dungheap," in retaliation for the policy of the Christians on the Temple Mount.

[5] Ibn Ezra *Peirush haKatzar* on Shemos 2:22

[6] This school is based on *Rashi* and *Tosephot* who draw on the verse "The Sanctuary, O God, which your hands have established." *Exodus*, 15:17.

[7] Drawing on the verse "And you shall build me a sanctuary."; Maimonides, Code of Law, "Hilchot Bet Ha-Bechirah," Chapter 1, Paragraph 1.

[8] The Itinerary of Rabbi Benjamin of Tudela

[9] Ibn Ezra *Peirush haKatzar* on Shemos 2:22

[10] This material is taken from David Hughes unpublished manuscript, "Davidic Dynasty"

[11] The Cohen-priests of the Jewish population of Nehardea was said to be descended from the slaves of Pashur ben Immer, the contemporary of King Jehoiachin (Ḳid. 70b).

[12] Jehoiakin, called "The Captive" ("Assir"), also referred to as [Je]Coniah in scripture, reigned three months Year 598/597 BC (2 Ki 24:8; 2 Chr 36:9). 2 Ki 24:8 says he was 18 on his accession, but 2 Chr 36:9 says he was age 8. He is known to have been married with at least one child, Zedekiah, at the time of his succession (1 Chr 3:16). Some cuneiform tablets discovered at Babylon by archaeologists mention [Je]Coniah by name as well as his sons [“step-sons”], indicating that his sons [“step-sons”] were already born at the time he was taken captive, which points to his marriage to a widow with children. He married Tamar, his cousin, her second marriage, the daughter of the late crown-prince, Johanan, his uncle, and begot Zedekiah, the crown-prince, who died without issue. Jeconiah adopted his step-sons, the sons of his wife, Tamar, by a previous marriage since they too were of the “royal seed”, that is, her first husband, Neri[ah], was a Davidic prince. They were: Shealtiel (Salathiel), his acknowledged heir; Malchiram; Pedaiah (Phadaia); Shenazzur (Sin-ab-Usur), an ancestor of a later Babylonian Exilarch; Jekamiah (Yekamia); Hoshama (Hochama); and Nedabiah. [David Hughes, Davidic Dynasty]

[13] II Kings xxv. 27

[14] The foundation of the synagogue " Shaf ve-Yativ" they used earth and stones which they had brought from Jerusalem in accordance with the words of Psalms 102:17, a similar statement in regard to the founding of the Jewish city of Ispahan in Persia.

[15] After the fall of the first Temple, the Greek used the term Exilarch to refer to the leader of the *golah* [Jeremiah 28:6, 29:1; Ezekiel passim] or *galut* [Jeremiah 29:22]: the Jews of the Babylonian exile. The Aramaic term was *Resh Galuta*, literally 'the head of the exile'.

[16] The Jews were appointed to the wardenship of the canals *reshe nahare*, and to offices of the court *gezirpaṭi* Persian, *hazar paiti*, Ta'anit, 20a; Canal-wardens were also taxcollectors. Sanh. 25b

[17] ibid. xviii. 9, § 1

[18] ibid.

[19] I Macc. xiv. 41

[20] The chronicle of Ahmad ibn Ali De Sacy as cited in “Chrestomathie Arabe,” i. 100; Herzfeld, "Gesch. des Volkes Yisrael," ii. 396

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[21] Josephus, Antiquities 15, Paragraphs 1, 2

[22] Josephus, Antiquities 15, Paragraphs 2, 4

[23] Herod left three children: Archelaus, Phillippe and Antipater (also called Herod). Archelaus, which was the most evil of the three, inherited Jerusalem and the main portion of the Judea from his father. Antipater and Phillippe were given other areas like Trans-Jordan with minor Jewish populations (neither of the latter two played a great role in the Jewish nation, Phillippe ruled until his death and Antipater was eventually exiled by the Romans). When Archelaus became king, the people revolted against him and after a ten-year struggle succeeded in ousting him. When that happened, the Romans exiled him and confiscated his property; Judea was annexed to the Syrian territories of the Roman Empire and was put under the rule of Roman procurators

[24] This is explained more thoroughly in the Authors essay "From Bar Kochba to the Prophet Muhammed". Forced conversion is prohibited in Judaism. But as the Hasmonean king declared his conquered subjects to be his property, technically as "slaves" *Avedim* (c.f. *Abdullah*) they could be forced to convert to a limited form of Judaism that did not include most of the ritual requirements.

[25] Seder HaDoros and Josephus state that she was from the royal family of Edom and her name was Kapidon the Edomite). As mentioned above, Yochanan Hyrcanus forcibly converted the Edomites to Judaism and made them slaves to the House of the Hasmoneans. Thus, since Herod's mother was an Edomite, she was considered a slave and passed on that status to her son.

[26] Josephus, Wars. Preface, Section 2.

[27] Acts 2:9

[28] Targum Onkolos on Exodus 2:25 and elsewhere renders Kenites (descendants of Yethro, the first convert) as *Shlamai*, probably related to the *Korban Shlamim*. Syed Abu-Ala' Maududi's "The Meaning of the Qur'an" basing himself on Qur'an 2.131-133 says "[Though the Jews] were originally Muslims, they had swerved from the real Islam ... So much so that they had even given up their original name "Muslim" and adopted the name "Jew" instead, and made religion the sole monopoly of the children of Israel". The word "Islam" represents the infinitive, the noun of action, of the factitive stem of the Arabic root "salam," and is rightly compared (Zunz, "Literaturgesch." p. 641; comp. Steinschneider, "Polemische und Apologetische Literatur," p. 266, note 56) with the use of the "hif'il" of "shalam" in later Hebrew; e.g., Pesiḳ. 125a ("mushlam"); Tan., ed. Buber, Gen. p. 46 ib. (where "hishlim" is used of proselytes). (J.E. Islam)

[29] Berachot 61. It is interesting to note that Rabbi Akiva himself was descended from Arab converts to Judaism.

