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Būluṣ ibn Rajā'

*The Fatimid Egyptian Convert
Who Shaped Christian Views of Islam*

By

David Bertaina



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Abbreviations

- CMR *Christian-Muslim Relations: A Bibliographical History*. 17 vols. Leiden: Brill, 2009–.
- CAAZ *Das christlich-koptische Ägypten in arabischer Zeit: Eine Sammlung christlicher Stätten in Ägypten in arabischer Zeit, unter Ausschluß von Alexandria, Kairo, des Apa-Mena-Klosters (Der Abu Mina), der Skētis (Wādi n-Naṭrūn) und der Sinai-Region*. 7 vols. Wiesbaden: Reichert, 2007.
- CSCO *Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium*. Paris / Leuven, 1903–.
- ECH *Encyclopedia of Canonical Ḥadīth*. Leiden: Brill, 2007.
- EI² *Encyclopaedia of Islam, Second Edition*. 12 vols. + indices and supplements. Leiden: Brill, 1960–2005.
- EI³ *Encyclopaedia of Islam, Three*. Leiden: Brill, 2007–.
- EQ *Encyclopaedia of the Qurʾān*. 5 vols. Leiden: Brill, 2001–2006.
- GAS *Geschichte des Arabischen Schrifttums, Band I*. Leiden: Brill, 1967.
- HPEC *History of the Patriarchs of the Egyptian Church: Known as the History of the Holy Church, Vol. II. Part 1, Khaël III – Šenouti II (A.D. 880–1066)*. Cairo: Société d'archéologie copte, 1948. Also known as: *History of the Patriarchs of Alexandria*.

Note on Translation and Transliteration

Arabic words, terms, names, and titles of books are transliterated according to the method of *The Encyclopaedia of Islam Three* (EI³). Technical terms in Arabic are all italicized apart from common terms (e.g., Qur'an, hadith, sura). The *tā' marbūṭa* is written as '-a' (e.g., sura) without the *-h* on the ending. Biblical names are translated using their English forms and Islamic names are transliterated using their Arabic forms. The Qur'an is listed by sura chapter and verse (e.g., Q 3:42).

PART 1

Study



The Life of Būluṣ Ibn Rajāʾ

1 Introduction

Būluṣ (Paul) ibn Rajāʾ was one of the most celebrated writers in Coptic Christianity during the Fatimid era in Egypt (969–1171).¹ According to his biography in the *History of the Patriarchs of Alexandria*, he was born into a leading Muslim family in Cairo, probably in the late 950s, where he studied with the foremost scholars of the Qurʾan and hadith.² After converting to Christianity due to a religious experience in the 980s, Ibn Rajāʾ became a monk and, later, priest in the Egyptian desert, where he wrote during the reign of the Fatimid caliph al-Ḥākim (996–1021). Notable for his criticism of Islam, Ibn Rajāʾ earned the nickname of “al-Wāḍiḥ,” which means “The Exposer/Clarifier.” He composed *The Exposer’s Book in Truth* (*Kitāb al-Wāḍiḥ bi-l-Ḥaqq*; shortened to *The Truthful Exposer*) during a general persecution of Copts in Egypt under al-Ḥākim.³ This book outlined Ibn Rajāʾ’s skepticism concerning the traditional accounts of the origins of the Qurʾan, the prophetic claims about Muḥammad, the alleged trustworthiness of oral traditions in the hadith collections, and the legitimacy of Muslim legal theories and practices. Material from Ibn Rajāʾ’s work circu-

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- 1 The most important entries on Ibn Rajāʾ include Mark Swanson, “Būluṣ ibn Rajāʾ,” in *CMR, Volume 2 (900–1050)*, eds. David Thomas and Alex Mallett (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 541–546; Wadi Abuliff, “Al-Wāḍiḥ Ibn Rajāʾ,” in *Bibliotheca sanctorum orientalium: Enciclopedia dei santi*, ed. Juan Nadal Cañellas and Stefano Virgulin (Rome: Città Nuova, 1998–1999), 120, 123–124; Vincent Frederick, “al-Wāḍiḥ Ibn Rajāʾ,” in *The Coptic Encyclopedia*, 8 vols., ed. Aziz Suryal Atiya (New York: Macmillan, 1991), 7:2311; Georg Graf, *Geschichte der Christlichen Arabischen Literatur*, 5 vols. (Vatican City: Biblioteca apostolica vaticana, 1944–1953), 2:318–319. For medieval accounts of Ibn Rajāʾ, see Shams al-Riʾāsa Abū al-Barakāt ibn Kabar, *Misbāḥ al-ḥulma fī ḍiḥ al-khidma*, ed. Samir Khalil Samir (Cairo: Maktaba al-kārūz, 1971), 322–323; Yūsāb of Fuwa, *Tārīkh al-Kanisa al-Qibṭiya: Tārīkh al-ābāʾ al-baṭārika*, ed. Jamāl Muḥammad Abū Zayd (Cairo: al-Hayʾa al-Miṣriyya al-ʿĀmma lil-Kitāb, 2018), 196–200; and Abū Shakīr Buṭrus ibn al-Mahadhdhib ibn al-Rāhib, *Petrus ibn Rahib: Chronicon orientale, cSCO 45–46*, ed. Louis Cheikho (Beirut: E Typographeo catholico, 1903; Reprint: Louvain: L. Durbecq, 1955), 134 (Arabic), 144 (Latin).
 - 2 Aziz Suryal Atiya, Yassā ʿAbd al-Masīḥ, and Oswald Hugh Ewart KHS-Burmester, eds., *History of the Patriarchs of the Egyptian Church: Known as the History of the Holy Church, Vol. II. Part 1, Khaḗl III – Šenouti II (A.D. 880–1066)* (Cairo: Société d’archéologie copte, 1948), 101–113 (Arabic), 151–170 (English), (henceforth *HPEC*).
 - 3 *The Truthful Exposer* contains 30 chapters. I have divided the work into 254 sections. All citations cite the chapter and section (1 = Introduction; 30 includes Conclusion and Addition).

lated across the Middle East and the Mediterranean in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. I discovered that his work is the Arabic original for the Latin *Liber denudationis*, which several scholars have shown contributed to the Latin West's knowledge of Islam. This transmission process took place mostly in the form of uncredited adaptations, which later Christians integrated into their works. Due to the popularity of Ibn Rajā's arguments, later authors writing in Latin, Syriac, Greek, and European languages repeated his views (sometimes verbatim). These new authors translated Ibn Rajā's text and reworked it into their materials – frequently polemical pieces – across medieval Europe. The result is that Būluṣ ibn Rajā profoundly shaped western Christian understanding of the Qur'an's origins, Muḥammad's life, the practice of Islamic law, and Muslim political history. This phenomenon occurred to a lesser extent in the Christian East. His work *The Truthful Exposer* also advances our knowledge of the Islamic scholarly culture existing in Egypt under the Fatimid caliphate.⁴ His work is a remarkable witness to intra-Muslim theological debates, as they would have been experienced by the intellectuals of the Fatimid period at the turn of the eleventh century. Ibn Rajā's text was instrumental to the process by which Christian Arabic literature integrated and disseminated internal Muslim debates into a new form via Eastern Christian networks across the Mediterranean and Europe.

Būluṣ ibn Rajā merits a place among the most important Christian Arabic authors, and among the most important figures in the history of Christian-Muslim encounters. His Arabic work *The Truthful Exposer* made a wide impact on the Mediterranean world, as Latin Christians adopted his views to interpret the Qur'an and Islam.⁵ Ibn Rajā's writings have filtered into different cultures, languages, regions, denominations, and religions. Apart from perhaps the ninth-century *Letter (Risāla)* of 'Abd al-Masīḥ al-Kindī, no other premodern work has had a greater impact on Christian analysis of the Qur'an.⁶ Since Ibn

4 For an overview of the Fatimids, see Johannes den Heijer, Yaacov Lev, and Mark Swanson, "The Fatimid Empire and its Population," *Medieval Encounters* 21 (2015): 323–344; Hanna Jeryis and Vivian Fouad, "The Copts in the Faṭimid Era," in *Christianity: A History in the Middle East*, ed. Habib Badr (Beirut: Middle Eastern Council of Churches, 2005) 531–548; and the contributions in Assadullah Souren Melikian-Chirvani, ed., *The World of the Fatimids* (Toronto: Aga Khan Museum/Munich: Hirmer, 2018). For a discussion of the Fatimids from a historiographical view, see Johannes den Heijer, "Religion, Ethnicity and Gender under Fatimid Rule: Three Recent Publications and Their Wider Research Context," *Bibliotheca Orientalis* 65 (2008): 38–72.

5 For a study of the Latin version and its reception, see Thomas Burman, *Religious Polemic and the Intellectual History of the Mozarabs, c. 1050–1200* (Leiden: Brill, 1994).

6 Laura Bottini, "The Apology of al-Kindī," in *Christian-Muslim Relations, Volume 1 (600–900)*, eds. David Thomas and Barbara Roggema (Leiden: Brill, 2009), 587–594 (henceforth *CMR*).

Rajā's name was not attached to later versions of his work, his influence arose through his arguments and not his celebrity status as a Muslim convert to Christianity. The aim of the present analysis is to unite the historical figure with his written Arabic text in order to reveal how his work has shaped the course of Christian perceptions of Islam across the Middle East, the Mediterranean, and Europe up to contemporary times. His life and works are important pieces of knowledge for contemporary scholars of the Christian East and West, as well as for scholars of Islamic intellectual history.

2 Ibn Rajā' and the Fatimid Era

In 1009, the Fatimid caliph al-Ḥākim bi-Amr Allāh ordered the destruction of the Church of the Holy Sepulcher in Jerusalem (also known as the Church of the Resurrection) and other churches in Fatimid territory.⁷ Three years later in 1012, al-Ḥākim intensified his persecution of Christians. In Egypt, Christian churches, homes, businesses, and possessions suffered seizure, damage, or destruction. Edicts forced Christians to wear distinctive clothing and forbade public worship on holy days.⁸ Al-Ḥākim also had several Coptic officials in the Fatimid administration killed.⁹ Some Christians fled to Byzantine territories as refugees, while others converted to Islam for fear of further violence.¹⁰ Al-Ḥākim's policies and actions were probably the most extreme in the history of

7 On the destruction of the Church of the Holy Sepulcher for reasons of popular appeal, financial gain, caliphal ambition, and religious fervor, see Jennifer Pruitt, *Building the Caliphate: Construction, Destruction, and Sectarian Identity in Early Fatimid Architecture* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2020), 106–113. On the destruction of the Cathedral in Damascus, see Alexander Treiger, "Unpublished Texts from the Arab Orthodox Tradition (1): On the Origin of the Term 'Melkite' and on the Destruction of the Maryamiyya Cathedral in Damascus," *Chronos* 29 (2014): 7–37, esp. 20–33.

8 Marlis Saleh, "Church Building, Repair, and Destruction in Fatimid Egypt," in *Ismaili and Fatimid Studies in Honor of Paul E. Walker*, ed. Bruce Craig (Chicago: Middle East Documentation Center, 2010), 177–196. See an English translation of events by the fifteenth-century Muslim historian al-Maqrīzī, *Kitāb al-mawā'iz wa-l-i'tibār bi-dhikr al-khiṭaṭ wa-l-āthār*, in Kurt J. Werthmuller, *Coptic Identity and Ayyubid Politics in Egypt, 1218–1250* (Cairo: American University in Cairo Press, 2010), 35.

9 Samir Khalil Samir, "The Role of Christians in the Fāṭimid Government Services of Egypt to the Reign of al-Ḥāfiz," *Medieval Encounters* 2 (1996): 177–192, esp. 181–183.

10 See examples of Fatimid interference and persecution in Marlis Saleh, "Government Intervention in the Coptic Church in Egypt during the Fatimid Period," *The Muslim World* 91 (2001): 381–397, especially 381; Dina Khaled Abou Salem, "Subject to the Caliph, Distant from the Law: The Status and Role of the Coptic Community in Fatimid Fustāṭ" (MA thesis: American University of Beirut, 2004).

Coptic relations with Muslims in Egypt.¹¹ These events are crucial to our story, because Būluṣ ibn Rajāʾ's writings emerged during this period of oppression.

Ibn Rajāʾ was raised as a Muslim in Fatimid Egypt among the privileged class.¹² The ruling Fatimid Ismāʿīlīs, who first gained political power in North Africa in 909 and conquered Egypt in 969, claimed to trace the lineage of their imam-caliphs back to ʿAlī and Fāṭima through Ismāʿīl (d. ca. 762), the son of the sixth imam Jaʿfar al-Šādiq (d. 765).¹³ They built a dynasty that encompassed North Africa, Egypt, and parts of the Arabian Peninsula and the Middle East at the height of their power. The Ismāʿīlīs were a part of Shīʿism but a minority in Egypt, so they worked with a mix of Sunnī Muslims, Jews, Copts, and other Christians to maintain stable governance, economic trade, intellectual learning, and cultural vitality.¹⁴ There was also a religiously diverse group of Christians in Egypt, which included a significant population of Melkites (Christians who were in communion with Orthodox Christianity in Byzantium), as well as Miaphysite communities of Syriac, Armenian, Nubian, and Ethiopian Christians.¹⁵ According to Samir Khalil Samir, Copts likely made up at least forty percent of the population in Egypt during the early Fatimid period.¹⁶ More recently, demographic analysis has shown that all Christians together made up a majority of the population in Egypt until the Mamluk period in the fourteenth century.¹⁷

11 On caliph al-Ḥākim, who ruled 996–1021, see Paul Walker, *Caliph of Cairo: Al-Hakim bi-Amr Allah, 996–1021* (Cairo: The American University in Cairo Press, 2009). He was 11 when he became the 16th imam in the Ismāʿīlī line from Muḥammad. On this controversial history, see for instance Girgis Naiem, *Egypt's Identities in Conflict: The Political and Religious Landscape of Copts and Muslims* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2018).

12 His father was likely a Sunnī of the Mālikī school based upon his teachers, although Ibn Rajāʾ also cites scholars sympathetic to the Ismāʿīlī movement.

13 See “Fāṭimids,” *ET*², 2:850–862.

14 For more on the Ismāʿīlīs, see den Heijer, Lev, and Swanson, “The Fatimid Empire and its Population,” 328–331. See also Maged Mikhail, “The Early Islamic Period (641–1517): From the Arab Conquest through Mamlūk Rule,” in *The Coptic Christian Heritage: History, Faith, Culture*, ed. Lois Farag (London: Routledge, 2014), 39–53.

15 For an introduction to this diversity, see den Heijer, et al, “Christian Art and Culture.” This chapter covers church communities, literary culture and histories, society, art, patronage of churches, and religious diversity.

16 Samir, “The Role of Christians in the Fāṭimid Government Services of Egypt to the Reign of al-Ḥāfiz,” 191.

17 While earlier scholars leaned toward the minority number, conversion demographics and their implications are ripe for reassessment. Since Copts were less visible in political and military affairs and tended to live in rural rather than urban settings, estimates concerning the percentage of Copts in Egypt and Christians across the Middle East may be revised higher. See Tamer el-Leithy, “Coptic Culture and Conversion in Medieval Cairo

Ibn Rajā' grew up within the Fatimid power structure as a member of the Cairo elite. His familiarity with this privileged community also would have introduced him to Christian administrators who were part of the ruling class.¹⁸ Copts were a "covenant people" (*ahl al-dhimma*) who facilitated the evolution of Islamic civilization through intellectual discussions and integration into the wider society.¹⁹ According to the *History of the Patriarchs of Alexandria*, Christians lived in relative peace during the time of the caliph al-Mu'izz li-Dīn Allāh (ruled 973–975), and his son al-'Azīz (ruled 975–996).²⁰ There were miracles attributed to Coptic-Muslim interactions, and some Copts even claimed that al-Mu'izz converted to Christianity.²¹ The years under al-Mu'izz and al-'Azīz allowed for Ibn Rajā's conversion, but strident persecution of Christians surfaced under the Fatimid ruler al-Ḥākim.²² Some challenges of the period

1293–1524 A.D." (PhD diss.: Princeton University, 2005), 23–28; Heinz Halm, *Die Kalifen von Kairo: Die Fatimiden in Ägypten 973–1074* (Munich: Beck, 2003), 13; Johannes den Heijer, Mat Immerzeel, Naglaa Hamdi Boutros, Manhal Makhoul, Perrine Pilette, and Tineke Rooijackers, "Christian Art and Culture," in *The World of the Fatimids*, ed. Assadullah Souren Melikian-Chirvani (Toronto: Aga Khan Museum/Munich: Hirmer, 2018), 190–217, esp. 194; and Jack Tannous, *The Making of the Medieval Middle East: Religion, Society, and Simple Believers* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2018), 491–504.

18 On Copts in the administration, see Jerys and Fouad, "The Copts in the Fatimid Era," 536–538.

19 Yaacov Lev, "The Fatimid Caliphs, the Copts, and the Coptic Church," *Medieval Encounters* 21 (2015): 390–410, esp. 402; Yaacov Lev, *State and Society in Fatimid Egypt* (Leiden: Brill, 1991), 185–187. There are some enduring misperceptions regarding Copts among scholars of the Middle East due to the destruction of Christian manuscripts, the biases of academic publishing, college course offerings, and hiring practices in the western world. See Tannous, *The Making of the Medieval Middle East*, 494–496.

20 For a long-term study, especially on polemics and identity, see Maged Mikhail, *From Byzantine to Islamic Egypt: Religion, Identity and Politics after the Arab Conquest* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2014), 232–254. See also Pruitt, *Building the Caliphate*, 47–67.

21 According to the miracle story, al-Mu'izz heard that the Gospel taught that faith the size of a mustard seed could move mountains (Matt 17:20). The caliph told Patriarch Abraham that he would persecute the Copts unless they moved the Muqaṭṭam hills, whereupon they fasted and prayed. Subsequently the hills moved back to allow for the expansion of Cairo. See Atiya, 'Abd al-Masiḥ, and KHS-Burmester, eds., *HPEC*, 100 (Arabic), 150–151 (English). See an analysis of the miracle in Maryann Shenoda, "Displacing *dhimmi*, Maintaining Hope: Unthinkable Coptic Representations of Fatimid Egypt," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 39 (2007): 587–606; and Johannes den Heijer, "Apologetic Elements in Coptic-Arabic Historiography: The Life of Afrahām ibn Zur'ah, 62nd Patriarch of Alexandria," in *Christian Arabic Apologetics During the Abbasid Period (750–1258)*, ed. Samir Khalil Samir and Jørgen Nielsen (Leiden: Brill, 1994), 192–202.

22 See a Muslim account of the persecutions according to the historian Ghāzī ibn al-Wāsiṭī (d. 1312) in the Arabic text and translation found in Richard Gottheil, "An Answer to the Dhimmis," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 41 (1921): 383–457, esp. 394–395, 427–428.

included Arabicization,²³ Islamization, the ambiguous status of Copts as *dhim-mīs*, conversions to Islam, the capriciousness of caliphs and their administrations, and the incompetency of Coptic leadership.²⁴ Like many other Christians, Ibn Rajāʾ did not simply acquiesce to these challenges. His actions and writings in response to the policies of the caliph al-Ḥākīm supported Coptic religious, cultural, and ethnic values through active resistance, preserving tradition, and adaptation to the shifting needs of the age.²⁵ Ibn Rajāʾʼs strategy was to engage Sunnī and Ismāʿīlī Muslims using their own tools and Arabic language, and, by virtue of the reception of his ideas, Ibn Rajāʾʼ became one of the most influential Christian Arabic writers to clarify Christians views of Islam.

3 The Biography of Būluṣ Ibn Rajāʾ

The *History of the Patriarchs of Alexandria* preserved Būluṣ (Paul) ibn Rajāʾʼs biography. The author who composed this section was Michael of Damrū, the Bishop of Tinnīs (ca. 1051).²⁶ This part of the *History of the Patriarchs of Alexandria* was later translated from Michaelʼs Coptic text into Arabic, then edited

23 On the shift from Coptic to Arabic, see Jason Zaborowski, "From Coptic to Arabic in Medieval Egypt," *Medieval Encounters* 14 (2008): 15–40; Arietta Papaconstantinou, "Why Did Coptic Fail where Aramaic Succeeded? Linguistic Developments in Egypt and the Near East after the Arab Conquest," in *Multilingualism in the Graeco-Roman Worlds*, ed. Alex Mullen and Patrick James (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 58–76; and Tonio Sebastian Richter, "Greek, Coptic and the 'Language of the Hijra': the Rise and Decline of the Coptic Language in Late Antique and Medieval Egypt," in *From Hellenism to Islam: Cultural and Linguistic Change in the Roman Near East*, ed. Hannah Cotton, et al (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 401–446.

24 Shenoda, "Displacing *dhimmī*, Maintaining Hope," 588.

25 For more examples of creative engagement in Arabic, see Mark Swanson, "Copto-Arabic Literature," in *Coptic Civilization: Two Thousand Years of Christianity in Egypt*, ed. Gawdat Gabra (Cairo: The American University in Cairo Press, 2014), 153–161; Samuel Moawad, "Coptic Arabic Literature: When Arabic Became the Language of the Saints," in *The Coptic Christian Heritage: History, Faith, Culture*, ed. Lois Farag (London: Routledge, 2014), 224–236.

26 Ibn Rajāʾʼs biography is found in Atiya, ʿAbd al-Masīḥ, and KHS-Burmeister, eds., *HPEC*, 101–113 (Arabic), 151–170 (English). Michael of Damrū (Mikhāʿīl al-Damrāwī), the Bishop of Tinnīs and synodal secretary, composed a biography of Ibn Rajāʾʼ in 1051, about two or three decades after his death. Michael obtained Ibn Rajāʾʼs biographical information from the deacon Theodore ibn Mīnā, his predecessor as secretary for the Patriarchate and personal confidant of Ibn Rajāʾʼ. Michael probably heard this story from Theodore orally, but he had also read Ibn Rajāʾʼs work. See Mark Swanson, "Michael of Damrū," in *CMR, Volume 3 (1050–1200)*, eds. David Thomas and Alex Mallett (Leiden: Brill, 2011), 84–88. For a summary of

decades later by Mawhūb ibn Manṣūr ibn Mufarrij al-Iskandarānī (d. ca. 1100).²⁷ Michael of Damrū notes that he based his account on eyewitness reports; this indicates that Ibn Rajāʾʾs biography was not a later addition by its Arabic editor, but instead was written down within two or three decades of his death. The following section includes, first, a descriptive summary of the narrative in its extant Arabic form, and then an analysis of how Michael of Damrū (and perhaps the editor Mawhūb of Alexandria) depicted Ibn Rajāʾʾs life using hagiographical motifs to advance his own concerns.

Ibn Rajāʾʾ was born in Cairo, most likely during the 950s, and given the name Yūsuf (Joseph) ibn Rajāʾʾ.²⁸ His father Rajāʾʾ al-Shahīd was a leading jurist in Cairo who sat on the judgesʾ council.²⁹ Based upon his quotations of his teachers, Ibn Rajāʾʾ studied the Qurʾan, hadith collections, different opinions of Islamic jurists, and commentaries (*tafsīr*) under several prominent Sunnī Mālikī scholars, as well as Ismāʿīlī sages.³⁰ He narrates on the authority of Egyptian traditionists including al-Ḥasan ibn Rashīq al-ʿAskarī (d. 980), al-Ḥasan ibn Ismāʿīl al-Darrāb (d. 1002), and Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad ibn al-Faraj Abū Bakr al-Qammāḥ (fl. 970). According to his own comments, he was an observant Muslim.³¹

the sources, dating, and redaction of the *HPEC*, see Johannes den Heijer, “Coptic Historiography in the Fāṭimid, Ayyūbid, and Early Mamlūk Periods,” *Medieval Encounters* 2 (1996): 67–98, esp. 69–77. He notes that Michael’s section was originally composed in Coptic, and the modern Arabic edition is taken from a later translation of the text.

- 27 See Mark Swanson, “Mawhūb ibn Manṣūr ibn Mufarrij al-Iskandarānī,” in *CMR, Volume 3 (1050–1200)*, eds. David Thomas and Alex Mallett (Leiden: Brill, 2011), 217–222. On his role as an editor, see Johannes den Heijer, *Mawhūb ibn Manṣūr ibn Mufarrij et l’historiographie copto-arabe: Étude sur la composition de l’Histoire des patriarches d’Alexandrie* (Louvain: Peeters, 1989).
- 28 Some manuscripts refer to him by his nickname and given Muslim name, al-Wāḍiḥ Yūsuf ibn Rajāʾʾ. Rajāʾʾ literally means “hope” but also “fear” in the sense that one who hopes is not sure and may fear what happens.
- 29 Mathieu Tillier, “The *Qāḍīs* of Fustāṭ-Miṣr under the Ṭūlūnids and the Ikhshīdids: The Judiciary and Egyptian Autonomy,” *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 131 (2011): 207–222, esp. 217. Tillier explains that Cairo had a number of professional witnesses, hence the title *al-Shahīd*, who were responsible for local rulings. The leading judges kept in check their overall numbers and influence, but this exclusivity made its office holders an important social class in Fatimid Cairo.
- 30 See 1.4. The scholars that Ibn Rajāʾʾ cites are listed as Mālikī scholars or students of Mālikīs, yet some of the hadith reports that he attributes to them trace back to ‘Alī’s family and appear to be sympathetic to Ismāʿīlī Shīʿī versions of history, such as 3.27, 3.31, and 4.43. At one point, he also cites a contemporary, the influential Ismāʿīlī missionary Abū al-ʿAbbās Aḥmad al-Naysabūrī (d. 1021).
- 31 1.5.