[30] Anilai and Asinai were two outlaws of Nehardea in Babylonia. They were apprenticed by their widowed mother to a weaver. Having been punished for laziness by their master, they ran away and became freebooters in the marshlands of the Euphrates. There they gathered about them a large number of discontented Jews, organizing troops, and levying forced contributions on the shepherds, and finally established a little robber-state at the forks of the Euphrates. One Sabbath they were surprised by the Parthian ruler of Babylonia, but they determined to fight regardless of the day of rest, and defeated their assailant so completely that the Parthian king Artaban III. (about 10-40), who was just then engaged in putting down a rebellion, resolved to make use of such brave Jews to keep the satraps in check. He concluded an alliance with them, entrusting them with the control of that portion of Babylonia which they already occupied. They then built fortifications, and the little state lasted for fifteen years (about 18-33). Its downfall was brought about by the marriage of Anilai with the widow of a Parthian general, whom he had attacked and killed in battle. He tolerated the idolatry of his foreign wife, and met the religious objections of his people with violence, thus estranging his followers and sowing dissension among them. After Asinai had been poisoned by his brother's wife for his too frank utterances, Anilai assumed the leadership of his troops. He sought to divert them with wars, and succeeded in capturing Mithridates, governor of Parthyene, and son-in-law of the king. He soon, however, released Mithridates, fearing that Artaban might take vengeance on the Babylonian Jews for his death. Being signally defeated by Mithridates in a subsequent engagement, he was forced to withdraw to the forests, where he lived by plundering the Babylonian villages about Nehardea, until his resources were exhausted and the little robber-state disappeared. Babylonian hatred of the Jews, long restrained from fear of Anilai, now broke forth afresh, and the Jews fled from the persecutions to Seleucia without finding there the desired peace. (Jewish Encyclopedia: Anilai and Asinai)

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[31] Under the Persian kings Adiabene seems for a time to have been a vassal state of the Persian empire. Ardashir III. (361-338 B.C.), before he came to the throne, had the title "King of ?adyab" (Nэldeke, "Geschichte der Perser," p. 70). The little kingdom attained a certain prominence on account of its kings during the first century. Izates became a Jew. His conversion took place before he ascended the throne and while he lived in Charax Spasinu. At about the same time his mother, Helena, was also converted. The times were troublous ones; for Parthian kings and counter-kings followed each other in quick succession. Artaban III. was king of Atropatene. He had succeeded Vonones, who, having been educated entirely at Rome, was unsympathetic toward the Parthians. Artaban soon had to flee to Hyrcania to escape from the rival king, Tiridates III. He returned, however, in 36, and, being afraid of a conspiracy, took refuge at the court of Izates, who was powerful enough to induce the Parthians to reinstate Artaban. For this service certain kingly honors were granted Izates, and the city of Nisibis was added to his dominions. However, in 45, Gotarzes, an adopted son of Artaban, was raised to the throne by the nobles, in preference to Vardanes, his half-brother. In 49 Meherdates (Mithridates V.), a son of Vonones, was sent from Rome by Claudius to take possession of the throne of Parthia. Izates played a double game, though he secretly sided with Gotarzes. A few years later, Vologeses I. set out with the intention of invading Adiabene and of punishing Izates; but a force of Dacians and Scythians had just entered Parthia, and Vologeses had to return home.

It is impossible to tell how far the inhabitants of Adiabene had followed the example of their king and become Judaized. Josephus ("B. J." preface, § 2) refers to the "Adiabenoi" as Jews. Both Queen Helena and Izates showered presents upon Jerusalem, and the queen took the king's sons there to be educated. The remains of Helena and Izates were sent by Monobaz II. to Jerusalem for burial. There seems to be no doubt that there were a number of Adiabene Jews in Jerusalem, who probably belonged to the princely household. Josephus knew several, and in"B. J." ii. 19, § 2 mentions a Kenedeus and a Monobaz as aiding bravely in the defense of Jerusalem against the Romans, and "the sons and brethren of Izates the king . . . were bound . . . and led to Rome, in order to make them hostages for their country's fidelity to the Romans" ("B. J." vi. 6, § 4). A certain Jacob ?adyaba is mentioned in B. B. 26b; and also Zuga of ?adyab, or Zawa (Heilprin, "Seder ha-Dorot," ed. 1882, ii. 115). The Talmud mentions a certain kind of scorpion in Adiabene (Bab. Shab. 121b; in Yer. Shab. xiv. 14b, the reading is incorrect) that might be killed on the Sabbath day because of its venomous character. It also states (Bab. Men. 32b) that the followers of Monobaz (Yer. Meg. iv., end, !) were accustomed to fix the mezuzah upon a staff, and to set the staff upright in any inn in which they happened to pass the night (Tosef., Meg. iv. [iii.] 30; Yer. Meg. iv. 75c). (Jewish Encyclopedia: Adiabene)

[32] Eusebius, "Hist. Eccl." iv. 2; Philo "Legatio ad Cajum," para 36

[33] F. Lazarus, in Brüll's "Jahrbücher," x. 62

[34] Yeb., end and Gen. R. xxxiii. 5

[35] Rapoport, in "Bikkure ha-'Ittim," 1823, p. 70

[36] ed. London, 245b

[37] "Gola," in Saadia ibn Danan, in "Pe'er ha-Dor," No. 225

[38] Sanhedrin 93b

[39] Rambam Laws of Kings 11

[40] ibid.

[41] Tosfos (Bava Basra 3b)

[42] The History of the Jewish People, Vol. I, Chapter 88.