One day during the reign of al-Mu‘izz (973–975), Ibn Rajā’ was walking along the Nile River in what is now Old Cairo (Miṣr-Fuṣṭāṭ;³² see also Figure 2 on p. 19) near the markets for firewood and reeds in the neighborhood of Birkat Rumays.³³ There, he observed a Muslim convert to Christianity who was facing imminent execution. The Fatimid soldiers were holding him up while they prepared firewood and reeds to burn him to death. Ibn Rajā’ joined the crowd there to watch the execution (not unlike Saul witnessing the execution of Stephen in Acts 7:58–8:1, according to the biographer). He approached the apostate and rebuked him for ascribing partners to God by claiming that “God is the third of three” (Q 5:73) and that Jesus Christ was God’s son. Ibn Rajā’ declared that the man’s conversion had only resulted in the loss of his soul, and that he would burn in hell. He offered the apostate one final chance to recant his conversion and be honored like a brother to him.³⁴ In response, the convert told Ibn Rajā’ that Christians were not guilty of association and maintained monotheism. The mystery of the Trinity as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit was hidden from Muslims like Ibn Rajā’. Then he predicted that, although Ibn Rajā’’s heart was darkened, eventually it would be illuminated by the light of Christian faith – and that Ibn Rajā’ would someday endure suffering for Jesus Christ. After this prophecy, Ibn Rajā’ became angry and struck the man in the face with his sandal. Ibn Rajā’ insisted that he would never become a convert, but the man told him to remember his words and their truth in the future. Then the apostate was beheaded and his remains were burned. After three days, the remains of his body were buried.³⁵ This encounter left Ibn Rajā’ distressed. He could not

32 For Miṣr, see Timm, *CAAZ*, 7:56. On Fuṣṭāṭ, see *CAAZ*, 7:33.

33 On Birkat Rumays, see Yāqūt ibn ‘Abd Allāh al-Ḥamawī, and Ferdinand Wüstenfeld, ed., *Jacut’s Moschtarik das ist, Lexicon geographischer Homonyme* (Göttingen: Druck und Verlag der Dieterichschen Buchhandlung, 1846), 54. See also Peter Sheehan, *Babylon of Egypt: The Archaeology of Old Cairo and the Origins of the City* (Cairo: American University in Cairo Press, 2010), esp. 88–92; Gertrud van Loon, “The Christian Heritage of Old Cairo,” in *The History and Religious Heritage of Old Cairo: Its Fortress, Churches, Synagogue and Mosque*, ed. Carolyn Ludwig and Morris Jackson (Cairo: American University in Cairo Press, 2016), 72–124. See also the social-historical contributions in Tasha Vorderstrasse and Tany Treptow, eds., *A Cosmopolitan City: Muslims, Christians, and Jews in Old Cairo* (Chicago: The Oriental Institute of Chicago, 2015); Lucy-Anne Hunt, *Byzantium, Eastern Christendom and Islam: Art at the Crossroads of the Medieval Mediterranean, Vol. 1* (London: Pindar Press, 1998), 319–342.

34 Giving a Muslim apostate the opportunity to change their mind about their conversion is mandated in legal hadith about how to deal with apostasy, known as *istitāba*. See “Mur-tadd,” in *ET*², 7:635–636.

35 Executions of Muslim converts to Christianity such as the one recounted here were known in this period. For an account of a similar martyrdom in Fatimid Egypt in 978, see Mark

eat that night. He told his father and brothers what had happened. Although they insisted that he should not worry about it, it remained on his mind.

Some years later, Ibn Rajā' told his father that he would like to travel with a group of Muslims from Cairo on pilgrimage to Mecca to perform the *ḥajj*.³⁶ His father gave him one hundred dinars, bought the necessary provisions, and arranged for Ibn Rajā' to travel with a family friend in a caravan. On their journey, one night Ibn Rajā' dreamed of a luminous being, which he believed to be an older monk, who told him: "Follow me and your soul shall benefit." When he related the dream to his father's friend, he warned him that the apparition of the monk was simply Satan seeking to lead him astray. However, the next two nights Ibn Rajā' experienced the same vision which gave him an identical message. The caravan eventually reached Mecca and Ibn Rajā' performed the pilgrimage, as he describes in *The Truthful Exposer*.³⁷ Six or seven days after leaving Mecca on their return journey, the caravan stopped one night and they dismounted their camels to relieve themselves. His father's friend and the caravan continued on their journey before Ibn Rajā' was ready to leave, and he became lost in the desert. He ran after the caravan on foot but could not catch up. He sat down, alone in the desert, wondering if wild beasts would kill and devour him. Suddenly, a young man in shining clothing appeared on a horse. After hearing of Ibn Rajā's plight, he offered to return the wayward traveler home. Then the horse began to take them back to Cairo so rapidly that Ibn Rajā' believed they were flying through the air. That night they arrived at the Church of Saint Mercurius in Old Cairo.³⁸ The church had been recently

Swanson, "The Martyrdom of Jirjis (Muzāḥim): Hagiography and Coptic Orthodox Imagination in Early Fatimid Egypt," *Medieval Encounters* 21 (2015): 431–451.

36 There were regular journeys from Cairo to Mecca at this time, as the holy cities were nominally under Fatimid rule. The caravans traveled across the Sinai desert and along the coast of the Arabian Peninsula along the Egyptian pilgrimage route.

37 27–28, 217–219.

38 Saint Philopater Mercurius Church, also known by the nickname of Abū Sayfayn, is located by the Roman fortress Qaṣr al-Sham' in Old Cairo (Miṣr-Fuṣṭāṭ). The church of Ibn Rajā's time had recently undergone renovation, but a Muslim mob burned down this edifice in 1168. After rebuilding the church, it later became the seat of the Coptic Orthodox Pope of Alexandria. See Mat Immerzeel, *The Narrow Way to Heaven: Identity and Identities in the Art of Middle Eastern Christianity* (Leuven: Peeters, 2017), 76–86; Otto Meinardus, *Two Thousand Years of Coptic Christianity* (Cairo: American University in Cairo Press, 1999), 188–189; den Heijer, et al, "Christian Art and Culture," 201–203; Basil Thomas Alfred Evetts, *Churches and Monasteries of Egypt and Some Neighboring Countries, by Abu Salih, The Armenian* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1895; Reprint Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias Press, 2001), 48, n. 2. The Coptic Orthodox priest Abū al-Makārim composed this work around 1200.

reopened under the Coptic Patriarch Abraham (d. 979),³⁹ with the support of the Fatimid caliph, so Ibn Rajāʾ's conversion took place in the 980s. When Ibn Rajāʾ dismounted inside the compound, he felt astonished at the miraculous event which had saved his life. He examined the church where the being had dropped him off, including the icons and candles. Ibn Rajāʾ spent the whole night in the sanctuary.

The next morning, the sacristan entered the church and, seeing Ibn Rajāʾ, thought that he was a thief. But after questioning Ibn Rajāʾ about his experience, he could only express surprise that he had somehow traveled from the Arabian desert to the church of Saint Mercurius in a single night. Upon hearing where Ibn Rajāʾ became lost, the sacristan told him that it should have taken another month and twelve days to return to Cairo.⁴⁰ Then Ibn Rajāʾ asked about Saint Mercurius. The sacristan explained the history of Saint Mercurius Philopater (Figure 1), who was a Roman Christian soldier with the nickname "the holder of two swords" (Abū Sayfayn), because he appeared to have both a military and heavenly sword at his side – the latter a gift from the Archangel Michael. After a successful defeat of the Berbers in battle, the Emperor Decius requested that Mercurius offer incense to the gods in thanksgiving. He refused on account of his Christian faith and was tortured and beheaded in Caesarea in 250 at the age of 25. The martyr's relics were eventually transferred to Old Cairo, and the church was built for the glory of God in his honor. The sacristan explained how Saint Mercurius was an intercessor before God who could provide miracles to aid those in need. He remarked that Ibn Rajāʾ was similar in appearance and age to the saint. Ibn Rajāʾ then asked the sacristan for an image of Saint Mercurius. Upon viewing an icon of the martyr, Ibn Rajāʾ concluded that his savior in the desert was none other than Saint Mercurius. The portrait appeared to be the same man wearing golden clothing. In gratitude for this miracle, Ibn Rajāʾ pledged to convert to Christianity.

Ibn Rajāʾ explained his situation – and the need to remain there in secret on account of the danger for himself and the church – to the sacristan. Then he asked a priest to instruct him in the practices of the Coptic Church and its theological doctrines. Everyone agreed to this arrangement, and Ibn Rajāʾ lived at the church while a priest answered all of his questions about Christianity. He

39 See den Heijer, "Apologetics in Copto-Arabic Historiography."

40 The distance between Mecca and Cairo by caravan was approximately 1,050 miles. If a caravan with camels were to travel an average of 22 miles per day (18–25 miles for camels is average), the total distance would take 48 days. As Ibn Rajāʾ became lost six or seven days into the return journey, that would leave a remainder of about 41–42 days, which is approximately one month and twelve days from Cairo.



FIGURE 1 Icon of St. Mercurius (Abū Sayfayn), by Yuhanna al-Armani (1778), Church of the Virgin Mary al-Mu‘allaqa, Cairo, Egypt

had the priest translate the Bible from Coptic into Arabic for him, because he felt that he should have a knowledgeable foundation upon which to base his faith, especially because of the suffering he had to endure in giving up everything in his life.⁴¹ Ibn Rajā' began to look at his former life and Muslim beliefs more critically. He used spiritual terms to understand that Satan had sealed his heart, presenting his evil works to him in a favorable light to make him continue to stray in blindness and ignorance.⁴² He recognized "the darkness

41 The reference to biblical translation in this passage is intriguing. Presumably there would have been many biblical texts circulating in Arabic in the Coptic Church throughout Egypt. However, if this detail is historically accurate, then it suggests that Coptic clergy at the time were reluctant to use the Arabic Bible for liturgical purposes. For more on Copts and the Bible in Arabic, see Jason Zaborowski, "From Coptic to Arabic in Medieval Egypt."

42 I.4.

of error” that had led him to sin and unbelief, admitting: “For we wasted our earlier years in depravity and blindness until God blessed us and ... we turned away from that [i.e., Islam] to Him.”⁴³

Ibn Rajā’ also studied the Old and New Testaments with the priest. He was especially struck by the conversion story of the apostle Paul while on the road to Damascus to persecute Christians (Acts 9). On his journey, he experienced a bright light from heaven beaming down upon him while alone in the desert. A voice asked the blinded Saul why he was persecuting his people, which ultimately led to Jesus’ message for Paul to become his apostle. Because Ibn Rajā’ had participated in the martyrdom of a Christian, but was led out of error by a miraculous encounter with a being in the desert and desired to share his faith, he requested the baptismal name of Būluṣ (Paul).⁴⁴ The priest there was afraid to baptize him on account of potential violence and possible demonic powers at play. He recommended that Ibn Rajā’ travel to the desert monasteries at Wādī al-Naṭrūn (Scetis) to be baptized.⁴⁵ But Ibn Rajā’ eventually persuaded the priest to initiate him into Christianity on account of his fervent faith and the danger of travel. After his baptism, Ibn Rajā’ wore simple wool clothes, and, because of his fasting, he was barely recognizable. Along with frequent prayer, he committed himself to reading the Bible and theological books.

In the meantime, the caravan was still returning to Cairo. Ibn Rajā’’s brothers went out to meet the group about two days’ travel ahead of its arrival, but they could not locate him. The family friend explained that he was forced to leave without Ibn Rajā’ and assumed he had joined another part of the group elsewhere. When the friend could not find him in the caravan the following day, he assumed that Ibn Rajā’ had become lost in the desert and wild animals had killed him. The brothers informed their father of the news, and he set up a mourning service for his son who was presumed dead.

But one day when Ibn Rajā’ left the Saint Mercurius church compound, a friend noticed him wearing woolen garments and the Christian girdle (*zunnār*).

43 I.5.

44 The biography connects Ibn Rajā’ with Paul’s words in Romans 8:35–39: “Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, ‘For thy sake we are being killed all the day long; we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered.’ No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am sure that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

45 This desert region was known in the medieval period as Wādī Habīb. On these monasteries, see Johannes den Heijer, “Wādī al-Naṭrūn and the *History of the Patriarchs of Alexan-*

The man told the family about this Christian who resembled their long-lost son. Ibn Rajā'’s brothers disguised themselves and hid outside the church. After Ibn Rajā' left the vespers service at Saint Mercurius, his brothers recognized him and followed him toward the Nile River. There they approached him in grief over what he had done. They wanted to hide the conversion because it would bring disgrace to their family, so they brought him back to their father. After interrogating Ibn Rajā', they learned about his conversion to Christianity. Ibn Rajā'’s father disowned him. He lamented the shame it would bring upon him among the judges and jurists of the council in Cairo and even suggested the conversion happened because he did not marry off his son. The family members imprisoned Ibn Rajā' in a dark room for three days without food or drink, but he did not recant his conversion. His mother became distraught over the matter and fasted. Before they released him, they discussed killing him to avoid dishonor. But they decided to bring him from Cairo to Giza in secret, so that he would not bring public shame to his family.⁴⁶ Reports of his presumed death were better for the family’s image than knowledge of his apostasy from Islam.⁴⁷

Eventually, Ibn Rajā' made his way to Wādī al-Naṭrūn (Scetis) and took monastic vows. However, a fanatical monk advised him to publicly proclaim his apostasy from Islam and his new faith in Christianity – otherwise, the Lord would not accept his conversion. In obedience, Ibn Rajā' returned to Cairo and visited his family. Upon seeing him in the woolen hood of a monk, his father imprisoned him in their cellar for six days without food. The only thing that came down to him was the dust and dirt which they swept out of the house. His mother continued to grieve and even sent him food secretly, although he rejected it.⁴⁸ On the seventh day of fasting and prayer, the same luminous

dria,” *Coptica* 2 (2003): 24–42; Karl-Heinz Brune, “The Multiethnic Character of the Wadi al-Natrun,” *Coptica* 2 (2003): 12–23. See references in Timm, *CAAZ*, 7:51, 94.

46 Giza was a primarily Christian town on the west bank of the Nile. See den Heijer, et al, “Christian Art and Culture,” 198; and Timm, *CAAZ*, 7:35.

47 The Qur’an states that apostasy from Islam will result in eternal punishment (Q 2:109, 9:74), but it is vague about earthly repercussions. However, the hadith traditions are quite clear that apostasy merits death by execution, which was promulgated by Islamic jurists of the medieval era. On Islamic accounts of apostates leaving for Christianity, see Christian Sahner, *Christian Martyrs under Islam: Religious Violence and the Making of the Muslim World* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2018), 253–263; Christian Sahner, “Swimming Against the Current: Muslim Conversion to Christianity in the Early Islamic Period,” *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 136 (2016): 265–284.

48 Since the biography never mentions the religious identity of Ibn Rajā'’s mother, it is unclear if she did this simply out of love for her son or because she too was a Christian and he was raised in a mixed marriage. The fact that Ibn Rajā' did not know Coptic, however, may suggest that she was a Muslim or a Christian of a different community. There is not enough evidence to speculate further on this matter.

monk from his dream visions on the way to Mecca appeared and brought him bread. He revealed himself to Ibn Rajā' as Saint Macarius, the fourth-century founder of the Scetis monastic movement (not to be confused with the third-century martyr Saint Mercurius). When his father was unable to persuade him to renounce his new faith, he forced Ibn Rajā' to watch his older brother have sex with his former concubine.⁴⁹ Ibn Rajā' had also had a young son with this concubine. His father again threatened that, if he did not renounce his Christian faith, his son would die right before his eyes. When Ibn Rajā' refused to recant, his father arranged for the boy's teacher to drown him during swimming lessons. Ibn Rajā's father forced him to watch. Upon his deathbed, Ibn Rajā' reflected that these were two of the worst events to transpire in his life.

When these terrible deeds failed to dissuade Ibn Rajā' from abandoning Christianity, his father appealed to the caliph to have Ibn Rajā' condemned to death as an apostate from Islam. It was most likely the Fatimid caliph al-'Azīz bi'llāh (955–996) who appointed the chief justice in Egypt to preside over the case.⁵⁰ The judge was probably either 'Alī al-Nu'mān (974–984) or Muḥammad al-Nu'mān (984–999), both sons of Qāḍī al-Nu'mān (d. 974).⁵¹ The council convened to hear his case, along with witnesses, and they permitted a debate over whether his apostasy would merit death. Several notable leaders supported Ibn Rajā' in his case. A Christian wife of caliph al-'Azīz spoke on his behalf. His father was unable to prove any points against him in disputation, and

49 The arrangement of having a concubine was a common practice in medieval Egypt prior to marriage. See el-Leithy, "Coptic Culture and Conversion in Medieval Cairo 1293–1524 A.D.," 360–390.

50 The published edition of the *HPEC* claims that the appeal went to "al-Ḥākim." Most likely the Arabic term *al-ḥākim* here simply means "the ruler" of the time, since the dating of al-Ḥākim's reign and the historical context do not fit appropriately. This would fit best with the timeline presented in Jacques Tagher, *Christians in Muslim Egypt: An Historical Study of the Relations between Copts and Muslims from 640 to 1922*, trans. Ragai Makar (Altenberge: Oros Verlag, 1998), 99–100. Mark Swanson also found the mention of al-Ḥākim as difficult to reconcile with the context and suggested: "Perhaps the identification of the latter caliph as al-Ḥākim is a mistake. Then these dramatic events in Ibn Rajā's life could take place in the 970s, leaving room in the 980s (and perhaps beyond) for his collaboration with Sāwīrus ibn al-Muqaffa' (known to be an active senior churchman in 987) and a Christian ministry that would fall during the patriarchate of Philotheus (979–1003) – where Ibn Rajā's story is placed in the *History of the patriarchs*." See Swanson, "Būlus ibn Rajā'," 542.

51 Qāḍī al-Nu'mān was the founder of Ismā'īlī jurisprudence, which drew upon Mālikī Sunnī, Shī'ī, and local sources for its legal interpretations. See al-Qāḍī al-Nu'mān, *The Pillars of Islam: Da'ā'im al-Islām of al-Qāḍī al-Nu'mān*, ed. Ismail Poonawala, transl. Asaf Ali Asghar Fyzee (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2006); Richard Gottheil, "A Distinguished Family of Fatimide Cadis (al-Nu'mān) in the Tenth Century," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 27 (1906): 217–296; and "al-Nu'mān," *EI*², 8:117–118.

the judge sided with Ibn Rajā'. The caliph decided to free him and allow him freedom to go wherever he wished.

Būluṣ ibn Rajā' remained near Old Cairo and established a church that he dedicated to the Archangel Michael near the head of a canal (*Ra's al-Khalīj*) located between Abyssinian Lake (al-Ḥabash) and Banī Wā'il just south of Miṣr.⁵² One night during construction, some Muslims from the Ramādiyya neighborhood of Miṣr-Fuṣṭāṭ stole the building materials. When Ibn Rajā' found the group the next day, he offered them amnesty if they returned the wood, but if they did not, he threatened to appeal to the governor of Cairo. After they denied his accusation, he stated that he would bring the case to the caliph. Given the situation and his favor with the Fatimid leader, they feared his threat and returned everything. Once the church was completed and dedicated to Saint Michael the Archangel, Ibn Rajā' spent two years with the monks of Wādī al-Naṭrūn in the desert of Scetis. By this time, Ibn Rajā's reputation had earned him the epithet *al-Wāḍiḥ*, meaning "one who exposes something or renders it clear/evident." He befriended the distinguished Coptic apologist Severus ibn al-Muqaffa', bishop of Ashmūnayn (d. after 987).⁵³ Together they began to collaborate on Arabic works and would "consult together a good deal of the time to examine the books of God for the enlightenment of their minds and their nature, so that they might interpret spiritual books."⁵⁴

On account of his knowledge and prestige, the monks at the Monastery of Saint Macarius ordained Ibn Rajā' as a priest at the Sanctuary of Benjamin.⁵⁵ The representatives of the Coptic Patriarch Philotheus asked Ibn Rajā' for an obligatory donation for his ordination into the priesthood, which was a typical practice for the time.⁵⁶ This event probably took place around the end of

52 Evetts, *Churches and Monasteries of Egypt*, 340, notes: "This church was by the canal of the Banī Wā'il before the city of Miṣr to the south of 'Aḳabah Yaḥṣub, and is now near the Bridge of Al-Afram; it was newly built under Islam, and is of fine architecture." See also Paul Casanova, "Essai de reconstitution topographique de la ville d'Al-Fouṣṭāṭ ou Miṣr," *Mémoires de l'Institut français d'Archéologie orientale du Caire* 35 (1913): 1–110; (1916): 111–231; (1919): ix–xlili; 233–337; esp. xxvi and the maps at the end of the document. See also Timm, *CAAZ*, 7:54, 74.

53 Mark Swanson, "Sāwīrus ibn al-Muqaffa'," in *CMR, Volume 2 (900–1050)*, eds. David Thomas and Alex Mallett (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 491–509. On Ashmūnayn, see Timm, *CAAZ*, 7:17.

54 Atiya, 'Abd al-Masiḥ and KHS-Burmester, eds., *HPEC*, 110 (Arabic), 165 (English). It is unclear if any works attributed to Severus were works of collaboration with Ibn Rajā', although they could have finished texts dealing with Islamic debate together.

55 Hugh G. Evelyn White, *The Monasteries of the Wādī 'n Naṭrūn: Part III: The Architecture and Archaeology*, ed. Walter Hauser (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1933), 42–45.

56 Michael the Syrian repeats an account from Dionysius of Tell Mahre who visited Egypt in the ninth century and criticized the practice of paying for ordination among Coptic

Philotheus's reign (996–1003). Ibn Rajā' did not have the required amount, and the request for money troubled him. He considered the patriarch's failure to stop these representatives from demanding money, along with the rape of his concubine and the murder of his son, as the only events in his life which deeply troubled his faith. Fortunately, another monk paid the officials for Ibn Rajā' s ordination. Ibn Rajā' probably spent a number of years at the desert monasteries during the reign of al-Ḥākīm, and this is likely where he composed his works.

Sometime later, his father learned that Ibn Rajā' had become a priest, and he paid a group of Bedouins to assassinate his son. When news of the scheme reached the monastery, the monks agreed that Ibn Rajā' should go into hiding as he had already proclaimed his faith publicly. Ibn Rajā' fled in secret to Sandafā, one of the twin villages alongside al-Maḥalla in the Nile Delta region (*al-Rīf*; see also Figure 2).⁵⁷ He served as a steward at the church of Saint Theodore the Martyr for approximately two years, during which Ibn Rajā' became deathly ill. At this time, the secretary of the Coptic synod – Theodore ibn Mīnā – met with Ibn Rajā', who gave him an account of his life. This discussion became the basis for his biography. Soon afterward, Ibn Rajā' died of natural causes and was buried in a hidden crypt at the church of Saint Theodore in Sandafā so that a Muslim mob would not desecrate his remains.⁵⁸ Later, Theodore reported the information to his successor as secretary of the Coptic synod, Michael of Damrū, the Bishop of Tinnīs.⁵⁹ It was Michael who composed the biography around thirty years after Ibn Rajā' s death.⁶⁰ He confirmed that “this deacon Theodore was he who explained to me the case of this Saint Paul (Būluṣ) ibn Rajā' from its beginning to its end according to what he had related to him by his true mouth.”⁶¹

Christians at that time. See Michael the Syrian, *The Syriac Chronicle of Michael Rabo (the Great): A Universal History from the Creation*, transl. Matti Moosa (Teaneck, NJ: Beth Antioch Press, 2014), 562.

57 On Sandafā, see Timm, *CAAZ*, 7:76.

58 Ibn Rajā' s burial site is no longer known, nor are any relics attributed to him.

59 On Tinnīs, see Timm, *CAAZ*, 7:88.

60 This section covers the years 880–1046 and was written in 1051. For a summary of the text's sources, dating, and redaction, see den Heijer, “Coptic historiography in the Fāṭimid, Ayyūbid, and early Mamlūk periods.”

61 Atiya, 'Abd al-Masīḥ and KHS-Burmester, eds., *HPEC*, 112 (Arabic), 169 (English). This comment precludes the possibility that the biography and its material are the work of a later author such as the Arabic translator and editor Mawḥūb of Alexandria, although he or later interpolators may have stylized the Arabic account. According to the Coptic cataloger Shams al-Ri'āsa Abū al-Barakāt ibn Kabar (d. 1324), Ibn Rajā' wrote down his own autobiography, but more likely he was referencing Michael's biography.



FIGURE 2 Map of key sites in the life of Ibn Rajā'

The life of Būluṣ ibn Rajā' was a mix of suffering and triumph. He endured the persecutions of al-Ḥākim, faced the trial his father brought against him for apostasy, personally witnessed the rape of his concubine,⁶² the murder of his son, the theft of his property, and concealed himself from a mob attempting to kill him at the end of his life. From this perspective, we might view him as a victim. But Ibn Rajā' also freely converted from Islam to Christianity, he publicly declared his conversion, he was set free after his apostasy case, he became a Coptic monk and priest, and he was able to write critiques of Islam. He became one of the most famous Copto-Arabic writers of his time whose notoriety shaped later Christian views of Islam, the Qur'an, and Muḥammad. Ibn Rajā's biography demonstrates his remarkable impact on Coptic Christianity and the Fatimid Islamic communities in Egypt.⁶³

62 "Concubine" is the appropriate term for this medieval institutionalized practice, but it is problematic – the term strips away the agency, identity, and humanity of a woman, describing her primarily through her function as a sexual object possessed by another.

63 See for instance Mark Swanson, *The Coptic Papacy in Islamic Egypt* (Cairo: The American University in Cairo Press, 2010), 43–57. On the contemporary struggle to assert Coptic identity in Egypt, see the contributors in Nelly van Doorn-Harder, ed., *Copts in Context: Negotiating Identity, Tradition, Modernity* (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 2017).