[43] This paragraph is from "Halachic Status of the Herodian Dynasty", Yakov Shafranovich 2002

[44] Ardeshir I son of Babek; the full name appears in Abraham ibn Daud, ed. Neubauer, p. 60

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[45] see Ḳid. 39a; Shab. 53a

[46] Shab. 129a

[47] B. B. 54b, referring, of course to civil matters; and even when his king, in the exigencies of war, felt himself compelled to slaughter twelve thousand Jews at Mazaga (Cesarea), in Cappadocia, Samuel was ready to defend him (M. Ḳ. 26a).

[48] R. Johanan aptly remarked concerning these struggles that "Holwan, Adiabene, and Nisibis are the three ribs which the prophet Daniel describes as being held in the mouth of the beast, sometimes crunched and sometimes dropped" (ḳid. 72a; see Dan. vii. 5)

[49] Sherira, the "Small Chronicle" and the "Seder Tannaim"

[50] The Babylonian Talmud is the major source of information on the office up to the 6th century, supplemented by contemporary Palestinian sources, later medieval chronicles, and 9th-century Pahlavi texts (see, e.g., Markwart, Provincial Capitals, p. 19).

[51] Baba Ḳama 117a

[52] Ta'anit, 20a

[53] as is graphically described in Sanh. 25b

[54] Yeb. 63b

[55] Kiddushin 71b

[56] In regard to Nathan ha-Babli's additional account as to the income and the functions of the Exilarch, it may be noted that he received taxes, amounting altogether to 700 gold denarii a year, chiefly from the provinces Nahrawan, Farsistan, and Holwan. Also, documents discovered at Cairo indicate that Egyptian Caliphs of the Fatimid Dynasty paid a subsidy for the maintenance of the Rabbinical Academy of Jerusalem (Poliakov:II; 61-2)

[57] Beer, pp. 57-93. There is no clear evidence that he held the power of capital punishment, but there are references to types of corporal punishment and to extralegal steps taken by his officials to impose their will (see, e.g., Babylonian Talmud, Bava Kama 59a-b, Gitin 67b). The exilarch also regulated aspects of economic life, appointing overseers of the marketplace (*agoranomoi*) and granting to certain rabbis the exclusive privilege of selling their produce in the market, thus guaranteeing them the advantage over their competition (Beer, pp. 123-26).

The most important function of the Exilarch was the appointment of the judge. Both Rab and Samuel said [Sanhedrin 5a] that the judge who did not wish to be held personally responsible in case of an error of judgment, would have to accept his appointment from the house of the Exilarch. When Rab went from Palestine to Nehardea he was appointed overseer of the market by the Exilarch [Yer. Bava Batra 15b, top]. The Exilarch had jurisdiction in criminal cases also. Aha b. Jacob, a contemporary of Rab [compare Gittin 31b], was commissioned by the Exilarch to take charge of a murder case [Sanhedrin 27a, b]. The story found in Bava Kamma 59a is an interesting example of the police jurisdiction exercised by the followers of the Exilarch in the time of Samuel. From the same time dates a curious dispute regarding the etiquette of precedence among the scholars greeting the Exilarch [Yer. Ta'an. 68a]. The Exilarch had certain privileges regarding real property [Bava Kamma 102b; Bava Batra 36a]. It is a specially noteworthy fact that in certain cases the Exilarch judged according to the Persian law [Bava Kamma 58b]; and it was the Exilarch 'Ukba b. Nehemiah who communicated to the head of the school of Pumbedita, Rabbah ben Nahmai, three Persian statutes which Samuel recognized as binding [Bava Batra 55a].

A synagogal prerogative of the Exilarch was mentioned in Palestine as a curiosity [Yer. Sotah 22a]: The Torah roll was carried to the Exilarch, while every one else had to go to the Torah to read from it. This prerogative is referred to also in the account of the installation of the Exilarch in the Arabic period, and this gives color to the assumption that the ceremonies, as recounted in this document, were based in part on

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usages taken over from the Persian time. The account of the installation of the Exilarch is supplemented by further details in regard to the exilarchate which are of great historical value; see the following section.

[58] Compare "Pekod" in Jer. l. 21; called in other places "Nehar-Peḳor," probably after the celebrated Parthian general Pakorus

[59] See the Author's essay on "The Prophet Muhammed as a descendant of Onias III"

These two temples were built about the time that Judah the Maccabee rededicated the Temple in Jerusalem. This could explain the Hadith where is says they were built fourty years apart: "Narrated Abu Dhaar: I said, "O Allah's Apostle! Which mosque was built first?" He replied, "Al-Masjid-ul-Haram." I asked, "Which (was built) next?" He replied, "Al-Masjid-ul-Aqs-a (i.e. Jerusalem)." I asked, "What was the period in between them?" He replied, "Forty (years)." He then added, "Wherever the time for the prayer comes upon you, perform the prayer, for all the earth is a place of worshipping for you." Sahih Bukhari, Volume 4, Book 55, Number 636:

[60] Ber. 63a; Geiger, Urschrift, pp. 154 et seq.; Grntz, Gesch. d. Juden, iv. 202, 478; Bacher, Ag. Tan. i. 390.L. G.

In the account referring to the attempt of a Palestinian teacher of the Law, Hananiah, nephew of Joshua ben Hananiah, to render the Babylonian Jews independent of the Palestinian authorities, a certain Ahijah is mentioned as the temporal head of the former, probably, therefore, as Exilarch [Ber. 63a, b], while another source substitutes the name Nehunyon for Ahijah [Yer. Sanhedrin 19a]. It is not improbable that this person is identical with the Nahum mentioned in the list [Lazarus 1890, p. 65].

The danger threatening the Palestinian authority was fortunately averted; at about the same time, R. Nathan, a member of the house of exilarchs, came to Palestine, and by virtue of his scholarship was soon classed among the foremost tannaim of the post-Hadrianic time. His Davidic origin suggested to R. Meır the plan of making the Babylonian scholar nasi (prince) in place of the Hillelite Simon ben Gamaliel. But the conspiracy against the latter failed [Horayot 13b]. R. Nathan was subsequently among the confidants of the patriarchal house, and in intimate relations with Simon ben Gamaliel's son Judah I (also known as Judah haNasi).

R. Meır's attempt, however, seems to have led Judah I to fear that the Babylonian Exilarch might come to Palestine to claim the office from Hillel's descendant. He discussed the subject with the Babylonian scholar Hiyya, a prominent member of his school [Horayot 11b], saying that he would pay due honor to the Exilarch should the latter come, but that he would not renounce the office of nasi in his favor [Yer. Kilayim 32b]. When the body of the Exilarch Huna, who was the first incumbent of that office explicitly mentioned as such in Talmudic literature, was brought to Palestine during the time of Judah I, Hiyya drew upon himself Judah's deep resentment by announcing the fact to him with the words "Huna is here" (Yerushalmi Kilayim 32b).

[61] Ber. 63a; Yer. Ned. 40a; Yer. Sanh. 19a

[62] Pesahim 76b, Levi ben Sisi; Hullin 59a, Rab; Avodah Zarah 72b, Rabba ben Huna; 'Er. 11b, Nahman versus Sheshet; 'Er. 39b, similarly; Mo'ed Katan 12a, Hanan; Pesahim 40b, Pappai]

[63] 'Er. 26a, in the words of Jer. iv. 22

[64] Sanhedrin 5a on Genesis 49:10

[65] Sanhedrin 38a

[66] Seder 'Olam Zu?a, in Neubauer's Medirval Jewish Chronicles, ii. 68 et seq. Emphasis added.

[67] Of the mass deportation of Jews by the Romans in 70 C.E. many were re-settled in Provence, France, then called Narbonensis. Later Pepin (king of France) installed Machir, son of the Exilarch's sister, as the Jewish King of Narbonne. Probably because of the Exilarch's associated with France, the prayer for the Exilarchs is still mentioned in the Sabbath services of the Ashkenazim ritual. The Aramaic prayer "Yekum Purkan," which was used once in Babylon in pronouncing the blessing upon the leaders there, including the "reshe galuta" (the exilarchs), is still recited in most synagogues. The Jews of the Sephardic ritual have not preserved this tradition.

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[68] Sozomen ii. 8; Burckhardt, "Die Zeit Constantins des Grossen," 2d ed., 1880, p. 90

[69] Theophanes, ed. De Boor, p. 25, but Sapor was at that time still a child

[70]lost in a place called Agma (swamp?) (see Sherira, l.c. p. 31)

[71] Ber. 56a

[72] called Bithra by Sozomen (iii. 20)

[73] The Jewish Encyclopedia - Persia

[74] Joseph I Katsch, Judaism in the Koran

[75] Hamza, ed. Gottwaldt, p. 56

[76] Ḥul. 62b

[77] Shab. 11a

[78] The immediate cause of the uprising, however, was the assassination of the school principal Isaac, regarding which no accurate information exists. From the fact that Mar Ḥanina took part in the struggle, it may be deduced that it was of a religious character.

[79] This event would be recalled in the biography of Salmaan Farsi, as "bishop" who was crucified for his mishandling of monies collected.

[80] Justi, l.c. p. 370

[81] Bar-Hebreus, l.c. p. 85

[82] "A new Paradigm for the Rise of Islam and its Consequences for a New Paradigm of the History of Israel" by Dr. Günter Lüling; Originally appeared in The Journal of Higher Criticism Nr. 7/1, Spring 2000, pp. 23-53.

[83] Hagarism, Crone and Cook

[84] See the authors essays "The Prophet Muhammed as a descendant of Onias III" and "From Bar Kochba to the Prophet Muhammed"

[85] See *Katib at Wackidi*, p. 287.

[86] "Life of Mohamet I", by Sir Walter Muir, Chapter III, Section 6

[87] Historians and traditionists insist that he is identical with Abu Karib Tibban Asad, King or Yemen, who flourished in the beginning of the third century, or nearly two hundred years before the era of this expedition. From the sketch of the history of Yemen (Sir Walter Muir, "Life of Mohamet" p. clxii), it is evident that the incursion must have taken place about the reign of Dhu Nuwas.

[88] Among these were the three Zeids, "chiefs or the Aus", and are called by that name.

[89] He pitched below the hill of Uhud, where he dug a well; but its water did not agree with him. It was long after known as "the Tobba's well." *The Journal Asiatique*, Nov. 1938, p. 439. Burton says that the present tradition of Medina represents this well to be the Bir Ramah, which lies about three miles N.W. of the town; it p. 220.

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[90] See M. Perron, in the *Journal Asiatique*, Nov. 1838, p. 443. One of the houses at Medina so bristled with the arrows then shot into it that it received and retained the name of *al Ashar*, "the hairy." It belonged to the Bani Adi, and was situated near the spot where Mahomet afterwards built his mosque.

[91] The chief authority for these facts is the Syriac letter of Simeon of Bet-Arsham, which is found in the histories of John of Asia, Pseudo-Denys of Telmaḥre, and Zacharias, the best edition of which is that of Guidi ("Reale Acad. dei Lincei," 1881). Gretz, Pretorius (1870), George (1883)

[92] "The Jewish Kingdom of Himyar", by Joseph Adler

[93] ibid

[94] The connection between the two seen, Bishop Simeon of Bet-Arsham urged the Christians of Palestine to seize the leaders of Judaism (Mar Zutra III) in Tiberias, to put them to the rack, and to compel them to command the Jewish king, Dhu Nuwas, to desist from persecuting the Christians in Najran (Assemani, "Bibliotheca Orientalis Clementino-Vaticana," i. 379).

[95] ibid

[96] ibid

[97] The Qur'an referred to this event: “Cursed were the people of the ditch.” [85:4]

[98] "The Jewish Kingdom of Himyar", by Joseph Adler

[99] It is possible that Kavad's actions towards Mar Zutra and Dhu Nuwas were part of peace negotiations with Byzantium.