According to his biography, Ibn Rajā' composed three works. His final composition was *The Truthful Exposer* (*Kitāb al-Wāḍiḥ bi-l-Ḥaqq*), also called *The Confession* (*al-I'tirāf*). In *The Truthful Exposer*, Ibn Rajā' mentions two earlier works that were critiques of commentators on the Qur'an and hadith collections. These two pieces are not currently known to be extant. The first is known as *The Amusing Anecdotes of the Commentators and Corruption of the Opponents* (*Nawādir al-mufasssīrīn wa-tahrīf al-mukhālifīn*). The other piece he titled *Demonstration on the Contradiction of the Hadith* (*Kitāb al-ibāna fī tanāquḍ al-ḥadīth*).⁶⁴ Thus he wrote a trilogy meant to undermine the three foundations of Islamic belief: the Qur'an, the commentators, and the hadith collections. In addition, Ibn Rajā's biographer Michael of Damrū quotes a lengthy excerpt from *The Truthful Exposer* about a Muslim convert to Christianity named al-Hāshimī.⁶⁵ This proves that Michael had a copy of Ibn Rajā's work when he was writing the biography.

By reconstructing Ibn Rajā's life from the *History of the Patriarchs of Alexandria*, we can presume that he was born in the latter half of the 950s and had the experience with the apostate martyr around 973–975. Ibn Rajā' converted around 25 years of age (like St. Mercurius) in the 980s and his apostasy case likely occurred later in the decade. At this time, he collaborated with Severus ibn al-Muqaffa', which was perhaps limited as the two men were of different generations and Ibn Muqaffa' passed away sometime after 987. He was ordained a priest sometime between 996–1003, during the reign of Philotheus. He wrote his three main works during the reign of al-Ḥākim. It was during the latter part of his reign that Ibn Rajā' would have fled to the Nile Delta region and passed away a few years later.

These conjectures are dependent upon taking Michael of Damrū's historical descriptions at face value, but we must acknowledge that the genres of hagiography and historical writing were intertwined in late antique and medieval texts.⁶⁶ Michael was writing what medieval authors would consider "history"

64 Neither work is extant; see Swanson, "Būluṣ ibn Rajā'," 545–546.

65 3.34–38. Johannes den Heijer argues that Michael's section on Ibn Rajā' was originally composed in Coptic, and the modern Arabic edition is taken from a later translation of the text. However, I believe the quotation from Ibn Rajā's work was probably copied from Ibn Rajā's Arabic text by Michael for this section, so he probably did not translate it into Coptic. See den Heijer, "Coptic Historiography in the Fāṭimid, Ayyūbid, and Early Mamlūk Periods."

66 Stephen Davis, "Variations on an Egyptian Female Martyr Legend: History, Hagiography, and the Gendered Politics of Medieval Arab Religious Identity," in *Writing 'True Stories': Historians and Hagiographers in the Late Antique and Medieval Near East*, eds. Arietta Papaconstantinou, et al (Turnhout: Brepols, 2010), 205–218.

in his account of the patriarchs, but the details of Ibn Rajā's life and other figures show that the genre of hagiography shaped his narrative – these are one and the same approach for him. Michael's biography of Ibn Rajā' also contains complex layering, since it must be analyzed alongside Ibn Rajā's writings, as well as anecdotal evidence that Ibn Rajā' left an autobiography, Michael's claim to utilize a source (Theodore) who spoke directly with Ibn Rajā', and possible textual emendations made a few decades later by the Arabic translator Mawhūb of Alexandria.⁶⁷ The biographical account was probably shaped by Michael's knowledge of Ibn Rajā's rhetoric from his works. This suggests that, rather than a historical report, Michael created a narrative reflection on how Ibn Rajā's life and works served the purposes of Copts decades later. Indeed, Michael did not present a historically precise reconstruction – we know, for instance, that the claim that Ibn Rajā's apostasy trial was held under al-Ḥākīm is incorrect (which may indicate this was a mistaken emendation by Mawhūb, or a generic reference to the Fatimid leader). Claims for Ibn Rajā' composing his own autobiography are most likely later misattributions from Michael's biography to Ibn Rajā'. Also, Michael's claim to have spoken with a reputable source is a common literary trope in hagiographical accounts, and – if accurate – the information was not simply transmitted but transformed over time. More realistically, Michael's account reflects many of the literary features of hagiography found in the *History of the Patriarchs of Alexandria* and other literature about saints in the Christian East.⁶⁸ Michael is aware of Ibn Rajā' writings, rhetoric, and discourse, and he utilizes this knowledge to frame his account. Indeed, his narrative is not a documentary account of what actually happened, but a personal reflection and narration on what the figure of Būluṣ ibn Rajā' meant for the contemporary life of the Coptic Church.

In the Fatimid period, one of the main features of hagiography was to respond to the challenge of Islam. Lives of saints often focused especially on the conversion motif, whereby the legends of converts to Christianity followed the models found in the accounts about persecutions in the early Church or in the early Islamic era. The purposes of such texts were to dissuade other Christians from converting to Islam and to provide an alternative historiography of Christians living with Muslims while maintaining their agency. These texts confront Islamic structures of power and critique them while depicting a bet-

67 See Sahner, *Christian Martyrs under Islam*, 8–12.

68 See, for instance, Mark Swanson, "Sainthood Achieved: Coptic Patriarch Zacharias according to The History of the Patriarchs," in *Writing 'True Stories'*, 219–230.

ter model in the form of the convert's Church. These hagiographical accounts were rejoinders to the reality of the fuzzy boundaries between Christians and Muslims. Hagiographers, who were typically Church leaders, wished to present intractable walls of separation between the communities to reinforce their authority, with Christianity depicted as the true religion (Muslim authors did the same in reverse). Ibn Rajā's life became a template for Coptic Church officials who wished to assuage the worries of their faithful flock, to remind them of the dangers of engaging with Muslims, and to show them that heroic conversions by Muslims were still a reality in the eleventh century.

Another key feature in Michael's hagiography is that he used miraculous events attributed to important saints as key motifs to promote Coptic Orthodoxy and persuade his readers about the truth of the saints' intercessions in the lives of the faithful. Saint Macarius appears in Ibn Rajā's dreams during his pilgrimage to Mecca just prior to his conversion, and again during his imprisonment by his father. Given the fact that Ibn Rajā later became a monk and priest at Saint Macarius in Scetis, Michael probably envisioned the saint's appearance in Ibn Rajā's dreams as a way to enhance the prestige of the monastery, which could attach the wonderworking of Macarius to its more recent colleague and saint. The second connection between a saint and a miraculous event occurs when Ibn Rajā is saved in the desert. While this account has a clear connection with the desert experience of Saint Paul the Apostle on the road to Damascus, Michael chooses to associate the account with a different saint in the *History of the Patriarchs of Alexandria*. According to Michael, Ibn Rajā encountered Saint Mercurius. There are two interesting connections here. First, a Coptic priest instructs Ibn Rajā in the Bible and baptizes him at Saint Mercurius church, which suggests that the saint's appearance served to strengthen his connection to the church as a miracle worker and willing intercessor. Second, the Coptic Patriarch Abraham had recently renovated Saint Mercurius church, and it needed strong patronage. Connecting Ibn Rajā's conversion experience with Saint Mercurius and the refurbished church unified the saint, the building, and the new Coptic convert; therefore, they could mutually enhance the prestige of one another. Michael connected Ibn Rajā's life with specific structures and places to provide them with religious authority. The same process unfolds in Michael's account of Ibn Rajā's aid in the construction of the church dedicated to Saint Michael the Archangel. Ibn Rajā's hagiography sanctified Coptic space and shrines.

Michael's biography of Būluş ibn Rajā is a protest against Islamization and religious demographic change in the Egyptian world of the mid-eleventh century. It presents his life as a historical model for finding the truth of Jesus Christ in the Coptic Church, and suggests that – despite conversions flowing

in the opposite direction – the saints continued to intercede for the Copts. For Michael, Būluṣ ibn Rajā' was a Coptic saint – a person whose life and works were connected to the divine and worthy of emulation. We must keep in mind that his biography is more than a historical report, because Michael possessed a hagiographical worldview which shaped his portrait of Ibn Rajā' as a scion of resistance to Islam and a sanctifier within the Coptic Orthodox Church.

The Context for Ibn Rajā’s *The Truthful Exposer*

1 Title, Date, and Audience: Copts and Muslims ca. 1009–1012

Contextualizing and translating Ibn Rajā’s book title *Kitāb al-Wāḍiḥ bi-l-Ḥaqq* is an unsatisfying task. There is no perfect way to fully convey the range of senses of “*al-Wāḍiḥ*” as both a title and a nickname for Būluṣ ibn Rajā’. Given that we know this word refers to the author, we might think of *al-Wāḍiḥ* as referring to Ibn Rajā’ as someone who is performing the action. Thus, *Kitāb al-Wāḍiḥ* can mean “The Book of one who exposes [something]/The Exposer,” or it can convey “one who clarifies/The Clarifier” or “The Unveiler,” or – as the Latin translator chose – “The Book of Denudation.” This phrase suggests his intent to expose, clarify, unveil, or denude the different facets of Islam (the Qur’an, Muḥammad, the tradition).

However, there is also the challenge of how to integrate the final words *bi-l-ḥaqq*. This is because *al-Kitāb bi-l-ḥaqq* is a turn of phrase that frequently appears in the Qur’an (Q 2:176; Q 2:213; 3:3; 4:105; 5:48; 39:2; 42:17). Here it could mean “The Book/Scripture with [regard to] the Truth” (as a noun of description) or “The Book in truth” (as an emphatic). The Qur’an uses this phrase to describe earlier scriptures as well: “He has sent down upon you the Book in truth/with the Truth, confirming what was before it, as He revealed the Torah and the Gospel” (Q 3:3). Something accomplished “in truth/with the Truth” or *bi-l-ḥaqq* has a specific revelatory character and has the connotation of being authenticated. It appears that Ibn Rajā’ is alluding to the fact that his work is a (better) criterion with regard to the truth. Or, perhaps it is an emphatic that his book is indeed “truly” inspired by God, and truthfully sent down. Ibn Rajā’ does not use this phrase except in his title, although he often uses the word “truth” to argue that the Qur’an does not contain it.

The Arabic letter *bā’* in *bi-l-ḥaqq* could have two different connotations, as it could have a descriptive or causative function. A literal translation of the title would be “The Exposer’s Book with [regard to] the Truth” or “The Exposer’s Truthful Book,” meaning the work has a decisive and revelatory nature. I have given the title in previous publications as *Clarity in Truth*, but this does not convey the sense that *al-Wāḍiḥ* is also a nickname for the author. Other scholars have advocated reading “in truth” as an emphatic with a revelatory sense, as found in the second example above. Given this context, I have chosen the imperfect title *The Truthful Exposer*.

We can be more certain about the time frame in which *The Truthful Exposer* was composed. The violence Coptic Christians experienced during the reign of caliph al-Ḥākim was a significant factor that led to its composition. In one passage, Ibn Rajā' cites a hadith where Muḥammad claims that, within a hundred years, no person would be alive because God would have initiated His final judgment by that time. In response, Ibn Rajā' points out: "This is impossible and has no truth to it, because we have passed four hundred years and people increase more than ever."¹ According to the Hijra calendar, 400AH began in August 1009. The reference to four hundred years since the life of Muḥammad in this passage therefore suggests that Ibn Rajā' composed his work right around this date, ca. 1009–1012, during the reign of al-Ḥākim.² In *The Truthful Exposer*, Ibn Rajā' mentions his other two works, which were probably written in the earlier part of al-Ḥākim's rule (996–1021).

The period from 1005–1020 in the Fatimid caliphate witnessed one of the most systematic persecutions of Christian persons and properties in history. This assessment was the consensus among Melkite, Coptic, and Muslim historians of the period.³ As early as 1002, al-Ḥākim jailed and even executed leading Christian administrators. During 1004–1005, al-Ḥākim required that Christians wear black belts and distinctive badges on their clothing, in order to identify them in the community – which also occurred under the Pact of 'Umar in other times and places.⁴ He banned the sale of beer and, later, the production of wine by destroying vineyards; years afterward, he banned raisins and other fermentable products, all of which disproportionately affected Christians. By 1007–1008, al-Ḥākim forbade the public display of crosses, complete with a public burning of those which were seized, and confiscated other church materials. According to the Muslim historian al-Maqrīzī, al-Ḥākim began planning

1 18.152.

2 The Latin translation indicated the text was being written in the fourth century AH, but the Arabic text more precisely states it is four hundred years later. This ambiguity in the Latin led to a wide range of dating possibilities for its composition.

3 See a Muslim account sympathetic to the Fatimids in Taqī al-Dīn Aḥmad ibn 'Alī al-Maqrīzī, *Ittī'āz al-Ḥunafā' bi-Akhhbār al-A'imma al-Fāṭimīyyīn al-Khulafā'*, 3 vols., ed. Jamāl al-Dīn al-Shayyāl and Muḥammad Ḥilmī Muḥammad Aḥmad (Cairo: 1967–1973). For an eyewitness Melkite Christian account, see Yaḥyā ibn Sa'īd al-Anṭākī, *Histoire de Yaḥyā ibn Sa'īd d'Antioche*, ed. and transl. Ignace Kratchkovsky and Aleksandr Vasiliev, *Patrologia Orientalis* 23.3 (Paris: Firmin-Didot, 1932; Reprint: 2002), 347–520; and Yaḥyā ibn Sa'īd al-Anṭākī, *Histoire de Yaḥyā ibn Sa'īd d'Antioche*, ed. Ignace Kratchkovsky, transl. Françoise Micheau and Gérard Troupeau, *Patrologia Orientalis* 47.4 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1997). See the Coptic historical viewpoint composed by Michael of Damrū in Atiya, 'Abd al-Masiḥ and KHS-Burmester, eds., *HPEC*.

4 On the emergence of Islamic regulations for minorities, see Milka Levy-Rubin, *Non-Muslims in the Early Islamic Empire: From Surrender to Coexistence* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017).

for a systematic destruction of non-Muslim places of worship. The following year, two churches in Cairo were torn down to permit the new construction of al-Maqs mosque and the expansion of al-Azhar. In 1009–1010, he ordered the destruction of the Church of the Holy Sepulcher in Jerusalem, the site that Christians recognize as the place of Jesus' crucifixion, burial, and resurrection. During this same year, al-Ḥākim ordered the looting and demolition of the Melkite patriarchal headquarters, located at the monastery of Quṣayr in Cairo. The Melkite patriarch living there was Arsenius, the uncle to al-Ḥākim's sister Sitt al-Mulk. Al-Ḥākim had his relative Arsenius assassinated a few months later. In terms of daily regulations, Christians were required to dress in black turbans and could not put lights on their churches. Al-Ḥākim forbade public gatherings of Copts at the Feast of Epiphany (The baptism of Jesus Christ, on January 6 of the Julian calendar) and the Feast of the Cross.⁵

The protocols of 1012–1013 were perhaps more burdensome for Christians living under Muslim rule than at any other point in history. Both Muslim and Christian historians confirmed several impositions aimed at the Coptic administrative, medical, and merchant classes for the purpose of prompting their conversion to Islam. These included wearing black turbans and hoods as well as five-pound crosses around the neck, and riding only mules or donkeys (while forbidding Muslims to rent or sell to Christians) using wooden riding gear rather than leather. Muslims were not to be in any subservient relationship to Christians, whether as slaves or servants renting out their labor. Christians were not permitted to make any religious sounds, such as ringing bells or clappers. They were forbidden from publicly displaying crosses (except, ironically, for the heavy ones around their necks). Authorities and commoners were granted license to observe the actions of their Christian neighbors and report on any violations. Plundering and destruction of churches across the Fatimid realm reinforced these regulations. Al-Ḥākim tempted local Muslim populations to collaborate by allowing them to keep their plunder. In Cairo, the leading churches were looted for any items of value including vestments and those made of precious metals. In many other locations in Egypt and beyond, al-Ḥākim ordered the repossession of church properties for redistribution to local Muslims and converted the buildings into mosques. When a large group

5 Paul Walker, "Al-Ḥākim and the Dhimmīs," *Medieval Encounters* 21 (2015): 345–363, esp. 350–351. See also Walker, *Caliph of Cairo*, 83–85, 205–212. The Feast of the Cross referred to here could be on 17 Thout, commemorating the consecration of the Church of the Holy Sepulcher and Constantine's vision of the Cross, or 10 Paramhotep, commemorating Helena's discovery of the Cross and Heraclius restoring the Cross to Jerusalem in 629. These dates correspond to late September and mid-March on the Gregorian calendar.

of Coptic clerks, physicians, merchants, and clergy went to the palace to plead with al-Ḥākim in October of 1012, he calmed them – according to the Melkite historian and eyewitness Yaḥyā ibn Saʿīd – but then promptly increased regulations against Christians. The intention was that Christians employed by the Fatimid government would need to either resign from their jobs or convert to Islam. In Cairo (although not in other parts of Fatimid territory), these events led to mass conversions of Coptic and Melkite Christians to Islam – especially among those who served in the administration. Those who chose to remain Christian rarely went out in public. Some had their homes raided. Due to regulations, rumors, and mob violence, al-Ḥākim's Fatimid Egypt was a place of fear for Copts until the last two years of his rule (1020–1021).⁶

These events help to explain why Būluṣ ibn Rajā' was determined to compose *The Truthful Exposer*. He did not write it solely to justify his conversion, or merely out of a desire to attract converts to the Coptic Church, although those considerations undoubtedly motivated him. The most likely causal factor seems to be that his works were a response to the policies that al-Ḥākim promulgated from 1005–1012. Some historians claim that thousands of churches were affected by this vast program of destruction and repossession. According to an eyewitness, the historian Yaḥyā ibn Saʿīd, who fled from Egypt to Byzantine Antioch in 1013:

[Al-Ḥākim] granted all the churches and monasteries, both old and new, in Egypt and the districts of his kingdom, to the soldiery. He gave these to them, numbering in many thousands, with all of their furnishings, treasure, and goods, in order for them to destroy and reduce them to rubble. All of them were demolished; a few made into mosques. A decree was sent to the rest of his governorates to eradicate all traces of churches from the face of the earth and to remove all evidence of them. That was done; their very foundations were uprooted from the earth and, in several countries, the bones of the dead in the churches were thrown out. People burned them in the fires for the baths. They also burned copies of the Scriptures and other books found in the churches. In each region, those Christians in charge of affairs were made to pay the amounts due to the workers and demolishers who destroyed the churches. This happened to all of them throughout the kingdom except for the monastery once known as Isqīṭ (Scetis), which is in the Maryūṭ in the district of Alexan-

6 For attempts to rationalize and justify his actions, see the discussion in den Heijer, "Religion, Ethnicity and Gender under Fatimid Rule," 67–69.

dria, now called the Monastery of Abū Maqār and the small monasteries close by. Al-Ḥākim realized that two Arab tribes, the Banū Qurra and the Banū Kilāb, defended it and that they did so because of a benefit to them from it. So he held back against his hatred for it.⁷

The only location spared during this persecution was the monastic region of Scetis, where Ibn Rajāʾ was living. Given his reference to the fact that he is writing four hundred years after the time of Muḥammad (i.e., after 1009), and the fact that he was living during a period when Christians were suffering persecution, it seems that the events of 1009–1012 were major catalysts which motivated him to write *The Truthful Exposer*.

The Truthful Exposer reveals Būluṣ ibn Rajāʾ as a meticulous scholar who adapted intra-Islamic debates to respond to ongoing threats against Christians and their churches during the persecutions of al-Ḥākim in Fatimid Egypt. Ibn Rajāʾ was not engaged in a rhetorical exercise composed within the comfort of Christendom. The historical context of *The Truthful Exposer* reveals that real suffering prompted its creation. His work gave voice to the marginalized Copts by criticizing the power structures that incorporated systemic bias against them based on religion and language. *The Truthful Exposer* is a record of past protest by a religious and ethnic group that experienced persecution. This framework does not ignore Ibn Rajāʾ’s biases, but instead makes them relative to his historical circumstances.

In terms of audience, Ibn Rajāʾ had several reasons to write for Muslims and Christians. Disaffection with Christianity, acculturation, assimilation, and marriage were all factors that could draw Christians to Islam. He sometimes refers to his Christian readers, either to teach them how to respond to Muslims or to demonstrate contradictions in Islamic faith and practice. But Muslims are important readers too. There is a dearth of Christian theology in his work, and he rarely defends Christian doctrine. Instead, he often addresses Muslims directly in the text as “you” and also in the third person as “they.” This change of address indicates that he meant for both groups to read his work. In his opening invocation, he prays for his Muslim readers: “May God guide you to His obedience just as He guided us, and show you the way of truth just as He showed us, and guide you to His religion, which He chose for Himself, just as He guided us.”⁸ Later in his introduction, Ibn Rajāʾ prays: “We ask Him to keep us firm in that and to bless you – you who read my book and who are in a different religion – with what He has bestowed on us. May He

7 Walker, “Al-Ḥākim and the Dhimmīs,” 355.

8 L.4.

lead you from the darkness of error to the truth through His favor and His mercy.”⁹ Sometimes he addresses Muslims directly in an argumentative tone, such as by pointing out that verses about marital intrigues should not be part of a scripture to be read in prayers: “You crazy people, examine for yourselves this perilous situation. Think and you will recognize the outcome.”¹⁰ At other times, he is more conciliatory, such as when he writes: “Think about it, my brother – may God guide you – this impossibility has no truth to it.”¹¹ Whenever he cites hadith reports, he addresses Muslims directly, usually to affirm that they accept the validity of the source. Sometimes, Ibn Rajā’ switches back and forth between audience addressees.¹² On several occasions, Ibn Rajā’ uses the dialectical model “If someone says ... we say ...” (*in qāla ... naqūl*). At other points, he explains to Copts what kinds of questions are effective in discussions with Muslims.

Ibn Rajā’ was a practitioner of debate who absorbed the intellectual styles that he witnessed in the courts of Fatimid Cairo, including from his father’s professional career in Islamic law and his familiarity with intra-Islamic disputations.¹³ Some of his Muslim interlocutors were Ismā’īlīs, which is evident from his use of their hadith reports in his writings. These citations typically precede a direct address to the people who accept these reports, meaning his Ismā’īlī audience, such as “Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib, according to you is one of the pillars of knowledge.”¹⁴ We know of at least one Shī’ī reference to *The Truthful Exposer*, but it is from the modern period,¹⁵ so the extent to which it circulated among Muslims in Fatimid Egypt or in later periods is unknown. While the social elite in Cairo may have been one of his intended Muslim audiences, the simple Muslim believers he encountered among his protectors, the Banū Qurra and the Banū Kilāb, were also an appropriate audience for his reflections as an Arab and former Muslim. The “simple believers” who converted to Islam had religious lives that were based more on their culture and convenience than on theological principles. As Jack Tannous has argued, the Muslims in the early medieval

9 I.6.

10 14.110.

11 18.143.

12 17.134.

13 These intellectual circles included Muslim disputes with Christians. See, for instance, the literary debate between a Syriac Orthodox bishop and the caliph al-Mu’izz in the presence of Severus ibn al-Muqaffa’, which suggests there was a culture of open discussion, in Herman Teule, “Ibn al-Shammā’ Yu’anīs al-Suryānī,” in *CMR, Volume 2 (900–1050)*, ed. David Thomas and Alex Mallett (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 536–537.

14 26.215.

15 See the section on “Literary Afterlife: The Middle East” in this introduction on p. 76.

Middle East (and Egypt in particular) would have been part of a minority religion made up of many Christian converts who themselves were simple believers.¹⁶ These people would have been worthwhile conversation partners. Despite earlier speculation that he primarily intended the work for a Christian audience, the historical context for its emergence suggests a complicated mix of Coptic Christians (especially monks and clergy), Sunnī Muslims living near the Wādī al-Naṭrūn (especially simple believers), and Ismāʿīlī Muslims in Cairo (especially the religious elite, including the missionaries of the *daʿwa*).

2 Ibn Rajāʾ's Intellectual Circles

Ibn Rajāʾ's Islamic instructors, who were famous teachers and transmitters of hadith in their own right, provide a clear picture of his educational background as a young man in the latter half of the tenth century in Fatimid Cairo. He was raised in a culture that emphasized literary learning and the collection of books, but not at the expense of oral authorities.¹⁷ His father ensured Ibn Rajāʾ' s schooling was connected to influential jurists. As noted, his father Rajāʾ al-Shahīd, was part of the judges' council in Cairo. As part of the social elite, these judges were responsible for local rulings and served as a counterpoint to leading Fatimid judges.¹⁸ As for his instruction, Ibn Rajāʾ used transmission lines from Egyptian jurists on twelve occasions in *The Truthful Exposer*, confirming his training in his father's profession. According to his citations, his scholarly circle included:

1. Abū Muḥammad al-Ḥasan ibn Rashīq al-ʿAskarī (d. 980)¹⁹
2. Al-Ḥasan ibn Ismāʿīl al-Ḍarrāb (d. 1002)²⁰

16 On the term "simple believers" in reference to the Eastern Christians who converted to Islam and their interactions in daily life, see Tannous, *The Making of the Medieval Middle East*, 431–490, 497. On monasteries as potential places for a Muslim audience, see 461–473.

17 Paul Walker, "Literary Culture in Fatimid Egypt," in *The World of the Fatimids*, ed. Assadullah Souren Melikian-Chirvani (Toronto: Aga Khan Museum/Munich: Hirmer, 2018), 160–175. One estimation is that the Fatimid complex contained up to 1.6 million volumes (171).

18 Tillier, "The *Qāḍīs* of Fuṣṭāṭ-Miṣr," 217.

19 Abū Muḥammad al-Ḥasan ibn Rashīq al-ʿAskarī (896–980) was an Egyptian traditionist as well as a student and transmitter of the traditions from his teacher al-Nasāʿī as well as Aḥmad ibn Ḥamad. He earned the title of *al-ḥāfiẓ* for his memorization of hadith reports. See Fuat Sezgin, *Geschichte des Arabischen Schrifttums, Band 1* (Leiden: Brill, 1967), 201–202 (henceforth *GAS*); Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad al-Dhahabī, *Tārīkh al-Islām wa-wafayāt al-mashāhūr wa-l-aʿlām*, ed. ʿUmar Tadmurī (Beirut: Dār al-Kitāb al-ʿArabī, 1995–2004), 26:437–438.

20 Abū Muḥammad al-Ḥasan ibn Ismāʿīl al-Ḍarrāb (or al-Ḍurrāb, 925–1002) was an Egyp-

3. Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad ibn al-Faraj Abū Bakr al-Qammāḥ (fl. 970)²¹
4. Abū al-ʿAbbās Aḥmad al-Naysabūrī (fl. 980–1020)²²
5. An unknown successor to Abū Ishāq Muḥammad ibn al-Qāsim ibn Shaʿbān (Ibn al-Qurtī; d. 966)²³
6. Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad (unknown)²⁴
7. Al-Maʿmūn (unknown)²⁵
8. Rajāʾ al-Shahīd, his father (fl. ca. 1000)

Other possible Fatimid scholars with whom Ibn Rajāʾ may have interacted include the famous author and traditionist al-Dāraquṭnī (d. 995),²⁶ Yaḥyā ibn ʿAlī ibn al-Ṭaḥḥān (d. 1025),²⁷ ʿAbd al-Ghanī ibn Saʿīd al-Azdī (d. 1018), Abū Muḥammad ibn al-Naḥḥās, Ismāʿīl ibn ʿAmr al-Maqburī, Muḥammad ibn Muḡhallis al-Dāwūdī, Muḥammad ibn Jaʿfar ibn Abī al-Mudhakkār, ʿAlī ibn Rabʿa al-Tamīmī, Abū al-Qāsim ʿAlī ibn Muḥammad al-Fārisī, and Muḥammad ibn al-

tian traditionist and a student of Aḥmad ibn Marwān al-Mālikī al-Dīnawārī. Ibn Rajāʾ would have been in the same circle as his students, including his son ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz, Aḥmad ibn ʿAlī Ḥishām al-Muqrī, Rashāʾ ibn Nazīf al-Dimashqī (d. 1052), and even briefly al-Ḍarrāb's contemporary al-Dāraquṭnī. See Sezgin, *GAS*, 213; al-Dhahabī, *Tārīkh al-Islām*, 27:265.

21. Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad ibn al-Faraj Abū Bakr al-Qammāḥ (fl. 970) and his teacher Ibn Qudayd (d. 924) were transmitters of the historian Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam's (d. 871) *Futūḥ Miṣr* (*The History of the Conquest of Egypt, North Africa, and Spain*).
22. Abū al-ʿAbbās Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad (Ibrāhīm) al-Naysabūrī (fl. ca. 975–1021) worked for the caliph al-ʿAzīz (975–996) and later in the Ismāʿīlī daʿwa office under the caliph al-Ḥākim. See Sezgin, *GAS*, 579; Verena Klemm and Paul Walker, eds., *A Code of Conduct: A Treatise on the Etiquette of the Fatimid Ismaili Mission. A critical edition of the Arabic text and English translation of Aḥmad b. Ibrāhīm al-Naysābūrī's al-Risāla al-mūjaza al-kāfiya fi ādāb al-duʿāt* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2011); and Arzina Lalani, ed., *Degrees of Excellence: A Fatimid Treatise on Leadership. A New Arabic Edition and English Translation of Aḥmad b. Ibrāhīm al-Naysābūrī's Kitāb ithbāt al-imāma* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2010), 4–9; and Wladimir Ivanow, *Ismaili Tradition concerning the Rise of the Fatimids* (London: Oxford University Press, 1942), 157–183.
23. Abū Ishāq Muḥammad ibn al-Qāsim ibn Shaʿbān (d. 966) was a tenth-century Egyptian Mālikī jurist known as Ibn al-Qurtī.
24. The most likely possibility is that this is Abū Bakr Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad ibn Ishāq al-Dīnawārī ibn al-Sunnī (d. 975), who was a student of al-Nasāʿī; see Sezgin, *GAS*, 198. He may also be referring to Abū Bakr Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad ibn al-Muhandis (d. 995/996); see al-Dhahabī, *Tārīkh al-Islām*, 27:91–92.
25. I have not identified al-Maʿmūn. It may be possible that a copyist who was unfamiliar with the original name changed letters to mention al-Maʿmūn instead of al-Nuʿmān (either Muḥammad, Fatimid chief judge from 984–999; or his father (d. 974) who founded the school of Ismāʿīlī law).
26. Sezgin, *GAS*, 206–209. Al-Dāraquṭnī knew Ibn Rajāʾ's teacher al-Ḥasan ibn Rashīq al-ʿAskarī, which increases the likelihood of their mutual acquaintance.
27. Sezgin, *GAS*, 358.

Ḥasan ibn al-Ṭuffāl. All of these figures were known to work within the circles of Cairo in the latter half of the tenth century.

Ibn Rajā's family status connected him to Fatimid leadership. He may have already been acquainted with the Christians at court who argued on his behalf during his apostasy trial. Ibn Rajā's case was probably brought to the caliph al-'Azīz, who was known as an extremely forgiving person according to Islamic historians.²⁸ The *History of the Patriarchs of Alexandria* provides the name al-Ḥākīm – but, in this context, the word is probably a title meaning “the ruler” rather than a reference to the later caliph, or possibly a mistaken emendation by the Arabic translator Mawhūb of Alexandria.²⁹ To reinforce this point, another source describes his case under al-'Azīz.³⁰ While some Muslim jurists such as his father argued for Ibn Rajā's death, there were several factors working in his favor. Al-'Azīz was thoroughly acquainted with Christianity and comfortable around his Christian family members. Al-'Azīz's first love was a Melkite woman of Greek Byzantine descent, known only to us as “Azīz's Lady” (al-Sayyida al-'Azīziyya; d. 995). When he was only fifteen, she gave birth to al-'Azīz's daughter and future administrator of the Fatimid caliphate, Sitt al-Mulk (970–1023).³¹ 'Azīz's beloved convinced him to name her

28 Walker, *Caliph of Cairo*, 24.

29 den Heijer, “Apologetic Elements in Coptic-Arabic Historiography,” 200–201; Swanson, “Būluṣ ibn Rajā,” 542.

30 Tagher, *Christians in Muslim Egypt*, 99–100. Unfortunately, Tagher does not provide the exact source of this account. He mentions that Étienne Marc Quatremère misspelled his name (Rajā' is spelled as Wasā in Tagher, and as Vazah – not Vasah – in the works of Quatremère). However, this does not imply that Quatremère's works were his previous source, so his original source is unidentified. See also the first footnote in Aziz Atiya, *History of Eastern Christianity* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1968), 88. Atiya was correct that Quatremère mentions Vazah in *Mémoires géographiques et historiques sur l'Égypte et sur quelques contrées voisines*, 2 vols. (Paris: Schoell, 1811), 1:477, but it only states that “Yusuf ibn Raja embraced the religious life in the monastery of St. Macarius. His angry father resolved to have him killed by the Arabs who inhabited this desert.” Likewise in Quatremère, *Recherches critiques et historiques sur la langue et la littérature de l'Égypte* (Paris: L'Imprimerie impériale, 1808), 34–35, he only writes: “Yusuf ibn Raja, who was Muslim, having desired to embrace the Christian religion, was instructed by a priest who explained to him in Arabic the Coptic text of the Gospels and other books of the Old and New Testaments.” Regardless of the problem with identifying the original source, Ibn Rajā's conversion only makes sense at this earlier period in the 980s, since it provides time for him to study under his Muslim instructors and collaborate with Severus ibn al-Muqaffa' (d. after 987) before his death. Al-'Azīz was also much more likely than al-Ḥākīm to have ruled in favor of the Muslim apostate Ibn Rajā'.

31 On Sitt al-Mulk, the sister of al-Ḥākīm, see Fatima Mernissi, *The Forgotten Queens of Islam*, transl. Mary Jo Lakeland (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1993), 159–178; Delia Cortese and Simonetta Calderini, *Women and the Fatimids in the World of Islam* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2006), 119–127.

brother Orestus (Jeremiah) as the Melkite patriarch of Jerusalem (986–1006), and her brother Arsenius as the Melkite bishop of Cairo and Fustāṭ (986–1000) and later patriarch of Alexandria (1000–1010). Her father reputedly served in Sicily as an ambassador.³² Although disputed, it is possible that al-'Azīz's son al-Ḥākim was born of this Christian woman as well, but he was born 15 years later.³³ Al-'Azīz selected a Christian named 'Īsā ibn Naṣṭūrus (d. 997) to serve as vizier. His physician, Saḥlān ibn Kaysān, was also Christian. Thus, in his immediate entourage al-'Azīz had a Christian partner (mother of his daughter Sitt al-Mulk), two brothers-in-law who were Christian patriarchs, a Christian administrator holding high office, and a Christian physician. When Ibn Rajā's apostasy case came before al-'Azīz and the caliph's beloved woman allegedly spoke in support of Ibn Rajā, it is unsurprising that al-'Azīz agreed to release him.³⁴

Ibn Rajā' was linked to Coptic Church leaders through his ordination as a priest and celebrity as a convert from Islam. He was known to collaborate with Severus ibn al-Muqaffa', the earliest Coptic Christian to compose his works in Arabic.³⁵ Ibn al-Muqaffa' composed a record of a debate he had with a Muslim dialectical theologian, which may have been of interest to Ibn Rajā'. Since Ibn al-Muqaffa' was active as late as 987, they likely worked together during his old age when Būluṣ ibn Rajā' was a new convert. Ibn Rajā' confirms in *The Truthful Exposer* that they were close friends, as he notes: "Anbā Severus al-Muqaffa' – may God have mercy upon him – related a story to me"³⁶ The passage reveals that Ibn al-Muqaffa' had died prior to the composition of *The Truthful Exposer*. Ibn Rajā's collaborations with Severus would have gar-

32 Cortese and Calderini, *Women and the Fatimids in the World of Islam*, 52; Heinz Halm, "Prinzen, Prinzessinnen, Konkubinen, un Eunuchen am fatimidischen Hof," in *The Heritage of Arabo-Islamic Learning: Studies Presented to Wadad Kadi*, ed. Maurice Pomeranz and Aram Shahin (Leiden: Brill, 2016), 91–110, esp. 100. The role of 'Azīz's Lady is given as a concubine or captured slave in Islamic sources, although her family's role in the court makes this claim problematic and more likely an apologetic for having a Christian family so close to the Fatimid imam. Her family was more likely of North African or Sicilian Greco-Byzantine descent, Arabized, wealthy, and influential.

33 Michael Brett, *The Fatimid Empire* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2017), 97.

34 Tagher, *Christians in Muslim Egypt*, 99.

35 On his writings, see Severus ibn al-Muqaffa', *The Lamp of the Intellect of Severus Ibn Al-Muqaffa' Bishop of Al-Ashmūnāin*, ed. Rifaat Ebied, and M.J.L. Young (Louvain: Secrétariat du CSCO, 1975); Sidney Griffith, "The *Kitāb Miṣbāḥ al-'Aql* of Severus ibn al-Muqaffa': A Profile of the Christian Creed in Arabic in Tenth Century Egypt," *Medieval Encounters* 2 (1996): 15–42; Samir Khalil Samir, "Un Traité Nouveau de Sawirus ibn al-Muqaffa': La Lettre à Abū al-Yumn Quzmān ibn Mīnā," *Parole de l'Orient* (2000): 567–641.

36 3:34.

nered him a wide readership among the bilingual Copts who had been using Coptic as their primary language until the late tenth century. Ibn Rajāʾ's work was one of the earliest Coptic Christian writings to appear in the Arabic language.

Coptic leaders were often selected from the monasteries of the Wādī al-Naṭrūn, which made the location an important administrative center of Coptic Orthodoxy. They facilitated Ibn Rajāʾ's rise in prestige as an intellectual who lived and wrote there.³⁷ However, Ibn Rajāʾ's interactions with the Coptic Patriarchate were not always pleasant. He required financial assistance from a donor in order to pay his ordination fees to Patriarch Philotheus (r. 979–1003), which he felt the Patriarchate should have waived. Ibn Rajāʾ was known to the Coptic leadership of his time including the synodal secretary of the Patriarchate, Theodore ibn Mīnā. Theodore was the one who related Ibn Rajāʾ's biography to his successor, Michael of Damrū. Michael's commemoration of Ibn Rajāʾ in the *History of the Patriarchs of Alexandria* and his access to a copy of *The Truthful Exposer* reveals Ibn Rajāʾ's venerable reputation among the Coptic community of the eleventh century. While the Coptic Church calendar has not recognized Būluṣ ibn Rajāʾ as an official saint, he has a reputation as a holy exemplar and his biography names him a saint (*al-qiddīs*).³⁸

Monastic communities in Egypt played an important role in the composition of Ibn Rajāʾ's work *The Truthful Exposer*. He had connections with many of the future leaders of the Coptic Church, who often spent time at the monasteries of the Wādī al-Naṭrūn (Scetis) in the desert between Alexandria and Cairo. His connection to the monasteries was essential for his safety and influence as a writer.³⁹ His time spent at the Monastery of Saint Macarius permitted him to write his three works. In addition to his victorious court case, Ibn Rajāʾ was able to publicly critique Islam because of the political arrangement in the Wādī al-Naṭrūn. The monasteries were not only situated in a somewhat remote location, but they retained the services of two Bedouin Arab tribes, the Banū Qurra and the Banū Kilāb (a branch of the Ṭayyiʿ), whose job it was to protect the

37 den Heijer, "Wādī al-Naṭrūn and the *History of the Patriarchs of Alexandria*," 42.

38 Sally Adel, "Hagiographical Discourse in Medieval Arabic Christianity: A Study of Anthony al-Qurashi and Būluṣ ibn Raja as a Discourse of Parrhesia," (BA thesis; Sankt Ignatios College, Stockholm School of Theology, 2020). However, there is mention of him in at least one synaxarion. See the bibliography in Abuliff, "Al-Wāḍiḥ Ibn Rajāʾ," 124.

39 See the contributions in Maged Mikhail and Mark Moussa, eds., *Christianity and Monasticism in Wadi al-Natrun: Essays from the 2002 International Symposium of the Saint Mark Foundation and the Saint Shenouda the Archimandrite Coptic Society* (Cairo: American University in Cairo Press, 2009).

monasteries.⁴⁰ Therefore, he could theoretically write without fear of violent retribution – although his father’s attempt on his life proved this assumption to be false.

3 Ibn Rajā’ on Muslim Conversion to Christianity

A religious conversion is not a singular moment in time. Rather, conversion is a process that unfolds as a narrative, with a beginning (pre-conversion), a middle (conversion shift), and an end (post-conversion). At the start of this process, a convert assesses and revises their understanding of the past to affirm a new faith narrative. Conversion serves as a reconstruction of one’s history and identity. The conversion process has important implications for the convert’s personal life, social bonds, cultural fit, and worldview.⁴¹ For Ibn Rajā’, this process dramatically shifted every priority in his life. Converts are not typically interested in explaining the nuances of their former religion – considering their knowledge both an asset and a part of their past. Many scholars have utilized the Pauline conversion pattern as a template for analyzing the process of individual conversions. This Pauline model is quite suitable for the conversion narrative of Būluṣ ibn Rajā’. One advantage in studying his conversion is that we do not need to speculate on his interior motivations because Ibn Rajā’ was an oral source for his biography and we have his own writings reflecting on his conversion. In this case, we can study historical results rather than conjecture about an author’s literary imagination.

When discussing religious conversion in the medieval Middle East, historians tend to focus on the process of Christian conversion to Islam.⁴² Depending upon the geographic location, available data, and inferences made by scholars, Christians became a minority in the Middle East sometime between the tenth to thirteenth centuries.⁴³ Alternatively, the story of conversion from Islam to

40 Halm, *Die Kalifen von Kairo*, 149–165.

41 Ryan Szpiech, *Conversion and Narrative: Reading and Religious Authority in Medieval Polemic* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2012), 4, 13–14, 22.

42 For a nuanced discussion of this conversion process and the anxieties of influence that it produced for both Christians and Muslims, see Tannous, *The Making of the Medieval Middle East*, 310–352 and 353–399.

43 More recently, scholars argued that the shift from Christian majority to minority in the tenth century was somewhat early for many parts of the Christian Near East. Many would move the decisive shift to the Mongol period and highlight the fact that many converts to Islam retained much of their Christian culture and practices. See Tannous, *The Making of the Medieval Middle East*.

Christianity is rarely told. Conversions from Islam to Christianity did happen – these were not just literary tropes used for apologetics.⁴⁴ It is true that few Muslims dared to convert from the security of Islam to a long-suffering Christian community. Stories about Muslim apostates suggest that conversions were uncommon, although not unknown.⁴⁵ Most accounts of Muslims converting to Christianity in the medieval Middle East are hagiographic in nature and anonymous in authorship. They tend to follow three typologies that Christian Sahner has developed.⁴⁶ First, some stories recall Christians who converted to Islam and then reverted to their former faith.⁴⁷ Second, we find children from mixed marriages who kept the confessional identity of their Christian mothers.⁴⁸ Third, we find the rare person who was raised Muslim and later apostatized to join Christianity.⁴⁹ These converts' motivations usually included

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- 44 David Cook, "Apostasy from Islam: A Historical Perspective," *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam* 31 (2006): 248–288; Uriel Simonsohn, "'Halting Between Two Opinions': Conversion and Apostasy in Early Islam," *Medieval Encounters* 19 (2013): 342–370; Uriel Simonsohn, "Conversion, Apostasy, and Penance: The Shifting Identities of Muslim Converts in the Early Islamic Period," in *Conversion in Late Antiquity: Christianity, Islam, and Beyond*, ed. Arietta Papaconstantinou (Farnham, Surrey: Ashgate, 2015), 197–215; and William Jordan, *The Apple of His Eye: Converts from Islam in the Reign of Louis IX* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2019).
- 45 Thomas Sizgorich, "Mind the Gap: Accidental Conversion and the Hagiographic Imaginary in the First Centuries A.H.," in *Conversion in Late Antiquity: Christianity, Islam, and Beyond*, ed. Arietta Papaconstantinou (London: Routledge, 2016), 163–174.
- 46 Sahner, *Christian Martyrs under Islam*, 25–26.
- 47 For instance, 'Abd al-Masiḥ al-Ghassānī, a young Christian from Najrān, decided to go to Jerusalem to visit the holy sites and joined a group of Arabs traveling north to raid Byzantine territories. But he fell in with the bandits and led a life of raiding for the next thirteen years. After he encountered a priest in Baalbek and confessed his sins and desire to return to Christianity, the priest accepted him back into the Church. Al-Ghassānī went on to Jerusalem and served as a penitent at Mar Saba Monastery for a number of years. Later, he became an administrator at Saint Catherine's monastery at Mount Sinai. Some years later, al-Ghassānī was recognized by a former companion during a visit to al-Ramla. After refusing to renounce Christianity before the local governor, he was beheaded. See Sahner, *Christian Martyrs under Islam*, 46–49; Sidney Griffith, "Christians, Muslims, and Neo-Martyrs: Saints' Lives and Holy Land History," in *Sharing the Sacred: Religious Contacts and Conflicts in the Holy Land, First–Fifteenth Centuries CE*, ed. Arie Kofsky and Guy Stroumsa (Jerusalem: Yad Izhak Ben Zvi, 1998), 163–207.
- 48 For example, Bacchus/Ḍaḥḥāk had a father who converted to Islam, but he was raised as a crypto-Christian by his mother. He joined Mar Saba monastery in the Judean desert at eighteen years of age and served there until someone recognized him during a visit to nearby Jerusalem. After being questioned by the Muslim emir, Bacchus/Ḍaḥḥāk was executed. See Sahner, *Christian Martyrs under Islam*, 62–68.
- 49 Anthony Rawḥ al-Qurashī was a Muslim youth in Damascus who terrorized the local Christians. However, vivid visions of the Eucharist and Saint Theodore convinced him to

personal experience, miracles, and intellectual arguments, as was the case with Būluṣ ibn Rajā'. He understood his conversion as a repudiation of his past years in "depravity and blindness."⁵⁰ As a Muslim convert to Coptic Christianity, Ibn Rajā's *The Truthful Exposer* was a justification for his new conviction.⁵¹ In fact, Ibn Rajā' is the first known Muslim apostate to write about Islam after his conversion to Christianity. Likewise, he is the only confirmed medieval Christian author to publicly write against Islam using his own name while living in Islamic lands.⁵²

In Egypt, there are examples of Muslims converting to Coptic Christianity around the same time as Būluṣ ibn Rajā'. According to Ibn Ḥajar's account of the judges of Egypt, there was a martyrdom of a Christian convert under the Fatimid caliph al-'Azīz. The event is very similar to an experience described by Ibn Rajā' in his biography. According to the report given to the judge Muḥammad ibn al-Nu'mān, a Christian who had converted to Islam had apostatized and returned to Christianity. He was older, perhaps more than 80 years of age. He was asked to recant his reconversion and declare allegiance to Islam. When he refused, his case came before al-'Azīz, who turned him over to the legal authorities. Then the caliph ordered the judge to gather four witnesses to induce the apostate to recant; in turn, the convert would receive 100 dinars. When the convert rejected this offer and maintained his Christian faith, he was killed, and his body was thrown into the Nile River.⁵³

The tenth-century Coptic saint and martyr George (Jirjis) was another Muslim-born convert to Christianity. Known as Muzāḥim before his conversion, he was raised in a mixed marriage with a Christian mother. As an adult, he married a Christian woman named Saywālā and subsequently converted to Coptic Christianity, though not without difficulty as the priests feared that baptizing

convert to Christianity. Two hermit monks baptized him in the Jordan desert, after which he became a monk himself. After returning to Damascus in a monk's habit, his family tried to get him to recant his Christian faith. They took Anthony to a local judge who then imprisoned him for seven months. Finally, the authorities brought him before the Abbasid caliph Harūn al-Rashīd. When Anthony maintained that he would remain Christian, the caliph ordered his beheading, which occurred on Christmas Day in 799. *Ibid.*, 84–92.

50 1.5.

51 Ibn Rajā's work is not so different from that of the Christian convert to Islam, 'Alī b. Rabban al-Ṭabarī (d. 855). He composed apologetic and polemical works that cited biblical passages as proof of Islam and criticized Christianity. See, for instance, Rifaat Ebied and David Thomas, eds., *The Polemical Works of 'Alī al-Ṭabarī* (Leiden: Brill, 2016).

52 Perhaps the closest critic in resemblance to Ibn Rajā' as a skeptic would be the later works of Ibn al-Rāwandī (d. 911). See "Ibn al-Rāwandī," *ET*², 3:905–906.

53 Gottheil, "A Distinguished Family of Fatimide Cadis (al-Nu'mān) in the Tenth Century," 246, 277.

a Muslim would bring violence to him and to their church. After his baptism, he tried to live incognito in several locations with his wife. Once, the governor at Damīra in the Nile Delta region imprisoned him until a Fatimid official from Cairo had him released. But later, George was beaten at the instigation of local Muslim religious leaders at the head of a mob, after which the governor again imprisoned the apostate. When George would not renounce his conversion, he was beheaded and his body burned and thrown into the river. His wife Saywālā was also arrested and lashed. This took place in 978 during the reign of the Fatimid caliph al-ʿAzīz.⁵⁴

In *The Truthful Exposer*, Ibn Rajāʾ also recounts the legend of a native-born Muslim named al-Hāshimī who converted to Christianity.⁵⁵ In the story, this young man from the Banū ʿAbbās tribe in Baghdad enjoyed harassing Christians and their liturgies during the consecration of the Eucharist.⁵⁶ He would ride into churches upon his horse, along with his servant and guards, and proceed to throw the bread on the ground, spill the wine, and sometimes kill people. But one day, he witnessed a consecration in a church where the consecrated bread appeared as the body of a child, and the chalice looked like it contained real blood. He accused the priest of cannibalism, but his companions insisted it was only bread and wine. Amazed at the experience, he asked the priest to explain to him the commemoration of the Eucharist by Jesus Christ at the Last Supper and its meaning as a covenant for all Christians. Upon reflection, al-Hāshimī testified to faith in Jesus Christ by divine miracle and sought out baptism. His guards informed his father of his conversion. His father tortured him in hopes of gaining a repudiation of his Christianity, but eventually he had his son put to death. The Christians of Baghdad preserved the martyr's relics and erected al-Hāshimī church in his honor. At the conclusion of this account, Ibn Rajāʾ also notes: "There are many examples like this in our time, some of them which I have witnessed and some of them which I have heard about."⁵⁷

These examples of Muslims converting to Christianity share a number of similarities with the conversion of Būluṣ ibn Rajāʾ: a miraculous event precipitating an openness to Christianity, a special connection to a saint or the

54 Swanson, "The Martyrdom of Jirjis (Muzāḥim)."

55 On the origins of the al-Hāshimī legend and similar versions in the Passion of Antony Rawḥ and St. George and the Muslim, see John Lamoreaux, "Hagiography," in *The Orthodox Church in the Arab World, 700–1700: An Anthology of Sources*, ed. Samuel Noble and Alexander Treiger (DeKalb, IL: Northern Illinois University Press, 2014), 112–135, esp. 115–117, 128–134; Sahnner, *Christian Martyrs under Islam*, 108–109.

56 On Coptic liturgy, see John Paul Abdelsayed, "Liturgy: Heaven on Earth," in *The Coptic Christian Heritage: History, Faith, Culture*, ed. Lois Farag (London: Routledge, 2014), 143–159.

57 3:34–38.

Eucharist, a fear among the clergy to baptize the convert, a commitment to the ascetic life as a monk or priest, and a final reckoning when someone recognizes the convert and offers a chance for them to recant their conversion before execution. But there are important differences in these hagiographies compared to the conversion of Ibn Rajā'. He was not a martyr in the conventional sense. Ibn Rajā'’s biography was based upon discussions with him, so he was the main source of information. The writings of Ibn Rajā', which corroborate his biography, are extant. When he was put on trial, the judges found Ibn Rajā' innocent and freed him instead of ordering his execution.