[100] "The Jewish Kingdom of Himyar", by Joseph Adler

[101] ibid

[102] "A note on early marriage links between Qurashis and Jewish women", in. Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam 10 (1987), references to Jewish ladies of "noble birth" are descended from the Exilarch.

[103] "We will not say like the Israelites, 'Go and let you and your Lord fight we will wait'", Sura Al-Anfal

[104] "Sebeos' History", Chapter 21, as translated by Robert Bedrosian (New York, 1985) in his webpage Armenian Historical Sources of the 5-15th Centuries Selected Works.

[105] Syed Abu-Ala' Maududi in his "The Meaning of the Qur'an"

[106] "Sebeos' History", Chapter 21

[107] ibid

[108] ibid

[109] ibid

[110] "Sebeos' History", Chapter 26

[111] Jewish History (Ohr Sameach) http://www.jewishhistory.org.il/

[112] Sefer Zerubavel

[113] "Sebeos' History", Chapter 23

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[114] Encyclopedia: Heraclius

[115] "Sebeos' History", Chapter 21

[116] "Sebeos' History", Chapter 23

[117] Syed Abu-Ala' Maududi in his "The Meaning of the Qur'an"

[118] Encyclopedia: Heraclius

[119] "Sebeos' History", Chapter 24

[120] "Sebeos' History", Chapter 24

[121] The Jewish Encyclopedia - Chosroes (Khosru) II. Parwiz

[122] "Sebeos' History", Chapter 24

[123] Sefer Zerubavel

[124] ibid

[125] ibid

[126] "Sebeos' History", Chapter 24

[127] Sefer Zerubavel

[128] "Sebeos' History", Chapter 24

[129] ibid

[130] ibid

[131] Palestinian monk Antiochus Strategos of Mar Saba. in his Capture of Jerusalem, the Georgian text of which fills 66 large octavo pages of 33 lines each.38 Strategos devoted particular attention to the massacre perpetrated by the Jews in "the reservoir of Mamel [the Mamilla Pool]" after thousands of Christians were confined there by the conquering Persians: Thereupon the vile Jews . . . rejoiced exceedingly, because they detested the Christians, and they conceived an evil plan. . . . And in this season then the Jews approached the edge of the reservoir and called out to the children of God, while they were shut therein, and said to them: "If ye would escape from death, become Jews and deny Christ; and then ye shall . . . join us. We will ransom you with our money and ye shall be benefited by us." But their plot and desire were not fulfilled . . . because the children of Holy Church chose death for Christ's sake rather than to live in godlessness. . . . And when the unclean Jews saw the steadfastness of the Christians and their immovable faith, then they were agitated with lively ire . . . and thereupon imagined another plot. As of old they bought the Lord from the Jews with silver, so they purchased Christians out of the reservoir. . . .

How many souls were slain in the reservoir of Mamel! How many perished of hunger and thirst! How many priests and monks were massacred by the sword! . . . How many maidens, refusing their abominable outrages, were given over to death by the enemy! How many parents perished on top of their own children! How many of the people were brought up by the Jews and butchered, and became confessors of Christ! . . . Who can count the multitude of the corpses of those who were massacred in Jerusalem!" Strategos, cited a total number of 66,509 Christian corpses, of which 24,518 were allegedly found at Mamilla, many more than were found anywhere else in the city.

The Greek Theophanes (d. ca. 818), cited numbers of Christian dead as high as 90,000, which became a favorite among modern historians. See The Chronicle of Theophanes . . . (A.D. 602-813), trans. Harry Turtledove (Philadelphia, 1982), 11: "In this year [614] the Persians took . . . Palestine, and its holy city in battle. At the hands of the Jews they killed many people in it; some say, 90,000. The Jews, according to their

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means, bought the Christians and then killed them." The veracity of the claim by Strategos (and later Theophanes) that Jews purchased Christian captives and then butchered them has been challenged by many scholars, it has been taken quite seriously, even in recent years, by leading Byzantinists such as A. N. Stratos and Cyril Mango (the Bywater and Sotheby Professor of Byzantine and Modern Greek Language and Literature at the University of Oxford). N. Stratos, Byzantium in the Seventh Century, 4 vols. (Amsterdam, 1968-78), 1: 109 ("The Jews raised a fund to which each contributed according to his fortune, ransomed the prisoners, and slew them"); C. Mango, Byzantium: The Empire of New Rome (London, 1980), 92 ("In 614, the Jews bought Christian captives and put them to death").

[132] Sefer Zerubavel

[133] "Sebeos' History", Chapter 24

[134] The Jewish Encyclopedia - Chosroes (Khosru) II. Parwiz

[135] A monk of Mt. Sinai went to Tiberias to become a Jew. He received the name of Abraham, and married a Jewess of that city (Antiochius, "Homilia Octoginta-Quarta," in Migne, "Patrologia Greca," xii. 265).

[136] The Jewish Encyclopedia - Chosroes (Khosru) II. Parwiz

[137] "Sebeos' History", Chapter 24

[138] Sefer Zerubavel

[139] "Sebeos' History", Chapter 24

[140] The Jewish Encyclopedia - Chosroes (Khosru) II. Parwiz

[141] Jewish History (Ohr Sameach) http://www.jewishhistory.org.il/

[142] John, prefect of Cyprus, not only saw to the needs of the Persian prisoners but was able to raise enough money to ransom Patriarch Modestos of Jerusalem and to arrange further payment to the Persian conqueror Rasmiozis for sparing the sacred shrines of Christendom in the Holy City

[143] Sefer Zerubavel; In 1969, Jerusalem archaeologist James Fleming was investigating the Eastern wall of the Temple where a Muslim cemetery has long been located. It had rained heavily the night before and the ground remained soggy the next day. As he investigated the area immedaiately in front of the Golden Gate, the ground beneath his feet gave way and he dropped into a hole about eight feet deep. Fleming found himself "knee-deep in bones" and became suddenly aware he had fallen into a mass burial site. (BAR, Jan./Feb. 1983, p30)

[144] The "year of sorrow" is traditional attributed to the Prophet's Uncle, Abu Talib and his wife Khadijah who passed away that year.