One can also understand these factors in light of the Fatimid context. While Islamic legal schools agreed theoretically that apostasy from Islam justified the execution of the offender, what constituted apostasy was debatable; consequently, the real-life application of apostasy laws was flexible at times. The ruling in favor of Ibn Rajā' in his apostasy case is instructive. Also, at the end of al-Ḥākim’s reign from 1019 to 1021, the caliph shifted his policy to permit coerced converts to return to Christianity. When some Muslims complained that these reverts to Christianity were attending the liturgy and partaking in communion, al-Ḥākim ignored their complaints.⁵⁸ We also know that al-Ḥākim endorsed the rebuilding of churches later in his life and protected Christians who were coerced into converting to Islam:

When al-Ḥākim permitted the building of churches, along with their renovation and the return of their pious endowments, he announced that a group of Christians who had converted to Islam during the time of persecution, and had thrown themselves at his mercy and had prepared themselves for death, [said] to him: “That which made us profess the religion of Islam was neither our choice nor our desire, so we ask that you order us to return to our religion, if you see it this way, or order our execution.” He immediately ordered that they wear the sash and black clothing, and carry a cross, and each of them returned to change his clothes and to be presented to the police for their protection, and he restrained everyone from interfering with them. So those who asked him for this increased until they got to the point that they were meeting with him in massive crowds ... and those among them who returned to Christianity were protected from what people warned them about (i.e., the danger of apostasy), and everyone from these parties remained in his former situation.⁵⁹

58 See al-Anṭākī, *Histoire de Yaḥyā ibn Saʿīd d'Antioche*, 373–559, esp. 416, 432.

59 Ibid., 438, 440. The English translation is from Werthmuller, *Coptic identity and Ayyubid politics in Egypt, 1218–1250*, 36.

Muslim reconversion to Christianity was apparently common as people crossed religious borders during this time – but the safety of native-born Muslims who converted to Christianity was precarious. This did not prevent Ibn Rajā' from writing about his conversion experience and his problems with Islam. He remarked that his knowledge of Islam was an obstacle to conversion to Christianity, because Satan had sealed his heart, making him think that his works were favorable while he was blind and ignorant.⁶⁰ Yet his conversion to Coptic Christianity made him a missionary to other Muslims through his writings. He makes a direct comparison between his life and that of the apostle Paul, when he reflects on his own conversion moment:

Among them is one [i.e., Ibn Rajā'] whom God guided from error to guidance and from torment to forgiveness. God had mercy on him and revealed His wonders and His wisdom and His power to him. He saw the kingdom; therefore he was certain of God. So he left his home and his possessions and his loved ones and he renounced his ignorance and his error. He declared his baptism and it was made easy for him to shed his blood and he changed his innermost soul. He was tormented in a variety of ways while enduring happily for a reward in the hereafter for what he knew of God.⁶¹

Ultimately, Ibn Rajā' felt that God had called upon him to act as a conduit to direct Muslims towards God's truth. In his introduction, Ibn Rajā' reflected on his previous status as a Muslim, and he sensed that God was calling him to proclaim his conversion openly rather than hiding his apostasy. He believed his testimony would aid other Muslims in discovering this same Christian truth. Ibn Rajā' hoped that his appeal might convince Muslim readers: "Perhaps God will bestow this upon him as He did on us and will guide him as He guided us, so that we would have a sufficient reward to wash away our past sins and unbelief, if it be God's will."⁶²

60 1.4.

61 3:32.

62 1.6.

The Arguments and Sources of *The Truthful Exposer*

1 Ibn Rajā' on the Qur'an

Early Christian Arabic authors were ambivalent about citing the Qur'an.¹ On the one hand, critics of the Qur'an questioned its status as scripture and determined it was a flawed text. However, these same detractors integrated the Qur'an's vocabulary and wording into their own writings. Some figures cited the text to support their arguments for Christianity. By doing so, they gave credence to a text which allegedly had no divine authority.² Some of the earliest Christian Arabic responses to the Qur'an were the *Legend of Sergius Bahīrā* (translated from Syriac),³ the *Debate of Abū Qurra*,⁴ and the *Dialogue of Abraham of Tiberias*.⁵ These anonymous accounts did not demonstrate a deep understanding of the Qur'an within its Islamic context, but utilized a proof-text approach to the Qur'an set within fictional stories. Perhaps the only exception to this trend is the ninth-century Christian Arabic *Letter (Risāla)* by 'Abd al-Masīḥ al-Kindī.⁶ Būluṣ ibn Rajā' was the only Christian Arabic author who wrote under

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- 1 See examples in Clare Wilde, *Approaches to the Qur'an in Early Christian Arabic Texts, 750 CE–1258 CE* (Palo Alto: Academica Press, 2014); J. Scott Bridger, *Christian Exegesis of the Qur'an: A Critical Analysis of the Apologetic Use of the Qur'an in Select Medieval and Contemporary Arabic Texts* (Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2015); and the chapters in Mark Beaumont, ed., *Arab Christians and the Qur'an from the Origins of Islam to the Medieval Period* (Leiden: Brill, 2018); and Gordon Nickel, "'Our Friendly Strife': Eastern Christianity engaging the Qur'an," in *CMR, Volume 15: Thematic Essays (600–to 1600)*, eds. Douglas Pratt and Charles Tieszen (Leiden: Brill, 2020), 255–279.
 - 2 Sidney Griffith, "The Qur'an in Arab Christian Texts; The Development of an Apologetic Argument: Abū Qurrah in the maḡlis of al-Ma'mūn," *Parole de l'Orient* 24 (1999): 203–233.
 - 3 Barbara Roggema, *The Legend of Sergius Bahīrā: Eastern Christian Apologetics and Apocalyptic in Response to Islam* (Leiden: Brill, 2009).
 - 4 Wafik Nasry, *The Caliph and the Bishop: A 9th Century Muslim-Christian Debate: Al-Ma'mūn and Abū Qurrah* (Beirut: CEDRAC, 2008).
 - 5 Giacinto Bulus Marcuzzo, *Le Dialogue d'Abraham de Tibériade avec 'Abd al-Rahman al-Hashimi à Jérusalem vers 820* (Rome: Pontificia Universitas Lateranensis, 1986); Krisztina Szilágyi, "The Disputation of the Monk Abraham of Tiberias," in *The Orthodox Church in the Arab World, 700–1700*, 90–111.
 - 6 Sandra Keating, "Manipulation of the Qur'an in the Epistolary Exchange between al-Hāshimī and al-Kindī," in *Arab Christians and the Qur'an from the Origins of Islam to the Medieval*

his own name publicly, was comfortable in the linguistic world of the Qur'an, and understood the historical and cultural contexts which shaped Muslim discussions of the Qur'an and its authority, origins, canonization, interpretation, and application to Islamic law.

Būluṣ ibn Rajā' was well educated in the Qur'an. It is not surprising that he wrote *The Truthful Exposer* in the qur'anic language in which he was raised. He expresses his sentiments invoking qur'anic language in his introduction, such as desiring to be kept firm in the faith to which God guided him, and that he would be granted success in speech and coming close to God. Ibn Rajā' asks for a good ending to his life, God's favor, and to be among the best of this world and in the hereafter. He closes by acknowledging God is forgiving and merciful.⁷ The opening invocation (*basmala*) is reminiscent of Islamic introductions, albeit with Trinitarian imagery. Ibn Rajā' refers to human creation in ways that evoke the formation of the body in Q 23:12–14.⁸ He asks God to guide him toward the path of truth and away from the path of ignorance, similar to the closing of Q 1:6–7.⁹ He also explains that God leads believers to “the gardens of bliss,” which is a qur'anic reference to Paradise.¹⁰ He concludes his introduction by entreating God, whom he always honors as almighty and exalted (*'azza wa-jalla*), for a place in the hereafter.

Ibn Rajā' may have memorized the Qur'an. Whenever he cites a passage, he chooses to give the first line of the sura, rather than its title, which may have been a memory aid device for him. Qur'anic language suffuses Ibn Rajā's prose, and he admiringly acknowledges that it contains some beautiful passages, such as Q 12:80 on Joseph and his brother Benjamin and Q 11:44 on Noah and the flood. However, Ibn Rajā' uses the method of abrogation to cite the Qur'an

Period, ed. Mark Beaumont (Leiden: Brill, 2018), 50–65. There are two editions. See Anton Tien, ed., *Risālat 'Abd Allāh ibn Ismā'īl al-Hāshimī ilā 'Abd al-Masīh ibn Ishāq al-Kindī yad'ūhu bi-hā ilā al-Islām wa-risālat 'Abd al-Masīh ilā al-Hāshimī yaruddu bi-hā 'alayhi wa-yad'ūhu ilā al-Naṣrānīyya* (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1880; Reprint: 2005); and Georges Tartar, “Dialogue islamo-chrétien sous le calife al-Ma'mūn (813–834): Les épîtres d'al-Hāshimī et d'al-Kindī,” (PhD diss.: Université des Sciences humaines Strasbourg, 1977).

7 1:3.

8 Q 23:12–14: “We have created man from an extract of clay; then we placed him as a sperm in a secure place; then we created out of the sperm a clot; then made from the clot a lump of flesh, then made the lump of flesh into bones; and then covered the bones with flesh; then fashioned him into another creation.”

9 Q 1:6–7: “Guide us on the straight path, the path of those whom You have blessed – such as have not incurred Your wrath, nor are astray.”

10 The gardens of bliss are an eschatological description of heaven found in Q 5:65; 10:9; 22:56; 31:8; 37:43; 56:12; and 68:34.

against itself, arguing that it was full of repetitions, inconsistencies, contradictions, and had a convoluted editorial process that marred its integrity. Many of these arguments he derived directly from internal Muslim debates, as we shall see below. For Ibn Rajā', the Muslim community was not able to articulate a unified voice regarding its laws and proper interpretation because the scripture was inauthentic. The divisions and debate in Fatimid Cairo confirmed this for him.

Many of the chapters in *The Truthful Exposer* deal with the Qur'an in a significant way.¹¹ The following table summarizes the chapters that are relevant to the Qur'an.

Chapter	Relevance to the Qur'an (Q)
Introduction	Ibn Rajā's conversion and education in the Qur'an
1	The lack of interpretive consensus about the Qur'an
2	The reliability of the Bible according to the Qur'an
6	Problems regarding the revelation of the Qur'an
7	The 7 vocalizations/readings (<i>qirā'āt</i>) of the Qur'an
8	Omissions from the Qur'an
9	The canonization process of the Qur'an
11	Inconsistencies and repetitions of words and phrases in the Qur'an
14	Sexual themes in the Qur'an
15	Repetition of passages in the Qur'an taken from Torah, Psalms, and Gospel
16	Refuting the inimitability of the Qur'an
17	The Bible as a source for the Qur'an
18	Contradictions in the Qur'an
29	Alcohol in the Qur'an
30	Marriage in the Qur'an

Būluṣ ibn Rajā' was familiar with the Islamic literature that described the canonization process of the Qur'an.¹² Some of his information is similar to data

11 On Ibn Rajā's use of the Qur'an, see David Bertaina, "Būluṣ ibn Rajā' on the History and Integrity of the Qur'an: Copto-Islamic Controversy in Fatimid Cairo," in *Arab Christians and the Qur'an from the Origins of Islam to the Medieval Period*, ed. Mark Beaumont (Leiden: Brill, 2018), 174–195.

12 On this process, see Omar Hamdan, "The Second *Maṣāḥif* Project: A Step towards the Can-

we find in sources collected by the Muslim writer Ibn Abī Dāwūd (d. 929).¹³ The following paragraphs summarize Ibn Rajāʾ's arguments about the Qur'an in *The Truthful Exposer*.

According to Ibn Rajāʾ, the Qur'an contains numerous literary deficiencies which undermine any claims to the Qur'an's inimitability. The argument for its literary defects was already well established. John of Damascus claimed that the Qur'an lacked a chronological structure and contained opaque language with "tales worthy of laughter."¹⁴ Al-Kindī maintained that the Qur'an contains many foreign words and conformed to Arabic poetic styles of its time and place.¹⁵ Ibn Rajāʾ argued that Muḥammad produced the Qur'an in Arabic based upon existing vocabulary and style, thus its eloquence and vocalization was not any more remarkable than other texts. He alleges that Muḥammad imitated the material of authors around him. While he indicated that some passages in the Qur'an are beautiful, Ibn Rajāʾ did not think these verses were inimitable, and he notes three examples where he finds the qur'anic style inferior. When comparing the Qur'an to ancient texts and poetry, Ibn Rajāʾ states that it is not superior in quality. He saw no merit to the claim that the Qur'an was miraculously unique or that it could validate Muḥammad's prophethood.¹⁶

Ibn Rajāʾ believed that the Qur'an was a derivative summary of Jewish and Christian scriptures and legends. The purpose of this argument was to claim that Muḥammad recycled biblical content for the Qur'an. This allegation was established by the eighth century, when John of Damascus claimed that an Arian monk inspired Muḥammad's message. In the *Legend of Sergius Bahīrā*, a heretical monk is responsible for instructing Muḥammad, so the words of the Qur'an came from biblical material.¹⁷ Ibn Rajāʾ recounts two legends about Muḥammad's sources. First, he claims that the monk Bahīrā provided Muḥammad with scriptural material and served as his guide with the hope of becoming the leader of the community after Muḥammad's death. However, Muḥammad ordered the murder of Bahīrā and his Jewish source Phineas.¹⁸ Second, he notes

onization of the Qur'anic Text," in *The Qur'an in Context*, ed. Angelika Neuwirth, Nicolai Sinai, and Michael Marx (Leiden: Brill, 2009), 795–836.

13 Arthur Jeffery, *Materials for the History of the Text of the Qur'an: The Old Codices* (Leiden: Brill, 1937).

14 See Peter Schadler, *John of Damascus and Islam: Christian Heresiology and the Intellectual Background to Earliest Christian-Muslim Relations* (Leiden: Brill, 2018); and Daniel Sahas, *John of Damascus on Islam: the "Heresy of the Ishmaelites"* (Leiden: Brill, 1972), 132–141.

15 Platti, "Abd al-Masiḥ al-Kindī on the Qur'an," in *Arab Christians and the Qur'an from the Origins of Islam to the Medieval Period*, ed. Mark Beaumont (Leiden: Brill, 2018), 66–82.

16 16.119–127.

17 See Roggema, *The Legend of Sergius Bahīrā*.

18 While the legend of Bahīrā as Muḥammad's source for Christian material was well estab-

a report that skeptics from the Quraysh asked him about the source of his knowledge. They suggested it came directly from a Christian known as Salmān the Persian, and from a Jew called ‘Abd Allāh ibn Salām.¹⁹ At this remark, Muḥammad recited Q 16:103: “We know for certain that they say: ‘It is only a man [that teaches him]’. The language to which they refer is foreign, while this language is clear Arabic.” The unsatisfied Quraysh replied that the Jew and Christian translated their material orally for Muḥammad to present in Arabic.²⁰ According to Ibn Rajā’, Muḥammad used Jewish and Christian material to develop his own text: “He summarized [the scriptures] using the language of the ancient Arabs and the eloquence of the Quraysh and other Arabs. He gathered in [the Qur’an] stories and legends of sects of the prophets and others among the ancients.”²¹ He further claims that the Qur’an is comprised primarily of pre-existing biblical materials. According to Ibn Rajā’, Q 26:196 – “Indeed, it is in the ancients’ Scriptures” – was an admission by Muḥammad to reusing older material. Ibn Rajā’ wonders why he did not instead create something of his own to prove that his revelation was unique and possibly divine.²² Ibn Rajā’ laments that, even though Muslim children learn the Qur’an from teachers and the faithful read it and recite it in daily prayers, the derivative nature of its content is lost on people.²³

Basing his arguments upon longstanding internal Muslim debates, Ibn Rajā’ pointed out that the Qur’an contained various additions and missing passages, and that Muslim communities could not agree about what material was added or lost, thereby challenging claims to its integrity. Regarding missing passages from the Qur’an, Ibn Rajā’ notes that the invocation: “In the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate,” is missing from Q 9 al-Tawba. He insists that earlier versions of the Qur’an contained a passage for stoning adulterers as well as other punishments that were lost.²⁴ Other omissions

lished in Christian sources, I have not identified any other Christian Arabic texts that mention Phineas/Finḥās the Jew as a source, or the tradition that Muḥammad had them murdered. In the Islamic biography of Ibn Ishāq, Phineas ibn Azūra was a Jew of the Qaynuqā’ tribe, but he was an antagonist rather than a supporter of Muḥammad.

19 Salmān al-Fārisī (d. ca. 657) was a Persian Christian who converted to Islam and was mentioned as a teacher of Muḥammad. ‘Abd Allāh ibn Salām (d. ca. 663) was a Jewish rabbi who converted to Islam. See *ET*², 1:52.

20 6.56–57.

21 6.56.

22 15.116–118.

23 17.134.

24 8.79. This passage is also mentioned in al-Kindī; see Tartar, “Dialogue islamo-chrétien sous le calife al-Ma’mūn,” 115–116.

included Q 65 “Divorce” which contained 285 verses or more, but today it has only twelve verses. He notes Q 2 “The Cow” originally contained more than a thousand verses but was shortened to 285.²⁵ In terms of additions, Ibn Rajā’ points out that Ibn Mas‘ūd’s copy of the Qur’an did not include Q 1, 113, or 114, which were liturgical prayers added by Zayd ibn Thābit.²⁶ Q 1 was added to the Qur’an from Muḥammad’s morning prayer book.²⁷ Whenever Ibn Mas‘ūd heard someone attribute these passages to the Qur’an, he would accuse them of error.²⁸ All of these claims were taken from Islamic material.

Using Muslim sources once again, Ibn Rajā’ interpreted them to indicate that the Qur’an had unverifiable historical origins due to its canonization process. Ibn Rajā’ suggests that the Qur’an cannot be credited solely to the Prophet or presumed to have a divine origin. The only other author to go into more detail was al-Kindī, who utilized Islamic sources to trace how the text was assembled over time to form a scripture.²⁹ Ibn Rajā’ recounts many of the same facts known to Muslims about the formation of the physical text of the Qur’an. Ibn Rajā’ argues that Muḥammad did not leave a written text, so it was his followers Abū Bakr and ‘Umar who decided to collect the scripture based upon the revelations memorized by different individuals. He mentions the seven vocalization traditions (*qirā’āt*) and their historic origins.³⁰ These traditions developed due to regional corrections of a malleable text, with different authors adding different readings. Ibn Rajā’ argues that it was memorized differently by ‘Abd Allāh ibn Mas‘ūd (d. 653), Zayd ibn Thābit (d. ca. 665), ‘Umar (d. 644), and ‘Uthmān ibn ‘Affān (d. 656). He provides four examples of cases where the Qur’an reciter Ibn Mas‘ūd did not follow the canonical text, although his recitation was deemed to be among the best of Muḥammad’s followers (Q 39:6, 70:9, 12:31, and 75:17–19).³¹ Ibn Rajā’ also provides examples of changes from Zayd ibn Thābit, grammatical mistakes ‘Uthmān had noted, and Abū Bakr’s alternative readings. It was only under the Umayyad caliph Marwān ibn al-Ḥakam (d. 685), he explains, that the Qur’an reached its canonical state. Textual diversity existed

25 8.77–80.

26 See also Omar Hamdan, “The Second *Maṣāḥif* Project,” 798–799, 824, 827; “al-Kur’an,” *ET*², 5:400–432, esp. 404–408.

27 7.66.

28 7.62.

29 Platti, “Abd al-Masiḥ al-Kindī on the Qur’an.”

30 For an Islamic response to the seven readings issue, see Muhammad Amin Samad, *Ibn Qutaybah’s Contribution to Qur’ānic Exegesis: An Analytical Study of his Work Ta’wīl Mushkil al-Qur’ān* (Indonesia: Fajar, 2018), 51–60.

31 7.62.

until Marwān ibn al-Ḥakam burned all the variant codices belonging to Ḥafṣa, ‘Uthmān, ‘Alī, Ibn Mas‘ūd, and Zayd ibn Thābit.³²

Given internal Muslim debate, Ibn Rajā’ held that Muslims, who lacked a consensus over its meaning, had distorted the Qur’an’s interpretation. He suggests that Muslims subjugated the Qur’an to their own worldly traditions. He points out occasions when the Qur’an suggests a clear reading, but later Muslim jurists ignored, misinterpreted, or contradicted the clear intention of the text. He claims that, even if it were trustworthy, Muslims could not agree because of its internal contradictions and confusing passages.³³ Ibn Rajā’ alleges that the reason for this hermeneutical problem is that Muḥammad did not understand its interpretation, since he was only a mouthpiece for the revelation, which belonged to God alone (Q 3:7: “No one knows its interpretation except God”). For Ibn Rajā’, human practices had co-opted the message of the Qur’an. He argues that Muslims were unable to develop a consensus about the Qur’an’s interpretation because over forty men interpreted it after Muḥammad’s death. The claims of a unified body of testimonies authenticating its truth (*tawātur*) did not exist for Ibn Rajā’. Muslims relied upon local dialects from the tribes of the Hudhayl and the Quraysh, along with poetry and other criteria, to shape the consonantal text.³⁴ To illustrate the alleged Muslim distortion of Qur’an interpretation, Ibn Rajā’ cites the misuse of the Qur’an in marriage laws related to Q 4:3: “Marry whoever is pleasing to you among the women, a second and third and fourth.” Some commentators claimed that the verse’s context was meant to be understood in the sense of addition. Ibn Rajā’ had heard of legal consent for men marrying up to nine wives and found this approach twisted the verse’s intended meaning.³⁵

Following the disputes that he learned in his Islamic education, Ibn Rajā’ acknowledged that the Qur’an contained numerous repetitions, inconsistencies, and contradictions which rendered it inconsistent. Ibn Rajā’ argues that many phrases from the Qur’an are redundant. For instance, he focuses on repetitions of phrases and prophetic stories such as Moses’ encounter with Pharaoh. He jokes that eliminating the Moses stories from the Qur’an would remove a quarter of its material.³⁶ For Ibn Rajā’, biblical recollections – rather than unique material told in one collective story – show the Qur’an is not chronologically coherent. Ibn Rajā’ offers more examples of contradictions in the Qur’an

32 9.81–84.

33 1.10.

34 1.11.

35 1.13.

36 15.114.

by listing passages which differ regarding the order of creation. In reference to alcohol (Q 2:219; Q 7:33; Q 5:90; Q 16:67; Q 6:145; Q 4:43), he notes how Islamic practice sanctions or condemns its use depending upon the legal interpreter.³⁷ Ibn Rajā' also critiques divorce practices outlined in the Qur'an as irrational. He claims that, if the text has a divine origin, then each subsequent divorce would require a stronger punishment for the offender.³⁸ He concludes that the Qur'an is not worthy to be used in divine worship given its lack of internal consistency and contradictions.

Ibn Rajā' thought that the Qur'an contained certain material and themes that were not appropriate for scripture, including sexual matters related to the life of the Prophet. The goal of this claim was to assert that the Qur'an could not authenticate its Prophet, nor could it validate itself. Ibn Rajā' addresses Q 66:1–5 on account of its description of Muḥammad's sexual encounters with his concubine Mary the Copt. According to Muslim commentators, the verses were given to Muḥammad absolving him of a previous oath to his other wives that he would not have sexual relations with Mary, since she had made 'Ā'isha and Ḥafṣa jealous. Ibn Rajā' explains that, if the commentators are correct about the historical context, then this episode has no benefit for the spiritual worship of God, nor should worshippers read aloud such revelations in prayers.³⁹ He recounts the problem of Abū Hurayra constantly visiting Muḥammad for meals, which led to a revelation declaring one should not stay for conversation after a meal. Again, Ibn Rajā' finds the revelation an ill fit for a scripture.⁴⁰ He also mentions the rules governing whom the Prophet may marry and divorce in Q 33:50–51 as inappropriate. Regarding Muḥammad's marriage to Zayd's wife Zaynab mentioned in Q 33:37, Ibn Rajā' argues that sexual matters like this have no proper place in a holy text to be read for prayer.⁴¹ Worship should focus on God or moral lessons rather than recitations of marital intrigues.

Ibn Rajā' concluded that the Qur'an lacked divine authority based upon its origins and Muslims had misused it. Similar to the Qur'an's use of biblical recall to authenticate its own authority, Ibn Rajā' recalled the Qur'an to certify his arguments about Islam. Ultimately, Ibn Rajā' believed that the Qur'an had no divine origins. He modeled his argument on contemporaneous Islamic approaches to the Bible. For instance, the Qur'an suggests that Christians had confused, obscured, replaced, tampered, twisted, and/or forgotten their scrip-

37 29.220–226.

38 30.227–230.

39 12.96–99.

40 13.101–102.

41 14.106–109.

tures.⁴² In a similar fashion, Ibn Rajā' maintained that Muslims had corrupted the Qur'an's interpretation (*taḥrīf ma'nawī*) and made mistakes in transmission that altered the qur'anic text itself (*taḥrīf lafẓī*). Ibn Rajā' sanctioned the Qur'an's use, but only insofar as it proved its lack of divine authority: the textual history of the Qur'an was sufficient confirmation of its corruption in both word and interpretation. Neither can the Qur'an's followers live up to its standards, according to Ibn Rajā', on account of ignorance, misreading, and/or intentional obfuscation of its rules. Ibn Rajā's work, on the contrary, is presented as the opposite of obfuscation – it is a clarification and exposing (*al-Wāḍiḥ*).