[145] The Itinerary of Benjamin of Tudela, section "Jerusalem", p 23, . This is called the Gate of Mercy, and thither come all the Jews to pray before the wall of the court of the Temple"

[146] Succot 51b, Sefer Elijah

[147] Hishami; p.143; Tabari, p.161

[148] ibid

[149] Sefer Zerubavel

[150] ibid

[151] ibid

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[152] Daniel 10:11

[153] Hishami states that they were seven Genii belonging to Nisibin, who happened to pass that way, and were arrested by hearing Mahomet at his devotions reciting the Coran. Others say they were nine in number and came from Yemen, or from Nineveh. Importantly it is noted that they professed the Jewish religion.

[154] Qur'an 46.29

[155] "Sebeos' History", Chapter 30

[156] ibid, by this is meant Pharisaic, vs. various forms of Sadducean and pagan

[157] Sebeos' History, Chapter 30, writes: "In that period a certain one of them, a man of the sons of Ishmael named Muhammad, a merchant, became prominent. A sermon about the Way of Truth, supposedly at God's command, was revealed to them, and [Muhammad] taught them to recognize the God of Abraham, especially since he was informed and knowledgeable about Mosaic history. Because the command had come from On High, Abandoning the reverence of vain things, they turned toward the living God, who had appeared to their father--Abraham. Muhammad legislated that they were not to eat carrion, not to drink wine, not to speak falsehoods, and not to commit adultery."

Katib al Wackidi p. 42; Hishami, p. 143 put it these terms: " We will not worship any but the One God; we will not steal, neither will we commit adultery, or kill our children; we will not slander in anywise; and we will not disobey the Prophet,32 in anything that is right."

[158] "Sebeos' History", Chapter 30

[159] K. Wackidi, 45.

[160] See the authors "The Islamic Jewish Calendar"

[161] The Jews shall contribute with the Moslems, so long as they are at war with a common enemy. The several branches of the Jews, - those attached respectively to the Bani Auf, Bani Najjar, Bani Aus, etc., are one people with the Believers. The Jews will maintain their own religion, the Moslems theirs. As with the Jews, so with their adherents; excepting him who shall transgress and do iniquity, he alone shall be punished and his family. No one shall go forth but with the permission of Muhammed. None shall be held back from seeking his lawful revenge, unless it be excessive. The Jews shall be responsible for their own expenditure, the Moslems for theirs. Each, if attacked, shall come to the assistance of the other. Medina shall be sacred and inviolable for all that join this Treaty. Strangers, under protection, shall be treated on the same footing as their protectors; but no stranger shall be taken under protection save with consent of his tribe. New questions and doubts, likely to produce evil and danger, shall be referred for decision to God and Muhammed his Prophet. War and Peace shall be made in common [Hishami, 176] Here we propose that the "Jews" are the Cohen-priests of their client Sadducean or Judaic tribes.

[162] K. Wackidi 46, 207; Tabari 219

[163] Syed Abu-Ala' Maududi in his "The Meaning of the Qur'an"

[164] Sefer Zerubavel

[165] Sefer Zerubavel, Prayer of Shimon bar Yochai

[166] Mujir al-Din

[167] ibid

[168] Quran 39:23

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[169] Sura 16.124. Traditionally he word "differ" (ikhtalafu) means those who used to argue (differ among themselves) over observance ofthe Sabbath. Jewish Literature often uses the word "differ" (mavdil) in conjunction with the Sabbath. However it is in the sense of "distinguish". Hence the reading of Sura An-Nahl implies:

1) That the Sabbath was only intended for certain people (the Jews)
2) The Jews are made different than other nations by the Sabbath
3) The Sabbath is still in effect until the Day of Resurrection
4) The Lord will judge the Jews according to their observance of the Sabbath
5) The Lord will *not* judge non-Jews for not keeping the Sabbath.

[170] Syed Abu-Ala' Maududi in his "The Meaning of the Qur'an"

[171] This is supported by the fact that during Abu Karib's siege of Yathrib, Yathrib was referred to as a city of Jews even though the Khazraj and the Aus had lived there for over two hundred years.

[172] According to Ibn Abbas, once Ka'b bin Ashraf (the Jewish chief of Madinah) came to Makkah and the Quraish chiefs said to him: "Just see this boy, who is cut off from his people; he thinks he is superior to us, whereas we manage the Hajj, look after the Ka'bah and water the pilgrims." (Bazzar)

[173] The Sadduceans did not believe in the afterlife, nor in the re-application of prophecies, but they did believe in angels, and specific one-time messages given to the *Cohenim*. Three prophets (called poets in Islamic literature): Asma bint Marwan, Abu 'Afak, and Ka'b Ashraf were assassinated. Afterwards, it was said "Kill every [pro-Persian, false prophet] Jew whom you come across. Ibn Sanina was killed and the Sadducean priests "Jews" were frightened, so none of them came out, nor did they speak. They were afraid that they would be suddenly attacked as Ibn Ashraf was attacked in the night. (Wackidi, 191; K. Wackidi, 104 ; and Hashimi, 201, Ibn Sa'd, Kitab al-Tabaqat al-Kabir, Vol. 2, p. 37).

[174] Ibn Sa'd, Ibn Hisham, Tarikh Tabari

[175] Syed Abu-Ala' Maududi in his "The Meaning of the Qur'an"

[176] ibid

[177] ibid

[178] In addition the Qu'ran speaks about they *hanifim*, the persecuted "two-faced" secret Christians.