For Ibn Rajā', the Qur'an was not fit to be used as a criterion for the Bible's authenticity. After quoting Q 15:9 ("It is We who revealed the reminder and We will indeed be its guardian"), he explains how the context for this verse must mean that God is the guardian of the Bible.⁴³ The Qur'an recalls biblical accounts to remind its audience what they have already learned about God's revelation.⁴⁴ But Muḥammad only recalled the Bible to justify his own authority. Its self-proclaimed links to the Bible were calculated moves meant to validate the Qur'an's allegedly divine origins, which Ibn Rajā' rejected as biblical plagiarism. The Qur'an might make true statements about the Bible, but this is only because Muḥammad was familiar with biblical teachers – not because he received divine revelations.

Bülüş ibn Rajā' viewed the Qur'an through a critical lens that he had developed during his time as a Muslim, having listened to internal Muslim disputes over which group had lawful authority to interpret it, or which groups had corrupted the physical text of the Qur'an or its interpretation. Ibn Rajā' "exposed" the Qur'an on account of the lack of a consensus over its interpretation, the problematic means of its disclosure, its divergent readings, omissions and additions in earlier versions of the text, its chaotic canonization process, alleged word and phrase inconsistencies and repetitions, alleged contradictions, and concern for human matters at times instead of the divine message. For Ibn Rajā', the Qur'an held probative value because it established a set of criteria by which he could analyze his former religion. By reinterpreting the Qur'an, he argued that Muslims did not remain faithful to its admonitions. He believed its content did not inspire religious devotion once one understood the historical circumstances that led to its present form. He concluded that the internal

42 Gordon Nickel, *Narratives of Tampering in the Earliest Commentaries on the Qur'an* (Leiden: Brill, 2011), 52–61.

43 2.21.

44 On biblical recall, see Sidney Griffith, *The Bible in Arabic: The Scriptures of the "People of the Book" in the Language of Islam* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2013), 54–96.

strife of the Islamic community, coupled with the lack of knowledge about the Qur'an's linguistic and historical contexts, had led to poorly applied interpretation, unreliable oral traditions, and faulty legal pronouncements. In this way, Ibn Rajā' quotes from the Qur'an faithfully while subjecting it to new hermeneutical possibilities.

In contrast to the ubiquitous presence of the Qur'an in *The Truthful Exposer*, Ibn Rajā' cites the Bible on only sixteen occasions, and – in several instances – these are allusions rather than direct quotations. When he mentions the Bible, he refers to it in Qur'anic style as the Torah, Psalms, and Gospel.⁴⁵ He alludes to stories from the Hebrew Bible on three occasions (Genesis 3:8–10; Genesis 17:1; Exodus 3:2–6) and only quotes from it twice (Psalm 33:6 and Isaiah 7:14). From the New Testament, he cites from the Gospels according to Matthew and John exclusively – he mentions no other books. Further, Ibn Rajā' never quotes the Bible and Qur'an in tandem. In contrast, Ibn Rajā' mentions the Qur'an approximately 170 times and quotes from it on more than 125 occasions (see index).

Ibn Rajā' came to similar conclusions as his Christian Arabic predecessors regarding the Qur'an's human origins. But his use of Islamic sources and reading the Qur'an within an intra-Islamic polemical context, rather than a Christian apologetic context, is novel. Ibn Rajā' prioritizes the Qur'an over the Bible. He does not depend on earlier Christian Arabic themes for his material and, therefore, does not get stuck in the perennial debates about the Trinity, Incarnation, and Christology. These themes are mostly absent from his analysis because he had already found Islamic teachings unconvincing. Ibn Rajā' did not allow polemics against Christianity to dictate his analytical method of contradiction-making, instead following Sunnī-Mu'tazilī polemical styles as found in the works of Ibn Qutayba (d. 889; see "Ibn Rajā's Use of Intra-Islamic Disputations" below).

2 Ibn Rajā' on Muḥammad

The portrait of Muḥammad in *The Truthful Exposer* is unflattering and gave rise to later negative depictions in Europe and beyond.⁴⁶ But unlike many Christian

45 15.116.

46 For Christian portraits of Muḥammad, see Charles Tieszen, *The Christian Encounter with Muhammad: How Theologians have Interpreted the Prophet* (London: Bloomsbury, 2021); John Toland, *Faces of Muhammad: Western Perceptions of the Prophet of Islam from the Middle Ages to Today* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2019); and Clinton Bennett, "Christian Perceptions of Muḥammad," in *CMR, Volume 15: Thematic Essays (600–to 1600)*, eds. Douglas Pratt and Charles Tieszen (Leiden: Brill, 2020), 153–179.

polemics about Muḥammad that make extreme claims based upon speculation and/or fabrication, Ibn Rajāʾ assesses the Muslim prophet using Islamic sources in the hadith reports and Qurʾan commentaries of Fatimid Egypt. To be sure, he evaluates Muḥammad's words and actions in light of the model of Jesus Christ. But Ibn Rajāʾ constructed his image of Muḥammad based upon what he said and did in life, according to Muslim sources. Ibn Rajāʾ largely based his arguments upon earlier intra-Islamic disputes about the status of Muḥammad (e.g.: When did he become a prophet? Did he sin?), to which he adds his own interpretation. In this vein, the Muslim sources which argued against the doctrine that Muḥammad was protected from sin (*ʿiṣma*) were especially valuable for his claims.

There is a second factor to consider in Ibn Rajāʾ's depiction of Muḥammad: the prophetic figure appears to be a typological model for the contemporaneous Muslim leader of the Fatimid era, the caliph al-Ḥākim. A direct critique of the reigning Fatimid caliph would have been unacceptable, but aligning his actions with those of Muḥammad had the added benefit of trying to discredit both figures. For Ibn Rajāʾ, al-Ḥākim was the new Muḥammad. They both claimed special status as prophets with a link to the divine and divine origins for their authority. Both men used violence against their enemies, and both coerced Christians into converting to Islam "for fear of the sword." In other words, many of Ibn Rajāʾ's critiques of Muḥammad were ones that he also intended as a response to the ongoing persecutions al-Ḥākim had instituted against Christians.

Ibn Rajāʾ claims that Muḥammad was not a prophet, nor was he God's messenger. He insists that Muḥammad's connections to earlier religions' prophets and books were fabricated to justify the divine source of his authority, but when these claims failed, he fell back upon his political authority to achieve his goals. Charles Tieszen has argued that Ibn Rajāʾ portrays the Muslim prophet as "a vanquished anti-hero."⁴⁷ Muḥammad is said to have embellished his stories of revelations and his fainting spells and impossible journeys in order to serve his needs. Over the course of his work, Ibn Rajāʾ covers topics such as Muḥammad as an Arab polytheist and his call to prophethood, his use of political violence to force conversions, the circumstances of his revelations, his scripture instructors and use of biblical material, his controversies with women, debates over miracles attributed to him, and his status compared to Jesus. This list of critiques from Ibn Rajāʾ summarizes his portrait of Muḥammad in *The Truthful Exposer*.

47 Tieszen, *The Christian Encounter with Muhammad*, 77–93.

One reason for his skepticism was that Ibn Rajā' had read Muslim debates about how Muḥammad did not become a prophet until age forty, and he was originally a polytheist. Unlike some other apologists who acknowledged that Muḥammad had accomplished some good by shifting the Arabs away from polytheism towards monotheism, Ibn Rajā' does not credit him with ending the practice. The continued allegiance to kissing the Black Stone, circling the Ka'ba, and other practices of the pagan pilgrimage (*hajj*) are not commendable – Ibn Rajā' talks about his visit to Mecca and witnessing other Muslims acting like “crazy people.”⁴⁸ Ibn Rajā' believed that the argument for Muḥammad's lifelong prophetic status was problematic based upon Muslim sources. One feature he analyzed was Muḥammad's doubt about whether he was receiving a message from God. For instance, Ibn Rajā' cites Q 10:94 (“If you are in doubt about what We have revealed to you”) and contrasts that doubt with a hadith stating Muḥammad will be distinguished over all other prophets, martyrs, and humans in heaven. But if Muḥammad were truly the prophet described in these glowing terms, Ibn Rajā' argues, then he would not have been so mentally fragile as to need God to remove his doubt about being a prophet. He also reminds his readers that prophets must be predicted by earlier sources, and Jesus Christ confirmed that only false prophets would appear in the future. Ibn Rajā' cites a hadith report affirming that Muḥammad only asked for converts to outwardly profess their faith and did not require sincerity of heart. If they profess monotheism, then they can enter heaven, even if they commit adultery, steal, drink wine, and murder.⁴⁹ Ibn Rajā' argues that earlier in his life Muḥammad could rightfully be called an unbeliever in the one God since he was astray (Q 93:7; 42:52), was the son of two polytheists, and lived for forty years as a polytheist. A prophet guided since his birth would not have married his daughters to polytheists either.⁵⁰ Ibn Rajā' concludes that the concept of his infallible status is a hagiographical fiction that contradicts the Qur'an and other historical sources.⁵¹

Ibn Rajā' was certain that Muḥammad had used political violence to spread Islam. Ibn Rajā' uses sword imagery on more than twenty occasions to describe Muḥammad's method of political intimidation to coerce individuals to convert to Islam. He states three times that Muḥammad “wielded the sword,” and claims on ten occasions that certain people converted for “fear of the sword” in response to his raids, assassinations, and threats. In his introduction, Ibn Rajā'

48 27.217.

49 3.25.

50 20.171–173.

51 20.165–170.

states that no person can refute his arguments by logic but they can only silence him by the sword.⁵² He outlines the four types of people who become Muslims, with the first group being those who were forced to convert by the sword.⁵³ Later, he cites a hadith where God commands Muḥammad to fight people until they admit that he is God's messenger.⁵⁴ He contrasts the imagery of Muḥammad's sword as a sign of political might with Jesus' miracles as a sign that called his followers to martyrdom by worldly powers.⁵⁵ According to a commentary on Q 17:59, God told Muḥammad that – like earlier prophets – he would be called a liar without proof, and that his proof would be his sword.⁵⁶ Overall, Ibn Rajā' compares Muḥammad to the Babylonian co-regent Belshazzar whose kingdom fell to the Persians in 539 BC.⁵⁷ In Late Antique Jewish, Christian, and Islamic legends, Belshazzar was known as a tyrant and torturer. Ibn Rajā' alleges many individuals converted for fear of the sword. These include the conversions of Mu'āwiyā's father Abū Sufyān, Muḥammad's uncle 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib, al-Zubaydī, and Ibn Abī Balta'a.⁵⁸ Ibn Rajā' also speaks of several Arab Muslim tribes who apostatized from Islam and fled to Persian and Byzantine territory for fear of retribution.⁵⁹

Ibn Rajā' believed that the circumstances of Muḥammad's revelations were inconsistent with other stories about his life. For instance, he recounts hadith reports that explain how Muḥammad would receive revelations like the sound of a bell, and then he would sweat. Then he would collapse on the ground and his limbs would seize, according to Ibn Rajā's sources.⁶⁰ To him, it makes no sense that Muḥammad could travel to the seven heavens and pray for angels

52 1.7.

53 1.8.

54 3.24.

55 3.39.

56 3.41.

57 See Daniel 5:1–30 and Baruch 1:11–12.

58 4.42–47. See Abū Sufyān, *ET*², 1:151; 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib, *ET*² 3:152–154; al-Zubaydī, Alfred Guillaume, ed., *The Life of Muhammad: A Translation of Ibn Ishāq's "sīrat rasūl allāh"* (London: Oxford University Press, 1955; Reprint, 1990), 20; Ibn Abī Balta'a, al-Ṭabarī, *The History of al-Ṭabarī: The Victory of Islam*, transl. Michael Fishbein (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1997), 8:166–168.

59 30.243. On the context for the *rida* wars, see Fred Donner, *Muhammad and the Believers: At the Origins of Islam* (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2012); Ayman Ibrahim, *The Stated Motivations for the Early Islamic Expansion (622–641): A Critical Revision of Muslims' Traditional Portrayal of the Arab Raids and Conquests* (New York: Peter Lang, 2018).

60 6.51–52. However, the canonical hadith reports only mention the bell sound and the sweating. Whether the collapsing was a fabrication or excised from the sources is a matter of scholarly dispute.

there, but that he would sweat and collapse at the sight of Gabriel appearing to him on earth.⁶¹ Ibn Rajā' argues that, based upon Q 3:7 ("No one knows its interpretation except God"), Muḥammad did not comprehend the revelations that he received, nor did he clarify the verses' meanings for his followers.⁶² He concludes that he could not follow a book without a clear explanation. According to Ibn Rajā', Muḥammad was a plagiarist who collaborated with monotheists to obtain biblical sources (addressed in the section above on the origins of the Qur'an). Ibn Rajā' states that the Christian monk Baḥīrā provided Muḥammad with material to use for his Arabic revelations. After his death, 'Abd Allāh ibn Salām the Jew and Salmān the Persian read the scriptures and summarized them for Muḥammad to edit and proclaim in Arabic.⁶³ Ibn Rajā' opines: "He looked at the previous scriptures and stole the words that were in them, and he ascribed them to himself."⁶⁴ The Qur'an was only meant for Arabic speakers, according to Ibn Rajā', so its message lacked the universal nature of a true scripture.⁶⁵

Having familiarized himself with the virtues of the prophets, Ibn Rajā' concluded that Muḥammad was involved in so many controversies with his wives and other women that his affairs were inconsistent with that of a prophet. In these arguments, Ibn Rajā' claims that Muḥammad's polygamy, sexual controversies, and marriage problems revealed his deeply flawed personal character issues. As mentioned above, Ibn Rajā' cites the Islamic reports that Muḥammad had sexual relations with Mary the Copt after she was presented to him as a gift. After promising 'Ā'isha and Ḥafṣa not to sleep with her again and failing, Muḥammad said that God absolved him of the previous oath (Q 66:1–5). When they questioned why God would permit him to have what he denied to himself, Muḥammad suggested that God would allow him to divorce them for better wives (verse 5), after which they repented of their accusations.⁶⁶ Ibn Rajā' criticizes Muḥammad for his marriage practices, including permit-

61 6.54.

62 Shī'a Muslims interpret the Arabic text to mean that "No one knows its interpretation except God and those deeply-rooted in knowledge," which encompasses prophets and imams as well. See Stefan Wild, "The Self-Referentiality of the Qur'an: Sūra 3:7 as an Exegetical Challenge," in Jane Dammen McAuliffe, et al, eds., *With Reverence for the Word: Medieval Scriptural Exegesis in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam* (Oxford/New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), 422–436.

63 6.56–57.

64 17.132.

65 See a similar argument by Paul of Antioch in his *Letter to a Muslim Friend*, Sidney Griffith, "Paul of Antioch," in *The Orthodox Church in the Arab World, 700–1700*, 216–235.

66 12.96–99.

ting himself more wives than other Muslims, permitting the accumulation of slave concubines, and permitting himself to divorce undesirable wives such as Sawda bint Zam‘a.⁶⁷ He recounts the Islamic commentaries on Q 33:37 that discuss the complications between Muḥammad, his adopted son Zayd, and Zayd’s wife Zaynab. After meeting Zaynab at her home, Muḥammad received a revelation that it was acceptable for Zayd to divorce her so that she could be married to Muḥammad.⁶⁸ For Ibn Rajā’, these sexual affairs recounted in Islamic biographies were not consistent with the actions of a prophet. Paradise as a location where men derived much of their pleasure from wide-eyed virgins (houris) also troubled him.⁶⁹ As a Muslim convert to Christianity who had committed himself to the monastic life, Ibn Rajā’ felt this carnal description of the afterlife did not align with his view that probably reflected Matthew 22:30: “For in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels of God in heaven.”

Tapping into internal Muslim debate again, Ibn Rajā’ insisted that Muḥammad was a fallible human who did not produce the miracles that others attributed to him. During the formation of Islamic orthodoxy in this period, certain Muslims had advocated for the notion that Muḥammad was without sin (along with the rest of the prophets). In this process, some laudatory hadith reports had arisen to suggest that Muḥammad would be the first to enter heaven on the Day of Resurrection. Other reports suggested that earlier prophets were inferior to him, and that God had created the world on his account. Ibn Rajā’ rejects these reports as exaggerations.⁷⁰ One of the miracles attributed to Muḥammad is the Qur’an itself, which Ibn Rajā’ rejects because it can be emulated and it did not surpass the style and eloquence of ancient poetry.⁷¹ Ibn Rajā’ also argues from Q 10:15 that Muḥammad only gave revelations in Arabic and was unable to provide a revelation in another language.⁷² In his final chapter, Ibn Rajā’ recounts the story of Muḥammad’s Night Journey (*mi‘rāj*), when he traveled upon the animal al-Burāq to Jerusalem and then with Gabriel up to the seven heavens to speak with angels, prophets, and God (a story that developed in the commentary tradition when analyzing Q 17:1). Muslims cannot claim the story as a sign for Muḥammad’s legitimacy, since that would

67 13.104.

68 14.106–108. See David S. Powers, *Zayd* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2014).

69 18.148, 150.

70 19–20.163–173.

71 16.119–127.

72 17.129.

invalidate the Qur'an's claims that he did not produce any miracles.⁷³ Ibn Rajā' and other Muslim skeptics among the Mu'tazilīs agreed that Muḥammad did not persuade others through signs of miracles.⁷⁴

Using his Christian theological training, Ibn Rajā' concluded that Muḥammad was inferior to Jesus in every way. Ibn Rajā' depicts a stark contrast between Jesus Christ and the Muslim prophet. In every category – prophecy, core message, miracles, universal mission, and others – Ibn Rajā' sees Jesus as superior to all humanity, including Muḥammad. While the prophets of the Old Testament had predicted Jesus, Muḥammad could not be found there.⁷⁵ Jesus was born of the virgin Mary, as the Qur'an agreed (Q 3:42–47; Q 19:16–33), while Muḥammad was born to pagan parents whom Muslims believed were in hell.⁷⁶ Jesus' core message was one of peace and sacrifice, focusing on the personal moral life – even up to his death upon the cross – while Muḥammad accepted the necessity of violence and focused on political advancement. Jesus performed countless miracles described in the gospels, while the Qur'an states that Muḥammad did not produce miracles (later accounts looking to remedy that fact were contradictory fabrications). Jesus Christ was God's Word and Spirit, eternally God, while Muḥammad was made from clay like all humans.⁷⁷ For Ibn Rajā', there was no legitimate comparison that could make Islam more compelling to him than the Christian faith modeled on Jesus Christ.

3 Ibn Rajā' on the Hadith

Ibn Rajā' utilizes hadith reports throughout *The Truthful Exposer* because these reports provide contextual information, illustrate argumentative points, and/or demonstrate their contradictions with other Muslim sources or with reason. He mentions in his introduction that he received training in hadith narrations from his instructors in Cairo. He cites more than thirty hadith reports in *The Truthful Exposer*. Ibn Rajā' did not cite hadith reports as part of a book culture, where they were sourced from a physical copy from a canonical collection. The six Sunnī collections were not yet absolute authorities at this time in

73 30.232–244.

74 30.245–247.

75 This argument gave rise to a popular genre of literature among Muslims known as the "Proofs of the Prophethood," in which authors cited passages in the Bible that they believed proved his predicted arrival.

76 This conclusion is based upon Muslim readings of Q 2:119 and 9:113.

77 21.176–184.

Fatimid Egypt. Authority was based upon an unbroken succession of transmitters from one's instructor back to the time of Muḥammad that was also found in other authoritative reports (*tawātur*). Understandably, Ibn Rajā' narrates hadith accounts on the authority of his teachers, suggesting he had memorized them or used memory aids that he had written down from his instruction. In an earlier work Ibn Rajā' wrote called *The Book of Demonstration on the Contradiction of the Hadith*, he probably went into more detail about his approach to this material. It was natural for Ibn Rajā' to draw upon hadith narratives because Muslims repeated them frequently in their works. He cited reports which are traceable to both Sunnī Mālikī and/or Shī'ī Ismā'īlī origins, since the Ismā'īlī collection of his elder contemporary al-Nu'mān – who founded the Ismā'īlī school of law but was originally part of the Mālikī school – combined reports from both traditions.⁷⁸ Based upon his transmission lines, it appears that some of his instructors had training in the Mālikī Sunnī school but were themselves Ismā'īlī or at least knowledgeable in traditions attributed to the first seven imams.⁷⁹ For Ibn Rajā', these rivalries were irrelevant to his purpose. Ibn Rajā' does not always cite a hadith with a full transmission line but sometimes notes that Muslims generally recognize an account as acceptable, such as, "Someone told me about the hadith, of which they do not doubt its soundness."⁸⁰ Based upon these hadith reports, Ibn Rajā' made the following arguments.

Hadith reports demonstrated for Ibn Rajā' that Muslims had divided into factions regarding what was the authentic version of Islam. One of Ibn Rajā's key strategies was to cite hadith reports that Muslims used to critique each other. He took those accounts and pointed out that they critiqued the whole of Islam. For instance, he cites a well-known account from his father that Muslims would be divided into seventy-three sects and only one group would be saved.⁸¹ Rather than using it as a proof to discover the true version of Islam, he exploited it to demonstrate the lack of unity among Muslims. At other times, Ibn Rajā' quotes Shī'ī hadith reports that were critical of Sunnī Muslims for the same effect. One report alleges that the caliph Mu'āwiya wore a cross around his neck. Upon his deathbed, he asked to be placed facing east and died a Christian,

78 Unfortunately, most of the Ismā'īlī hadith collection belonging to al-Nu'mān has been lost. See more in Ismail Poonawala, "Hadith in Ismailism," in *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, volume 11, ed. Ehsan Yarshater (London: Routledge / Kegan Paul, 2003), 449–451; Heinz Halm, *The Fatimids and their Traditions of Learning* (New York: I.B. Tauris, 1997).

79 For more on Sunnī-Ismā'īlī relations under the Fatimids, see den Heijer, "Religion, Ethnicity and Gender under Fatimid Rule," 41–47.

80 12.100.

81 1.9.

according to Ibn Rajāʾ's source.⁸² Interestingly, a modern Muslim Shīʿī editor cites this story on the authority of Ibn Rajāʾ in his book of hadith reports!⁸³ Ibn Rajāʾ also quotes an anti-Umayyad legend that Muʿāwiyā's mother Hind slapped her husband Abū Sufyān and threw soot on him for converting to Islam.⁸⁴ These reports reveal how Ibn Rajāʾ cited trusted hadith reports for the purpose of exploiting differences between Muslim communities. His assessments of these divisions also extended into the realm of Islamic practice. Ibn Rajāʾ cites a hadith in which Muḥammad permitted the faithful to mix wine with water to cleanse their hands before prayer. Ibn Rajāʾ adds that Muḥammad said there was no harm in drinking it (which is absent in canonical reports).⁸⁵ Then, he lists legal scholars that permitted alcohol consumption, demonstrating the inability of Islamic texts to create a consensus among Muslim communities.

Like some rationalist Muslims (e.g., *mutakallimūn*), Ibn Rajāʾ considered traditionist beliefs in the reliability of hadith reports to indicate that such Muslims were naïve and gullible. He illustrates this point by citing a canonical hadith wherein Muḥammad acknowledged that whoever says that there is no god but God will enter Paradise, even if that person commits serious sins.⁸⁶ Ibn Rajāʾ adds that certain Muslims used this hadith to justify unconscionable actions. Next, he mentions that, during the Arab conquest of Ctesiphon, some of the victors were unable to tell the difference between flatbread and clothing patches and consequently attached the bread to their clothing.⁸⁷ He also points out conflicting hadith reports on how Muḥammad allegedly

82 3.31. See Cook, "Apostasy from Islam: A Historical Perspective," 262. We also find an example of a similar hadith referring to a cross of gold on the neck of ʿAdī ibn Ḥatīm in Devin Stewart, ed., *The Disagreements of the Jurists: A Manual of Islamic Legal Theory* (New York: New York University Press, 2015), 48–49.

83 The citation is by the modern editor Mahdī Rajāʾī in his edition of Sulaymān ibn ʿAbd Allāh ibn ʿAmmār al-Baḥrānī al-Māḥūzī, *al-Arbaʿūn ḥadīthan fī ithbāt imāmat Amīr al-Muʾminīn*, ed. Mahdī Rajāʾī (Qum: Maktabat al-Rajāʾī, 1996/7), 89, n. 1.

84 4.43. On Hind bint ʿUtba as a figure for Abbasid critique of the age of ignorance (*jahiliyya*) and the Umayyads, see Nadia El-Cheikh, *Women, Islam, and Abbasid Identity* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2015), 17–37.

85 30.224–226. The absence of the last sentences does not necessarily mean that Ibn Rajāʾ added the phrase. He may have learned of – or had access to – a hadith report that included the final addition. Hadith reports commonly were purged of controversial actions or comments attributed to Muḥammad. See, for instance, M.J. Kister, "A Bag of Meat: A Study of an Early Ḥadīth," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 33 (1970): 267–275.

86 3.25.

87 3.27.

split the moon (Q 54:1), which then fell upon two mountains near Mecca while also somehow being eighteen times the size of the world.⁸⁸ Here he pleads with his Muslim reader: “Think about it, my brother – may God guide you – this impossibility has no truth to it.”⁸⁹ Another hadith attributed to al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī declares that in heaven a Muslim man’s penis will lengthen so much as to require seventy Jews and Christians each to carry it.⁹⁰ He finds that only “inferior minds” would accept such a ridiculous claim as reasonable.

Following the genre of “Contradiction of the Hadith,” Ibn Rajā’ echoed the idea that hadith reports contradicted each other and/or gave incompatible accounts of historical events. Ibn Rajā’ notes, for instance, that there are two legends about the Night of the Jinn, based upon Q 46:29: “When We dispatched toward you a team of jinn listening to the Qur’an, when they were in its presence, they said, ‘Be silent!’ When it was finished, they went back to their people as warners.” One report mentions Muḥammad encountering the jinn alone, while another version mentions that Ibn Mas‘ūd accompanied him.⁹¹ According to a report attributed to Abū Ma‘mar, Muḥammad said that not a single soul would remain on earth within a hundred years of his lifetime.⁹² Ibn Rajā’ replies, of course, that he is writing four hundred years later. In addition, Ibn Rajā’ cites a tradition from Muḥammad in which he claimed that Jesus put his image upon one of his disciples to be crucified in his place.⁹³ According to Ibn Rajā’, the historical fact of the crucifixion, the resulting effects such as tombs opening and apparitions appearing, and Jesus’ subsequent resurrection nullify this legend. Concerning the Ka’ba in Mecca, he cites a report on the authority of Ibn ‘Abbās that it was protected from tyrants according to Q 22:29. Ibn Rajā’ points out the historical inaccuracy, since al-Ḥajjāj ibn Yūsuf al-Thaqafī (d. 714) destroyed it during a civil war in 692 and the Ismā‘īlī Qarmatians sacked Mecca in 930 and stripped the gold and silver and gate from the building.⁹⁴ In

88 18.141–143.