[179] ASUTA The Journal for the Study and Research into the Mandaean Culture, Religion, and Language. Volume 5. Ajae states that the real Sabeans were around before the common era. Though originally Jews, some eventually came to follow teachings of Chrisitanity yet many Sabeans adhered to Jewish laws. Sabeans were numerous in Palestine and Mesopotamia.

[180] Joseph Schwartz, "Descriptive Geography and Brief Historical Sketch of Palestine". Bahira was traditionally called a Nestorian Monk, although the Jewish source quoted by R' Schwatz calls him an astrologer.

[181] ibid

[182] ibid

[183] Traditional Islamic literature says that Salmaan Farsi "grew up in the town of Isfahan in Persia in the village of Jayyan. My father was the Dihqan or chief of the village. He was the richest person there and had the biggest house". It is the authors assumption that the Chief of the Village means the Chief of the Exile.

[184] ibid "So he kept me at home, a veritable prisoner, in the same way that young girls were kept"

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[185] ibid. "I became devoted to the Magian (*a.v. Jewish*) religion so much so that I attained the position of custodian of the fire which we worshipped (*a.v. head of Yeshivot*). My duty was to see that the flames of the fire remained burning (*a.v. learning did not stop*) and that it did not go out for a single hour, day or night."

[186] ibid. "On my way to the estate, I passed a Christian church (a.v. Bedouin camp) and the voices at prayer attracted my attention… [I] felt drawn to their religion."

[187] ibid. Shallum said "[I would] like to attach myself to your service, learn from you … I soon found out, however, that the man was corrupt. He would order his followers to give money in charity … he would hoard it for himself and not give anything to the poor or needy. In this way he amassed a vast quantity of gold. When the bishop died .. [because] of his corrupt practices …they nailed him on a cross and threw stones at him."

[188] ibid

[189] ibid

[190] ibid

[191] ibid

[192] Sefer Zerubavel

[193] ibid

[194] Syed Abu-Ala' Maududi in his "The Meaning of the Qur'an"

[195] The Jewish Encyclopedia

[196] Ibn Hisham, al Sirah, 3/272

[197] Ibn Hisham, al Sirah, 3/253

[198] "The Conquest of Khaybar and of the Remaining Jewish Strongholds in al Hijaz" Akram Diya al Umari Excerpted from Madinan Society At the Time of the Prophet, International Islamic Publishing House & IIIT, 1991

[199] Eutychius, ii. 241

[200] While the Syrians and the Melchite Greeks ceased to keep it after the death of Heraclius; Elijah of Nisibis ("Beweis der Wahrheit des Glaubens," translation by Horst, p. 108, Colmar, 1886) mocks at the observance.

[201] Pertz, "Monumenta Germaniæ Historica," i. 286, vi. 25; compare Joseph ha-Kohen, "'Emeḳ ha-Baka," tr. Wiener, p. 5

[202] Sackur, "Sibyllinische Texte," p. 146, Halle, 1898, seems to refer to these occurrences, since about one hundred and twenty years elapsed from the time of the Persian war under Anastasius, in 505, to the victory of Heraclius in 628. It has been thought that several Jewish apocalypses refers to this expedition of Heraclius against the Jews.

[203] Sefer Zerubavel

[204] "Sebeos' History", Chapter 30. The text is corrupt here. The citation is from Genesis 25.18], and they set out from the P'arhan desert [being] twelve tribes [moving] in the order [of precedence] of the Houses of the patriarchs of their tribe. They were divided into 12,000 men, of which the sons of Israel were in their own tribes, 1,000 to a tribe, to lead them to the country of Israel. They travelled army by army in the order [of precedence] of each patriarchy: Nebaioth, Kedar, Adbeel, Mibsam, Mishma, Dumah, Massa, Hadad, Tema, Jetur, Naphish and Kedemah [Genesis 25. 13-16]. These are the peoples of Ishmael. They reached Moabite Rabbath, at the borders of [124] Ruben's [land].

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[205] "Sebeos' History", Chapter 30

[206] "Sebeos' History", Chapter 30. [i kaluats zharhangut'ean]

[207] ibid

[208] Al-Tabari

[209] Al-Tabari

[210] The carnage amongst the "Readers" (those who had the Kor'an by heart) was so great as to give 'Omar the first idea of collecting the Qur'an, "lest any part of it should be lost."

[211] Joseph Schwartz, "sword incident"

[212] The rebels called themselves *Kurra'*, Readers, although their opponents called them *Kharajji*, separatists. Years later the rebel Exilarch David ben Anan would call his movement the *Karaim*, Karaites, Literalists.

[213] Tabari

[214] This is also noted in Sefer Zerubavel

[215] "The Caliphate, Its Rise, Decline, and Fall", by Sir Walter Muir, Chapter VIII, page 46

[216] He was known by the Persians as "Mayaa" "Behbood" "Naajaa" "Borzooyeh""Bakh-Shoodaan""Eben Khoshnoodaan" "Roozbeh" and Salmaan El Farsi

[217] Based on Foulavand, an Iranian Scholar, who claims that Salman "Mayaa" invented Islam; Cambridge History of Iran

[218] Sefer Zerubavel

[219] Sebeos Chapter 30

[220] Mujir al-Din

[221] It appears from Eutychius (tenth century), and from the Arabic writers, Mujir al-Din and Jelal al Din (fifteenth century), that Omar found no building over or near the Sakhrah rock

[222] Mujir al-Din

[223] Most of the information here is from Sebeos Chapter 31. The identification that there were only two places of prayer (for Christian+Muslims and Jews+Muslims) as opposed to three places of prayer (Christians, Muslims and Jews) is clear from the reading of the text.

[224] The pedestal was to isolate the house of prayer from the contaminated bedrock, even though it had been cleaned of refuse. The Mosque of Al-Aqsa, was also built originally in a similar fashion.

[225] This negotiatons between Christians and Jews is also seen when Hanamel requested to bring 210 families to Jerusalem, when the Christians would not agree, it was reduced to 90 and lastly 72.

[226] Dan Bahat, "The Physical Infrastructure," in Prawer and Ben-Shammai, eds., The History of Jerusalem, p. 53.

[227] The Itinerary of Benjamin of Tudela, section "Jerusalem", p 23

[228] see note 223

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[229] ibid

[230] Sheikh Abdul Hadi Palazzi, "The Jewish-Moslem Dialogue and the Question of Jerusalem", Institute of the World Jewish Congress, Jerusalem 1997

[231] Tafsir

[232] Tabari

[233] Geniza library of Egypt, University in England.

[234] The Itinerary of Benjamin of Tudela, section "Jerusalem", p 23, "There is also visible up to this day the pool used by the priests before offering their sacrifices"

[235] Temple Mount Excavations, B. Mazar

[236] The Itinerary of Benjamin of Tudela, section "Jerusalem", p 23, " the Jews coming thither write their names upon the wall."

[237] Temple Mount Excavations, B. Mazar

[238] According to some Islamic histories, he died in the year thirty five after the hijrah (657CE), during the caliphate of Uthman, at Ctesiphon.

[239] There is a tendency among modern Shi`ah scholars to dismiss the role of `Abdullah ibn Saba (sometimes called ibn Sauda) in the history of Islam. Some modern Islamic scholars deny that such a person even existed. It is beyond the scope of this work to investigate these claims. It is sufficient for our purposes to state that ibn Saba is clearly documented in Islamic works (Tabari, etc), and in many points agrees with what we would expect of an ambitious, heretical Exilarch – out of favor with the Caliphate due to the "incident of the pigs".

[240] Sebeos Chapter 31

[241] Bustanai's name is aramaized from the Persian "bustan" or "bostan" which means garden.[241] He was the posthumous son of the exilarch Hananiah.

[242] Seder HaDoros, Jerusalem ed., pp. 174-176

[243] Rijal, by al-Kushshi

[244] Concerning *maaseh merkavah,* Al-Qurtubi, in his commentary on the Qur'anic chapter of Ghafir, reported that Ka'b said: " When God created His throne, the throne said: 'God did not create any creature greater than me.' The throne then shook itself to show its glory. God roped the throne with a snake which had 70 thousand wings; each wing had 70 thousand feathers; each feather had 70 thousand faces; each face had 70 thousand mouths, and each mouth had 70 thousand tongues. Out of these mouths words glorifying Allah came with a quantity equal to the number of drops of rain that have fallen, and the leaves on the trees, and the number of pieces of gravel and soil, and the number of days of the world, and the number of angels. The snake coiled around the throne, for the throne was much smaller than the snake. The throne was covered by only half the snake."

[245] Ibn Abd al-Barr, Al-Isti'ab, part 3, page 1287

[246] This is traditionally referred to as happening upon 'Umar's first entry to Jerusalem, but according to this narration, 'Umar said he would build the musalla "at the forefront of the mosque". This implies that there already was a mosque at Al Aqsa when 'Umar summoned Yaakov, so this could probably only occur after the wooden mosque had been built.

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[247] Zohar, Parshas Balak, while refering to Exodus 3:5, says that the commandment to stand barefoot on holy ground was changed by the Rabbis because of its adoption by "sinners".

[248] This title means Redeemer, and has messianic connotations.

[249] Referred to in B. Mazar's research as *beit Menorot*, House of the Menorahs because of the red menorahs that had been painted on the entrance. This synagogue however has a Quibla that faces Mecca and not Jerusalem.

[250] Ozar Tob, 79, 13

[251] Carmoly, "Itine'raires de la Terre Sainte," p. 237

[252] Z. D. P. V." xiii. 9 et seq

[253] Al-Tabari, part 4, page 191

[254] Mahmood Abu Rayyah, in his book Adhwa (lights) on Al-Sunnah Al-Muhammadiyyah, reported that Ibn Hajar Al-'Asqalani, recorded in his book (Al-Isabah, part 5, page 323)

[255] "On the burial of martyrs", Michael Lecker, Jerusalem

[256] Almost all of the information in this paragraph is from "The Emergence of the Schools of Islamic Thought" by Mufti Yaseen Shaikh, unless otherwise noted.

[257] See the authors essays, "The True Meaning of Jihad" and "From Bar Kochba to the Prophet Muhammed"

[258] Hai Gaon, in "Sha'are Ẓedeḳ," p. 3a , See Rapoport, in "Bikkure ha-'Ittim," x. 83; B. Goldberg, in "Ha-Maggid," xiii. 363

[259] In the original quote the reference is to Muhammed. If so, would refer to a throne made for Salmaan Farsi. This is not probable because Salmaan Farsi only achieved fame after his conquest of al-Iraq.

[260] The Itinerary of Rabbi Benjamin of Tudela

[261] Sefer Eliyahu, Pirkei Moshiach, p. 236

[262] Neubauer's "Medieval Jewish Chronicles," i. 64

[263] As Halevi points out (vol. 6, p. 178)

[264] Sherira II.'s "Letter," ed. Neubauer, ib. p. 35; Abraham ibn Daud, ib. p. 62

[265] Most all of this information is taken from "Medieval History under Islam", JUICE History 7, by the World Zionist Organization.

[266] Ibid

[267] Marcus, no. 47

[268] Syed Abu-Ala' Maududi in his "The Meaning of the Qur'an", "[the Jews] had distorted even that part of the Word of God which had remained intact in their Scriptures and taken out of it the real spirit of true religion and were now clinging to a lifeless frame of rituals. Consequently their beliefs, their morals and their conduct had gone to the lowest depths of degeneration. The pity is that they were not only satisfied with their condition but loved to cling to it. Besides this, they had no intention or inclination to accept any kind of reform. So they became bitter enemies of those who came to teach them the Right Way and did their worst to defeat every such effort"

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[269] Tiburtine Sibyl

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