89 18.143.

90 18.148.

91 7.65.

92 18.152.

93 24.201. This tradition is well known in commentaries on Q 4:157, such as in Abū Ja‘far al-Ṭabarī, *Tafsīr al-Ṭabarī: Jāmi‘ al-bayān ‘an ta’wīl āy al-Qur‘ān*, 26 vols., ed. ‘Abd Allāh ibn ‘Abd al-Muḥsin al-Turkī (Cairo: Dār al-Hijr, 2001), 7:650–660. However, this particular report is narrated on the authority of the Ismā‘īlī Aḥmad al-Naysabūrī.

94 25.205–206. The Qarmatians were a rival Ismā‘īlī faction that were sometimes foes of the Fatimids.

the final chapter of *The Truthful Exposer*, Ibn Rajā' highlights alleged historical and/or logical inconsistencies in the hadith reports about Muḥammad's Night Journey.⁹⁵ Although the story claims that all of the events happened in only a matter of moments during the night, Ibn Rajā' declares that reason and logic cannot accept such claims.

In the same vein, hadith reports were sometimes in direct conflict with the Qur'an. Ibn Rajā' notes that the Qur'an does not include a specific verse prescribing a punishment for adultery, but he cites a hadith report indicating that the stoning verse and the whipping verse were originally part of the revelation.⁹⁶ For Ibn Rajā', either the report is true and the Qur'an has been tampered with, or the report is false and the hadith is unreliable. Later, Ibn Rajā' quotes Q 2:28, that God will make the dead to rise at the resurrection. However, another hadith explains that after death two angels (Munkar and Nakīr) will judge the soul and give another death and resurrection before the final judgment by God. Ibn Rajā' finds this report in conflict with the Qur'an. In another hadith, Ibn Rajā' explains how women, fragrances, and prayer to God were most precious to Muḥammad. Ibn Rajā' believed this hadith would mention God first in order to be consistent with the Qur'an.

For Ibn Rajā', the hadith reports indicated that Muḥammad was not protected from error. For instance, regarding Muḥammad's death, Ibn Rajā' cites a hadith that a Jewish woman had bewitched and later poisoned Muḥammad, which contrasts with another hadith noting that, whenever he arose or went to sleep, seventy kinds of angels guarded him. If this were the case, they failed in their divine duties.⁹⁷ When he argues for the superiority of Jesus Christ and the Holy Family over Muḥammad and his family, Ibn Rajā' cites three hadiths about Muḥammad's status as the most favored prophet.⁹⁸ Then Ibn Rajā' contrasts these statements with a report that Muḥammad wished he knew what God had decided about the ultimate fate of his parents.⁹⁹ He

95 30.234. On the reception of his story in the west, see Ana Echevarría Arsuaga, "La reescritura del *Libro de la escala de Mahoma* como polémica religiosa," *Cahiers d'études hispaniques médiévales* 29 (2006): 173–199. Ibn Rajā's reinterpretation of the legend later made its way into Latin, Castilian, and Provençal versions.

96 8.79.

97 18.160.

98 19.162.

99 19.163. The hadith report that this statement quotes is: "The messenger of God said: 'I wish I knew what He did with my parents'. Then it was revealed (you will not be questioned concerning the inmates of hell)." See al-Ṭabarī, *Tafsīr al-Ṭabarī*, 2:481; see also the report with minor differences in al-Ḥusayn ibn Mas'ūd al-Baghawī, *Tafsīr al-Baghawī, al-Juz' al-awwal* (Riyadh: Markaz al-Turāth lil-Barmajjīyāt, 2013), 143.

also alludes to the Muslim controversy over whether Muḥammad was a polytheist prior to his call to prophethood.¹⁰⁰

Ibn Rajā' cites twelve hadith reports with complete transmission lines from his contemporaries in Fatimid Cairo. He transmits on the authority of Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad ibn al-Faraj Abū Bakr al-Qammāḥ (3 times, perhaps 4), Abū Muḥammad al-Ḥasan ibn Rashīq al-ʿAskarī (3), Abū al-ʿAbbās Aḥmad al-Naysabūrī (2), al-Ḥasan ibn Ismāʿīl al-Ḍarrāb (1), a student of Abū Ishāq Muḥammad ibn al-Qāsim ibn Shaʿbān (perhaps Ibn Rajā'ʼs father), a certain Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad, and a certain al-Maʿmūn. This evidence demonstrates that Ibn Rajā' employed genuine material from hadith collections, sometimes with complete transmission lines from his teachers who were from the Sunnī Mālikī and/or Ismāʿīlī traditionist schools. There are only a couple of instances where the origin of his citation is unverifiable. His sources were based upon hadith reports that he had learned as a Muslim in Fatimid Cairo.

4 Ibn Rajā'ʼs Use of Intra-Islamic Disputations

A close reading of *The Truthful Exposer* within its proper historical context in early eleventh century Fatimid Egypt reveals that Ibn Rajā' used the polemics between Sunnīs, Ismāʿīlīs, Muʿtazilīs, and other sects to shape his presentation of themes that were germane to medieval Muslim scholars. Ibn Rajā' was raised in a polemical culture of debate in Fatimid Cairo, and he was familiar with the topics under dispute between his fellow Muslims. Ibn Rajā' often cited sources which he probably read in intra-Islamic polemical material and/or personally witnessed in the Fatimid court (*majlis*). He alludes to this fact: "In every one of these groups is an imam who will support that [various] teaching. Many communities listened and they call each other unbeliever and they call each other ignorant."¹⁰¹ Ibn Rajā' redirected the arguments from these debates so that they applied not just to one sect but to the entirety of Islam. Ibn Rajā' made the following points which can be traced back to intra-Islamic disputations, primarily made by critics of Sunnī traditionist claims.

Ibn Rajā' echoed earlier Muslim disputes that rulings by certain legal schools demonstrated deliberate misinterpretation of the Qurʾān to suit personal taste. There are several instances when Ibn Rajā'ʼs rhetoric parallels the style and themes found in *The Disagreements of the Jurists*, written by the Fatimid legal

100 20.171.

101 1.14.

scholar Qāḍī al-Nu‘mān.¹⁰² Both Ibn Rajā’ and al-Nu‘mān wrote about the controversies generated by the qur’anic literalist Dāwūd al-Zāhiri (d. 884). Ibn Rajā’ confirms that Dāwūd’s literalist reading of the Qur’an led him to conclude that only consuming pork meat and blood was specifically prohibited in Q 2:173, 5:3, and 6:145. Therefore, by matter of inference, other byproducts such as pork fat were permitted if the faithful drained the blood properly and separated the fat from the meat, presumably by inference of Q 6:146 which permits some exceptions for other fats.¹⁰³ Al-Nu‘mān was also critical of Dāwūd and his school because, while he thought they properly rejected contemporary consensus, analogical reasoning, and preference, the literalists permitted inference.¹⁰⁴ In this case, Ibn Rajā’ may have learned his critique of Dāwūd’s interpretation from his teachers. Given the fact that Ibn Rajā’ was familiar with Ismā‘īlī hadith reports, it is likely that his assessment of Dāwūd’s interpretations is not the product of Christian polemic but a repetition of Ismā‘īlī polemics that he had learned as a Muslim student in Cairo.

Like some rationalist Muslims, Ibn Rajā’ acknowledged that jurists sometimes contradicted each other on matters of interpretation, even within the same legal school, invalidating their interpretive enterprise. Al-Nu‘mān’s Ismā‘īlī polemical arguments against Sunnī jurists are similar to those found in *The Truthful Exposer*. Both al-Nu‘mān and Ibn Rajā’ critique Sunnī opponents for their arbitrary submission to authority. Ibn Rajā’ notes of jurist-interpreters: “Not even two of them could agree about an interpretation, as if every one of them was convinced of his interpretation, according to the way he wanted to interpret it.”¹⁰⁵ Al-Nu‘mān writes similarly: “[The Sunnī jurists] disagreed concerning what they allege is not found in the Book of God, or, they claim, in the Practice of the Prophet, or in the opinions of the Companions, or in the consensus of the scholars after them.”¹⁰⁶ Later, al-Nu‘mān accuses the jurists of

102 Ibn Rajā’ opens his work by referring to the Gospel as a lamp that acts as a guide (*imāman*) for the people of God’s religion and illuminates the path to God. In the introduction to al-Nu‘mān’s text, caliph al-Mu‘izz states that the caliph-imam is “a shining lamp on His earth by which people might be guided and by whose light the path might be illuminated, and set him up as a landmark for his creation,” Stewart, *The Disagreements of the Jurists*, 32–35. Ibn Rajā’ emphasizes that his book is about that which is made clear with regard to the truth (*al-Wāḍiḥ bi-l-Ḥaqq*). Al-Nu‘mān applies the same term of clarity to the imams, while remarking that the Shī‘a are the “People of Truth,” *ibid.*, 42–43, 46–47.

103 1.12.

104 His method is described in Stewart, ed., *The Disagreements of the Jurists*, 248–249, and especially 284–285.

105 1.10.

106 Stewart, *The Disagreements of the Jurists*, 18–19.

being ignorant people who contradicted the Qur'an and put their legal rulings on par with God's commands.¹⁰⁷ When al-Nu'mān identifies an inconsistency in his opponents' arguments, he labels it a contradiction and incongruity – a phrasing Ibn Rajā' also employs throughout his work.

For Ibn Rajā', early Muslims were unreliable transmitters of tradition and unfaithful to Islamic practice. Al-Nu'mān discourages his readers from following the normative example (*sunna*) of Muḥammad's companions because they disagreed with one another after his death. He suggests that many first-generation Muslims were also hypocrites (*munāfiqūn*).¹⁰⁸ Al-Nu'mān asserts: "Most of them openly drank alcohol, listened to frivolous entertainments, committed sins, violated sacred prohibitions, and behaved tyrannically, attacking and oppressing the nation and treating its members with violence and injustice."¹⁰⁹ Both authors cite the hadith that Muḥammad's community would be divided into seventy-three sects to demonstrate the lack of authority and consensus among early Muslims. Both authors were comfortable with citing unflattering hadith accounts of early Muslims to serve their polemical goals.

Following the tactics and critiques preserved by Ibn Qutayba (d. 889)¹¹⁰ in his *Explanation of Hadith Differences (Ta'wīl mukhtalaf al-ḥadīth)*, Ibn Rajā' alleged that the practice of citing a hadith as a source of authority is unreliable, contradictory, and causes hostility and division. This claim came directly from Mu'tazilī rationalists in their disputations with Sunnī traditionists. These philosophically-minded intellectuals criticized tradition-based Muslims for the alleged triviality of their books and for marketing lies to simple believers, transmitting contradictory accounts, and causing hostility and division between Muslims.¹¹¹ According to Ibn Qutayba, Muslim rationalists accused traditionists of contradicting themselves on narratives of the Prophet, and claimed that, if presented with one subject, any two Muslim hadith experts would disagree on its relevance to the point that everyone with a personal opinion would make it an article of faith and create his own religious system (a

107 Ibid., 30–31.

108 Ibid., 63–64. Hypocrites are self-professed Muslims who fail to observe the ritual and legal obligations of Islam. The term has a qur'anic resonance coming from Q al-Munāfiqūn 63 and also Q 4, 9, and 33, among others.

109 Ibid., 166–167.

110 "Ibn Qutayba," *EI*², 3:844–847.

111 Ibn Qutayba, *Ta'wīl mukhtalaf al-ḥadīth*, ed. Riḍā Faraj al-Hamāmī (Beirut: Al-Maktaba al-ʿAṣriyya, 2003), 5; see also Ibn Qutayba, *Le Traité des divergences du ḥadīth d'Ibn Qutayba (mort en 276/889): Traduction annotée du Kitāb ta'wīl muḥtalif al-ḥadīth*, transl. Gérard Lecomte (Damascus: Presses de l'Ifpo, 2014), <http://books.openedition.org/ifpo/6387>, #1.

point Ibn Rajā' echoed).¹¹² An important connection here is the fact that the Ismā'īlī jurist al-Nu'mān also composed a refutation of the Sunnī Ibn Qutayba on the unreliability of early Islamic sources with the exception of the first seven imams.¹¹³ These debates and texts shaped Ibn Rajā's education, views, and critiques of early Islam.

Islamic disputes over rulings concerning alcohol consumption, marriage laws, and dietary laws suggested to Ibn Rajā' that they were arbitrary interpretations unrelated to God's truth. Both Ibn Rajā' and Ibn Qutayba's rationalist opponents believed that legal scholars had greatly diverged from each other in *fiqh*, especially between the Meccan-Medinan school and the Iraqi schools.¹¹⁴ Ibn Qutayba acknowledged their disagreement, but he blamed it on Mu'tazilī rationalists. One reason for this distrust is their claim that wine is not illicit to drink and abstention is only recommended for self-discipline. Ibn Qutayba also rebukes Zāhirī literalists who allow marriage to nine women based on their reading of Q 4:3, and he complains of their ruling that only pork meat is forbidden and not its blood or skin.¹¹⁵ Fascinatingly, Ibn Rajā' cites these same two examples, only in reverse order, and he names the legal scholars who made these arguments.¹¹⁶

Islamic debates demonstrated that the doctrine of Muḥammad's infallibility (*iṣma*)¹¹⁷ was controversial among Muslims, and, for Ibn Rajā', indicated the doctrine was flawed. For instance, a Muslim critic of hadith pointed out that Muḥammad was supposedly always guided by God, yet he had married two of his daughters to polytheists (just as Ibn Rajā' reasoned).¹¹⁸ Ibn Rajā' and

112 Ibn Qutayba, *Ta'wīl mukhtalaf al-ḥadīth*, 22; Ibn Qutayba, *Traité des divergences*, #24.

113 Avraham Hakim, ed., *The Epistle of the Eloquent Clarification Concerning the Refutation of Ibn Qutayba by Al-Qādī al-Nu'mān b. Muḥammad (d. 363/974)* (Leiden: Brill, 2012).

114 See more on the disagreements and the literature they generated in "Ikhtilāf," *EI*², 3:1061–1062.

115 Ibn Qutayba, *Ta'wīl mukhtalaf al-ḥadīth*, 57–58; Ibn Qutayba, *Traité des divergences*, #74–75: "I have heard that there are people of the *kalām* that consider wine as not unlawful, and to declare that God only forbade it to improve manners ... There are also those who consider it lawful to marry nine free women, for God said: 'Marry those women who please you, two, three, four'; they say: 'It's nine'. And they add: 'The proof is that the Prophet died leaving nine wives; but God could not allow the Prophet in the Qur'an more than what he allows the rest of men'. There are those who consider the fat and the skin of the pig as lawful, for God only forbade the flesh of it in the Qur'an, in the verse: 'The flesh of the dead beast has been declared unlawful for you, the blood, the flesh of the pig,' [God] therefore prohibited only the flesh."

116 1.12–13.

117 See "*iṣma*," *EI*², 4:182–184.

118 20.171–172; Ibn Qutayba, *Ta'wīl mukhtalaf al-ḥadīth*, 104–105; Ibn Qutayba, *Traité des divergences*, #147.

another Muslim skeptic cite the legend that a representation of the Prophet, pricked full of needles, had been thrown into a well, making Muḥammad a victim of sorcery. ‘Alī found it and removed the needles, reducing the Prophet’s pain until he was healed. According to both authors, this story contradicts Muḥammad’s alleged protection in Q 113:1–4.¹¹⁹ In another example, a Muslim disputant mentions a hadith, stating: “One hundred years from now not a soul will remain upon the surface of the earth.” This critic and Ibn Rajā’ both conclude this narrative is false because, after more than a century, there had been no Judgment Day.¹²⁰ There is also a tradition attributed to Abbasid Mu‘tazilī Thumāma ibn Ashras (d. 828), which both Ibn Qutayba and Ibn Rajā’ repeated, where Thumāma notes that Muslims going to Friday prayers are like cattle and donkeys, and he cannot believe what Muḥammad had done to them.¹²¹

Debates showed that Muslims were creating alternative origin stories for religious devotions tied to pre-Islamic practices. Ibn Rajā’ and Ibn Qutayba’s disputants both examine contrasting hadith reports on the origins of the Black Stone. Some reports allege the Black Stone was the right hand of God, while others claim it came from Paradise and was turned from white to black by people’s sins and unbelief.¹²² The disputant and Ibn Rajā’ both conclude with a saying attributed to Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥanafīyya (d. 700) that the Black Stone simply came from a valley in the region; both also admit that there are contradictions in the sources.¹²³ These examples suggest that Ibn Rajā’ possibly read Ibn Qutayba’s *Explanation of Hadith Differences* or that he was acquainted with the original sources for these rationalist critiques.

Islamic disputes sometimes revealed that hadith reports were historical fabrications, according to Ibn Rajā’. He was probably familiar with polemical arguments adduced by the Muslim *kalām* specialist and hadith skeptic Ibrāhīm al-Nazzām (d. c. 845).¹²⁴ Both al-Nazzām and Ibn Rajā’ ridicule the legend that Muḥammad split the moon, as well as the size of it, and refer to the fact that non-Muslim sources are silent on the matter. Al-Nazzām’s skepticism about

119 18.159; Ibn Qutayba, *Taʿwīl mukhtalaf al-ḥadīth*, 164; Ibn Qutayba, *Traité des divergences*, #203.

120 18.152; Ibn Qutayba, *Taʿwīl mukhtalaf al-ḥadīth*, 94–95; Ibn Qutayba, *Traité des divergences*, #139.

121 4.47; Ibn Qutayba, *Taʿwīl mukhtalaf al-ḥadīth*, 47–48; Ibn Qutayba, *Traité des divergences*, #55.

122 26.207–214; Ibn Qutayba, *Taʿwīl mukhtalaf al-ḥadīth*, 195–196, 258; Ibn Qutayba, *Traité des divergences*, #241, #303.

123 26.215–216; Ibn Qutayba, *Taʿwīl mukhtalaf al-ḥadīth*, 258–259; Ibn Qutayba, *Traité des divergences*, #303–304. See “Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥanafīyya,” *EI*², 7:402–403.

124 See “al-Nazzām,” *EI*², 7:1057–1058.

the moon legend led him to conclude that it was a lie. Instead, he confirms that no records were found among scientists, poets, or non-Muslims to indicate that the event had taken place – just as Ibn Rajāʾ explained.¹²⁵ Later, Ibn Rajāʾ points out the contradictions in the hadith about the Night of the Jinn concerning whether Muḥammad was alone or with Ibn Masʿūd when he encountered them. Al-Nazzām reports these same conflicting versions, and both authors introduce the hadith with a reference to the Zuṭṭ people.¹²⁶ This small detail likely suggests his familiarity with the same source and suggests that Ibn Rajāʾ was utilizing a product taken from intra-Islamic disputation.

Muslim groups debated one another over the reason for repetitions and word redundancies in the Qurʾan. In this regard, there are several parallels between Ibn Rajāʾ's work and Ibn Qutayba's *Explanation of Difficult Passages of the Qurʾan (Taʾwīl Mushkil al-Qurʾān)*.¹²⁷ Both figures point out misunderstanding and redundancy that arises from Q 78:9 (“We made your sleep [for] rest”), because what is rest if not sleep?¹²⁸ Likewise, both figures point out that the description of crystal cups of silver in Q 76:15–16 is nonsensical since crystal is transparent and silver is opaque.¹²⁹ Both men find the description of stones as clay in Q 51:33 confusing, since these are two different materials.¹³⁰ Most compelling is the fact that these three examples of repetitions appear in the same

125 18.142; Ibn Qutayba, *Taʾwīl mukhtalaf al-ḥadīth*, 27; Ibn Qutayba, *Traité des divergences*, #37a. According to Ibn Qutayba, al-Nazzām wrote: “This is an obvious lie, for God would not have split the moon for Him alone, nor for Him alone and a man. He would have split it to make it a sign for the worlds, an argument for the prophets, a warning shot for men and a proof for the whole universe. How then did not everyone notice it, and how was it not established a new calendar from that year? How did no poet speak of it? How did no infidel become a Muslim? How did no Muslim argue against an atheist [using this proof]?”

126 7.65; Ibn Qutayba, *Taʾwīl mukhtalaf al-ḥadīth*, 27; Ibn Qutayba, *Traité des divergences*, #37e. Al-Nazzām points out the contradiction as follows: “As [Ibn Masʿūd] saw a troop of Zuṭṭ, he said: ‘I did not see anything that looked more like the jinn than these people [during] the Night of the Jinn’. This was reported by Sulaymān al-Taymī from the mouth of Abū ʿUthmān al-Nahdī. [However,] Dāwūd reports from al-Shaʿbī that Alqama asked Ibn Masʿūd: ‘Were you with the Prophet, during the night of the spirits?’ He replied: ‘None of us attended.’” The Zuṭṭ were a non-Arab nomadic group of Indian origin who settled in the Arab Gulf region.

127 Ibn Qutayba, *Taʾwīl mushkil al-Qurʾān*, ed. Aḥmad Saqr (Cairo: Dār Iḥyāʾ al-Kutub al-ʿArabīya, 1954); see also Samad, *Ibn Qutaybah's Contribution to Qurʾānic Exegesis*.

128 11.89; Ibn Qutayba, *Taʾwīl mushkil al-Qurʾān*, 23, 56; Samad, *Ibn Qutaybah's Contribution to Qurʾānic Exegesis*, 92–93.

129 11.92; Ibn Qutayba, *Taʾwīl mushkil al-Qurʾān*, 23, 57; Samad, *Ibn Qutaybah's Contribution to Qurʾānic Exegesis*, 93.

130 11.91; Ibn Qutayba, *Taʾwīl mushkil al-Qurʾān*, 23; Samad, *Ibn Qutaybah's Contribution to Qurʾānic Exegesis*, 93–94.

section in both works, albeit not in the same order. These are not the only parallels between the works. Both figures quote Q 22:73, which promises a parable for an example; they point out that the example never appears in the text.¹³¹ Chapter 15 of *The Truthful Exposer* is on word repetition in the Qur'an, and Ibn Rajā' begins by citing Q 109:1–6 ("Say: You unbelievers, I do not worship what you worship and you do not worship what I worship. I am not a worshipper of what you worship and you are not worshippers of what I worship. You have your religion and I have [my] religion").¹³² Ibn Qutayba also cites this passage as an example of alleged repetition.¹³³ Both authors point out the imprecise recurrence of terms in the Qur'an, such as Q 55:68 which mentions fruit, then date palms and pomegranates – without the awareness that date palms and pomegranates are fruits.¹³⁴ This evidence suggests that Ibn Rajā' was familiar with Ibn Qutayba's source material that Mu'tazilī authors presented against Sunnī traditionists' interpretations of the Qur'an.

Ibn Rajā's rhetoric is not simply Christian polemic – his style derives from the polemical milieu of Fatimid educational culture common during the late tenth century, in which Sunnī, Ismā'īlī, and Mu'tazilī ideas were contested as the communities struggled for intellectual superiority. Ibn Rajā' does not object to Islamic teachings in principle. He is more interested in pointing out contradictions, which is a hallmark of Fatimid-era Islamic debate. Ibn Rajā' repeated longstanding tropes from intra-Islamic disputes with which he was conversant. He remodeled the polemical works of Sunnī and Shī'ī authors who were attempting to undermine each others' religious communities. He repurposed Muslim disputes over the Qur'an's origins and interpretation, Muḥammad's biography, questionable hadith narratives, and problematic legal rulings. Intra-Islamic controversy inspired him to fashion a work redirecting arguments about specific Muslim groups towards the entire edifice of Islam. Ibn Rajā's mental world and vocabulary are that of a former Muslim, in the tradition of intra-Islamic polemic as one finds in the works of his Islamic intellectual predecessors such as Ibn Qutayba, al-Nazzām, al-Nu'mān, and more. The evidence indicates that Ibn Rajā' utilized resources one could commonly find in use by Muslims against one another in early Fatimid Cairo. For Ibn Rajā', intra-Islamic polemics provided the necessary authority to demonstrate how

131 11.93; Ibn Qutayba, *Ta'wīl mushkil al-Qur'ān*, 24.

132 15.112.

133 Ibn Qutayba, *Ta'wīl Mushkil al-Qur'ān*, 185; Samad, *Ibn Qutaybah's Contribution to Qur'ānic Exegesis*, 168–169.

134 11.90; Ibn Qutayba, *Ta'wīl Mushkil al-Qur'ān*, 186; Samad, *Ibn Qutaybah's Contribution to Qur'ānic Exegesis*, 171.

Muslims in Fatimid Egypt disagreed about their scripture, oral traditions, and legal rulings.

Ibn Rajāʾ does not permit Islamic polemical tropes to dictate his structure, content, or message. He is less interested in persuading his Muslim audience to believe in Christianity than he is in proving that their faith in Islam is misguided. His main allegations about the Qurʾan address its authorship, authenticity, content, alleged corruption, alleged contradictions in commands, stories, history, and its portrayal of judgment, Paradise, and Hell. He critiques Muḥammad for his alleged polytheist origins, biblical plagiarism, revelations, lack of miracles, polygamy, sexual controversies, political violence, forced conversion, and trickster claims. He inspects hadith reports for their authenticity, divisive character, and contradictions. Ibn Rajāʾ scrutinizes legal and ritual practices governing polygamy and concubines, eating pork, drinking alcohol, fasting, sexual practices, and pilgrimage. He also argues that Islamic political rule has produced political divisions and violence, problems for Christians, and encouraged Islamic sectarianism. Islamic arguments against Christianity, especially concerning Jesus Christ as God's Son, Mary as the Virgin Mother, and the reality of the Crucifixion, demonstrate a greater need for truth in his view.

5 Ibn Rajāʾ's Use of Christian Arabic Sources

Būluṣ ibn Rajāʾ's work *The Truthful Exposer* is not a theological reflection on Christian doctrine. Historically, the common themes of medieval Christian-Muslim debate included Jesus and Christology, the Trinity, the authenticity of the Bible, whether the Bible predicts Muḥammad, Christian practice, and whether Christianity was corrupted.¹³⁵ Ibn Rajāʾ does not accept these Muslim terms of debate – there is no Christological analysis beyond a statement of Coptic doctrine about his divinity. The perennial theme of the Trinity is essentially absent from the text beyond the doxologies. The Incarnation is described only insofar as it contrasts Mary and Jesus with Muḥammad and his parents. Ibn Rajāʾ defends the Bible, but only because the Qurʾan mentions it. He never addresses Islamic claims that there are biblical prophecies pertaining to Muḥammad. He only discusses Christian practice in passing, as the nuances of Christian theology were not essential to his purpose. Neither does he fashion a Christian reading of the Qurʾan. His approach differs from the syncretistic

135 Hugh Goddard, "The Persistence of Medieval Themes in Modern Christian-Muslims Discussion in Egypt," in *Christian Arabic Apologetics during the Abbasid Period, 750–1258*, ed. Samir Khalil Samir and Jørgen Nielsen (Leiden: Brill, 1994), 225–237.

methods of other Christian Arabic authors. In summary, his use of Christian Arabic sources is minimal and difficult to discern.

The Coptic theologian and bishop Severus ibn al-Muqaffa' shaped Ibn Rajā'ʾs choice of materials, since they worked together, according to his biography. As mentioned above, Ibn Rajā'ʾ acknowledges that Severus is the one who told him the story of the Muslim convert al-Hāshimī. It is likely that his theological formulations in the text were honed under the guidance of Severus prior to his death. However, there are no extant works attributed to Severus that deal with the subject of refuting Islam. Unfortunately, a Christian-Muslim debate text attributed to Severus is missing; it may have presented a compelling intertwining.¹³⁶ In summary, we do not know much about the extent of their relationship and collaboration at this time.

The Christian Arabic text with the most parallels to *The Truthful Exposer* in terms of critiquing Islam is the ninth-century *Letter (Risāla)* of ʿAbd al-Masīḥ al-Kindī. One similarity is that both authors analyze the canonization of the Qurʾan. It is clear that both authors are utilizing Islamic sources. But their responses and selection of material are sufficiently distinct as to assume they were both making use of Islamic sources independently. Emilio Platti summarizes a list of nine manipulations that al-Kindī notes about the canonization of the Qurʾan. While accusations three, four, and five are mentioned by Ibn Rajā'ʾ in chapters 7–9 on the Qurʾan, these are not presented identically, and the rest of their respective material on the canonization of the Qurʾan is presented differently.¹³⁷ They reach similar conclusions based upon reading the same Islamic source material, but they use that information in different ways. There is no definitive evidence suggesting that Ibn Rajā'ʾ had read al-Kindī's work.

Another possible Christian Arabic source for Ibn Rajā'ʾ was one of the Arabic versions of the legend of the monk Baḥīrā.¹³⁸ However, his passing references to the monk as Muḥammad's teacher are too generic to easily identify his source material. His allegation that Baḥīrā was murdered at Muḥammad's order is also absent from other Christian legends. Perhaps it was part of the oral traditions of the Copts in Cairo and the monasteries of Scetis, but this is only speculation.

Overall, the extent to which Ibn Rajā'ʾ drew upon earlier Christian Arabic materials for his writings is by no means clear. Given that he offers minimal attention to Christian theological concerns, there is no Christian Arabic author

136 See the "Book of Sessions" in Swanson, "Sāwīrus ibn al-Muqaffa'," 498–499.

137 Platti, "ʿAbd al-Masīḥ al-Kindī on the Qurʾan," 78.

138 Roggema, *The Legend of Sergius Baḥīrā*.

who can definitively be suggested as a significant source for the structure and content of *The Truthful Exposer*. Ibn Rajā's tendency to use Coptic doctrinal theology suggests the most likely source of inspiration for his Christian theological content was Severus ibn al-Muqaffa' and the writings he would have encountered at Saint Macarius monastery in the desert at Scetis.

The Reception of *The Truthful Exposer*

1 Literary Afterlife from the Mediterranean to Europe

The impact of *The Truthful Exposer* was not historically inevitable. The reception of texts over time can lead to substantially different interpretations and functions for a collection of ideas, especially when viewed through the eyes of later readers. In the case of Būluṣ ibn Rajā's *The Truthful Exposer*, his conversion gave his work special value: it was a rational argument, founded on personal experience and supported by his expertise in Islam. Even with these advantages, its literary afterlife was obscured in history since later authors cited its content piecemeal for their own purposes. While there is only one known complete manuscript of *The Truthful Exposer* in Arabic, two partial Arabic texts, and one partial text in Karshūnī (Arabic written in Syriac characters), there are countless fragments of his arguments that later authors revised while writing in Latin, Syriac, Greek, early Romance languages, and German. The tangible impact of his ideas spread across Egypt to the Middle East, the Mediterranean, and Europe.

Networks were crucial to connecting Ibn Rajā's work to others across space and time (see also Figure 3). In the medieval Mediterranean, monks traveling between monasteries were catalysts who consumed, communicated, and transferred knowledge across the region. Similar to the tradition of voyaging for knowledge (*riḥla fī ṭalab al-ilm*), whereby Muslims would venture across Islamic lands to study under renowned figures, travelling monks visited Christian monasteries and brought their manuscripts with them.¹ In the ninth century, the monk George of Mar Saba in Palestine journeyed across the Mediterranean in search of funds and, presumably, manuscripts for his monastery. After failing to procure sufficient help in North Africa, he arrived in Umayyad Córdoba. The Arabic and Greek speaker befriended his monastic companions and was eventually martyred there in 852.² According to his contemporary

1 On manuscript patronage in the medieval Coptic tradition, see Abd el-Shaheed Abd el-Nour, "Copyists and Sponsors of Manuscripts in the Coptic Church (xiiie–xviiie Century)," in *Actes du huitième congrès international d'études coptes: Paris, 28 juin–3 juillet 2004, vol. 1*, ed. Nathalie Bosson and Anne Boud'hors (Leuven: Peeters, 2007), 1–13.

2 Sahner, *Christian Martyrs*, 237–239.

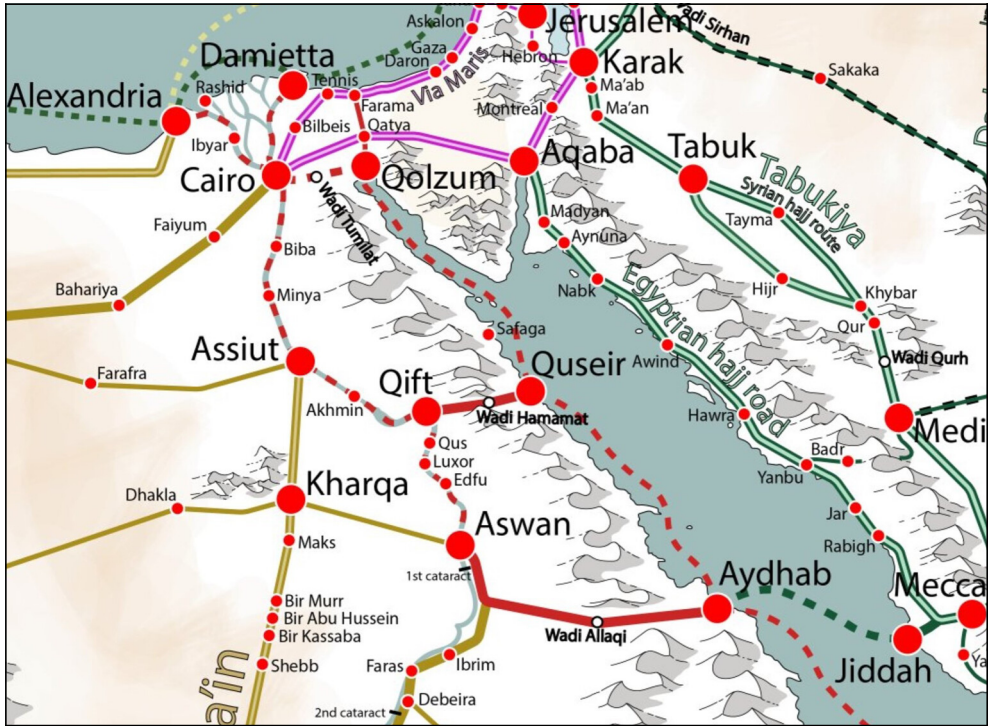


FIGURE 3 Map of medieval Egyptian trade routes

Eulogius of Córdoba (d. 857), an account of his martyrdom was sent east to Palestine. There is ample evidence that Eastern Christian texts were being translated into Latin in Andalusia during this period.³

While we do not know the specific figures who transmitted the *Kitāb al-Wāḍiḥ bi-l-Ḥaqq* beyond Fatimid Egypt, the existence of manuscripts demonstrates that this process took place. Given the historical setting from which it

3 See Juan Pedro Monferrer Sala, "Conduits of Interaction: The Andalusī Experience," in *CMR, Volume 15: Thematic Essays (600–to 1600)*, eds. Douglas Pratt and Charles Tieszen (Leiden: Brill, 2020), 307–329, esp. 324–326; Juan Pedro Monferrer Sala, "Somewhere in the 'History of Spain': People, Languages, and Texts in the Iberian Peninsula (13th–15th Centuries)," in *CMR, Volume 5 (1350–1500)*, eds. David Thomas and Alex Mallett (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 47–59; Juan Pedro Monferrer Sala, "A Nestorian Arabic Pentateuch Used in Western Islamic Lands," in *The Bible in Arab Christianity*, ed. David Thomas (Leiden: Brill, 2007), 351–368; and Santiago Fernández Ardanaz, "Monaquismo oriental en la Hispania de los siglos VI–X," *Antigüedad y Cristianismo: Monografías históricas sobre la antigüedad tardía* 16 (1999): 203–214. See also the ninth-century Mozarabic translation of the Psalms in Pieter Sjoerd van Koningsveld, *The Arabic Psalter of Ḥafṣ Ibn Albar Al-Qūfī: Prolegomena for a Critical Edition* (Leiden: Aurora, 2016).

emerged, it is rather surprising that the work was copied and disseminated to other Christian communities around the Mediterranean. Yet Copts were known for their papyrus and paper production and ability to manufacture books.⁴ Ibn Rajā's location at a central node of influence in Cairo, and the attractiveness of his arguments, likely helped to circulate his ideas about the Qur'an across the Christian Mediterranean.

The Truthful Exposer made its way beyond the Wādī al-Naṭrūn monasteries into the Coptic community first. It was probably copied for other Coptic monastic centers. The Miaphysite Syriac Orthodox Church also had a monastery in the desert nearby (Dayr al-Suryān), which likely provided a way for the text to be copied and distributed to the Miaphysite communities outside of Egypt.⁵ Another possibility is that Arabic-speaking Christians emigrated from Fatimid lands and brought copies with them. For instance, al-Kindī's ninth-century refutation of Islam made its way to Spain around the same period or earlier.⁶ Still another possibility is that Copts familiarized certain Western Christians in the Crusader States with the text, which they subsequently brought to their homelands in Europe. This process of human movement and Eastern Christian material making its way westward is well known, if perhaps underestimated, prior to the Crusades.⁷ In some cases, entire communities migrated west across the Mediterranean.⁸ In the following sections, Egypt, the Middle East, and Europe are highlighted as key places for the continued relevance of Ibn Rajā's ideas.

1.1 *Egypt*

We know something about the reception of *The Truthful Exposer* in Egypt immediately after Ibn Rajā's lifetime. In 1051, the Coptic synodal secretary Michael of Damrū quoted a lengthy citation from Ibn Rajā's work.⁹ This dem-

4 Jeryis and Fouad, "The Copts in the Faṭimid Era," 543.

5 Brune, "The Multiethnic Character of the Wadi al-Natrun," 20–21.

6 On its Latin reception, see Fernando González Muñoz, ed., *Exposición y Refutación del Islam: La Versión latina de las Epístolas de al-Hāshimī y al-Kindī* (A Coruña: University of Coruña, 2005).

7 On the importance of Eastern Christian literature to Mozarabic and Latin Christians, see Charles Tieszen, "Re-planting Christianity in New Soil: Arabized Christian Religious Identity in Twelfth-Century Iberia," *Medieval Encounters* 22 (2011): 57–68; Burman, *Religious Polemic*, 95–124.

8 Daniel Duran Duelt, "An Arrested Community: Christians of the Girdle in Fifteenth-Century Barcelona," *Medieval Encounters* 22 (2016): 379–426.

9 Or it may have been added by the Arabic translator and editor Mawhūb ibn Maṣṣūr ibn Mufarrij al-Iskandarānī a few decades later.

onstrates that the eleventh-century Coptic Patriarchate had copies of his work and were familiar with it. In fourteenth-century Cairo, the Muslim polemicist al-Ṭūfī (d. 1316) composed a critique of the Bible in response to a Copto-Arabic polemic against Islam.¹⁰ The Christian critique of the Qurʾan was nicknamed the *Al-Sayf al-Murhaf fi l-Radd ʿalā l-Muṣḥaf* (*The Whetted Sword in Refutation of the Book*). The Copt al-Muʿtaman ibn al-ʿAssāl (d. after 1270) may have been the author, although this is a point of dispute.¹¹ This work – of which the extant parts have been published – does not appear to utilize Ibn Rajāʾ’s composition; it uses a different structure, different biblical and qurʾanic passages, and cites later authorities.¹² However, the author may have been familiar with Būluṣ ibn Rajāʾ’s work. Some parallels include a citation of Matthew 7:15 (“Beware of false prophets”), a discussion of the Night Journey, eating and drinking in Paradise, the fact that the world did not end one hundred years after Muhammad, a critique of Muḥammad’s sexual controversies including his marriage to Zaynab, a critique of the doctrine of the Qurʾan’s inimitability, and critiques of polygamy, sexual practices, and divorce.¹³ Finally, there is a partial copy of *The Truthful Exposer* at the Coptic monastery of Saint Anthony which was copied in the eighteenth century; this suggests that it was disseminated among the Coptic monasteries of Egypt over the centuries.¹⁴

1.2 *The Middle East*

Ibn Rajāʾ’s ideas were known during the Crusader period in the Middle East among the Orthodox Miaphysite communities. The Coptic and Syriac Orthodox Churches shared a common Miaphysite Christology, and they shared monastic literature at the Wādī al-Naṭrūn. The famous bishop and literary figure Gregory Bar Hebraeus (d. 1286), also known as Abū al-Faraj, summarized some of Ibn Rajāʾ’s ideas in his Syriac *Book of Rays*. In one section, Bar Hebraeus responds to Muslim claims that the Bible has been altered by arguing that, in

10 Lejla Demiri, *Muslim Exegesis of the Bible in Medieval Cairo: Najm al-Dīn al-Ṭūfī’s (d. 716/1316) Commentary on the Christian Scriptures* (Leiden: Brill, 2013).

11 Lejla Demiri, “*Al-sayf al-murhaf fi l-radd ʿalā l-muṣḥaf*,” in *CMR, Volume 4 (1200–1350)*, eds. David Thomas and Alex Mallett (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 662–665.

12 Pieter Sjoerd van Koningsveld, *An Arabic Source of Ramon Martí: Al-Sayf al-Murhaf fi l-Radd ʿalā al-Muṣḥaf* (“*The Whetted Sword in Refutation of the Koran*”): *Introductory Study with Text and Translation of its Surviving Fragments* (Leiden: Aurora, 2018).

13 Demiri, *Muslim Exegesis of the Bible in Medieval Cairo*, 40–41.

14 Adel Sidarus, “Les débuts de la littérature copte de langue arabe (mi-xe–x1e s.),” in *Études coptes XIV: XVIIe Journée d’études (Louvain-la-neuve, mai 2011)*, ed. Anne Boud’hors and C. Louis (Paris: De Boccard, 2015), 163–189.

fact, the Qur'an has been altered, using Ibn Rajā's arguments on the canonization of the Qur'an. He summarizes chapters 7–8 from *The Truthful Exposer* as follows:

But it is your scripture that has suffered changes, additions, and omissions. Testifying to the changes, these seven readings do not agree between them. As for additions, Ibn Mas'ūd – about whom your prophet has said: “Whoever wants to hear the Qur'an in a pure way as it was clearly revealed, let him hear it from Ibn Mas'ūd's mouth” – he has said that the sura “Praise” (Q 1, *al-Fātiḥa/al-Ḥamd*), the sura “I seek protection with the Lord of dawn” (Q 113, *al-Falaq*), and the sura “I seek protection with the Lord of people” (Q 114, *al-Nās*), have been added by Zayd ibn Thābit. As for omissions, your writers testify and say that sura “The Cow” (Q 2, *al-Baqara*) had 1,285 verses but now there are only 285. Likewise, the sura “Divorce” (Q 65, *al-Ṭalāq*) had 285 verses but now only twelve.¹⁵

Certain details confirm that Bar Hebraeus was using Ibn Rajā's arguments. First, the *Book of Rays* follows the same order of argumentation on changes, additions, and missing passages. Second, Bar Hebraeus quotes the exact same hadith report from Ibn Rajā, naming the same three suras from the Qur'an. Most importantly, Bar Hebraeus does not call Q 1 “al-Fātiḥa” as it is commonly known among Muslims, but instead uses the Syriac word for “praise” (*shubḥā*) which is identical to the Arabic word (*al-ḥamd*) used by Ibn Rajā in the passage. This is because Ibn Rajā does not refer to the suras by their title, but by their opening lines. Bar Hebraeus also names the suras by their first line. Finally, Bar Hebraeus states that Q 2 only has 285 verses, when it is given 286 according to Muslim renderings. In Ibn Rajā's arguments, he also states that Q 2 was reduced to 285 verses. These details suggest that pieces of Ibn Rajā's work had been disseminated and reworked by the thirteenth century among his Syriac Miaphysite colleagues in the Middle East, or that Bar Hebraeus had direct access to a manuscript of his work.

It was not only Syriac Orthodox Christians who adapted Ibn Rajā's arguments. His ideas crossed denominational lines and were known to the Maronite community of Lebanon, as demonstrated by a manuscript in Karshūnī from

15 François Nau, “Deux textes de Bar Hébraeus sur Mahomet et le Qoran,” *Journal Asiatique* 211 (1927): 311–329, esp. 320–323. I would like to thank Bert Jacobs for bringing this passage to my attention. See also Hidemi Takahashi, *Barhebraeus: A Bio-Bibliography* (Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias Press, 2013), 191–197. He mentions a more recent corrected handwritten edition (1997), but it does not change the data points or the general conclusions above.

1470 that includes chapters 21–26 of *The Truthful Exposer*. This section was copied at the monastery of Our Lady of Qannūbīn for the purpose of instructing its monks and other readers during the Mamluk period.¹⁶ Therefore, we know that portions of Ibn Rajā’s work were known among Arabic-speaking Christians as well as Syriac-speaking Christians in the Middle East during the medieval period.

Finally, Shī’ī Muslims in modern times – and perhaps earlier – have mentioned at least portions of Ibn Rajā’s work, although the process by which a copy of his manuscript became known to Muslim readers is enigmatic. Sulaymān al-Baḥrānī (d. 1709) composed a work on hadith reports related to the imams in which there is a critique of the caliph Mu‘āwiya for his hypocrisy and unbelief. In a footnote, the editor Mahdī al-Rajā’ī states that he has seen, in the *Kitāb al-Wāḍiḥ* written by John (sic) the Apostate Christian, a hadith account narrating that Mu‘āwiya died a Christian with a cross around his neck. He subsequently summarizes the passage from *The Truthful Exposer*. In this way, a Shī’ī hadith made its way into Ibn Rajā’s work and then back into the Shī’ī tradition to be repeated in a gloss.¹⁷ In his edition, al-Rajā’ī mentions that he edited the book based upon a manuscript copy belonging to the Iraqi Ayatollah Mar‘ashi al-Najafī (d. 1990). His manuscript was one that a student of al-Baḥrānī copied in 1705.¹⁸ Based upon this information, more research is necessary to understand how his work came to be known within the Shī’ī tradition.

1.3 Europe

The literary afterlife of *The Truthful Exposer* has a fascinating history in Europe.¹⁹ The Arabic version was evidently transmitted to Mozarabic Spain but made little impact – the work is only extant in Europe via its Latin translation, known as the *Book of Denuding* (*Liber denudationis siue ostensionis aut patefaciens*).²⁰ In recent scholarship, it has also been called *Contrarietas alfolica* (*Con-*

16 MS Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Syriac 203, fols. 149^v–163^r.

17 See Sulaymān ibn ‘Abd Allāh ibn ‘Ammār al-Baḥrānī, *Al-Arba‘ūn ḥadīth fī ithbāt imāmat Amīr al-Mu‘minīn*, 89, n. 1.

18 Ibid., 20.

19 See Ulisse Cecini, “Latin Christianity engaging with the Qur’an,” in *CMR, Volume 15: Thematic Essays (600–to 1600)*, eds. Douglas Pratt and Charles Tieszen (Leiden: Brill, 2020), 227–253, esp. 241–246.

20 *The Book of Denuding or Exposing, or the Discloser*; or *The Contradictions of the Jurists*. This may have been the Latin translator’s attempt to translate the Arabic word *wāḍiḥ*, which conveys the sense of unveiling something or making it clear, but without the latter part of the title (*bi-l-ḥaqq*). But an alternative title given to the Arabic work was *The Disclosure of the Veiled* (*Ḥatā al-Mahjūb*), which may be the origin of the latter

traditions of the Jurists).²¹ From medieval to modern times, the Latin translation known as the *Liber denudationis* was only preserved in a single manuscript: MS Paris BNF lat. 3394, a sixteenth-century copy from a thirteenth-century Dominican exemplar.²² Overall, it appears that neither the Arabic nor the Latin version were very popular in Europe. However, it exerted influence indirectly. Several authors reworked its arguments into their own treatises against Islam. Revisions were attractive because they freed authors from the work's original context, to be recontextualized for Latin Christianity. This process circulated Ibn Rajā's ideas across a wider spectrum, universalizing his message. Editors took what was important to them and made these ideas more accessible to a western Christian audience. However, the circumstances surrounding its authorship, historical origins, and source content were not transmitted with the document, and its context was a mystery to scholars.

First among those to speculate on the origins of the Latin version were the mid-twentieth century scholars Marie-Thérèse d'Alverny and Norman Daniel.²³ At the time, historians of the *Book of Denuding* had not identified an Arabic version of the text – or the context for the Latin translation – on account of the late provenance of the only copy of the work, although they knew Euro-

Latin title for the work. Note that previous scholars attributed this title to another one of his lost works and not to *The Truthful Exposer*; see Swanson, "Būluṣ ibn Rajā," 541–546.

- 21 See, for example, Thomas Burman, "The Influence of the *Apology* of Al-Kindī and *Contrarietas Alfolica* on Ramon Lull's Late Religious Polemics, 1305–1313," *Mediaeval Studies* 53 (1991): 197–228; and Cecini, "Latin Christianity engaging with the Qur'an," 241–247. This title echoes the Islamic sources Ibn Rajā may have utilized, such as the *Disagreements of the Jurists* by al-Nu'mān, the founder of Ismā'īlī law.
- 22 Thomas Burman, "Two Dominicans, a Lost Manuscript, and Medieval Christian Thought on Islam," in *Medieval Exegesis and Religious Difference*, ed. Ryan Szpiech (New York: Fordham University Press, 2015), 71–86; Burman, *Religious Polemic*, 217–220.
- 23 Marie-Thérèse d'Alverny, "Deux traductions latines du Coran au Moyen Âge," *Archives d'histoire doctrinale et littéraire du Moyen Âge* 22–23 (1947–1948): 69–131, esp. 125–127; Marie-Thérèse d'Alverny and Georges Vajda, "Marc de Tolède, traducteur d'Ibn Tūmart," *al-Andalus* 16 (1951): 99–140 and 259–307, esp. 124–132; Marie-Thérèse d'Alverny, "Marc de Tolède," in *Estudios sobre Alfonso VI y la reconquista de Toledo*, vol. 3 (Toledo: Instituto de estudios Visigotico-Mozarabes, 1989), 25–59, esp. 43–48; see the reprints in Marie-Thérèse d'Alverny, *La Connaissance de l'Islam dans l'Occident Médiévale*, ed. Charles Burnett (Aldershot: Variorum, 1994), I, II, VII. See also Norman Daniel, *Islam and the West: The Making of an Image* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1962; Reprint: Oxford: OneWorld, 2009), 22, 30, 55, 71, 85–87, 96–97, 260, 265–266, 397 n. 60. Daniel's conclusions – that the work was an abstract discourse, that it distorted Muslim thought and practice, and that we should be skeptical of the author's biographical claims – are incorrect.

pean authors had adapted it in the thirteenth century.²⁴ This gap in knowledge led to speculation about the author, title, date of composition, historical setting, original sources and content, and the reliability of the Latin translation.

Thomas Burman, in his *Religious Polemic and the Intellectual History of the Mozarabs, c. 1050–1200*, published a study including an edition of the Latin text with an English translation and a summary of the historiography up until 1994. He deemed the work “the most remarkable monument of eleventh- and twelfth-century Mozarabic intellectual history.”²⁵ Burman also remarked, “I know of no other work which so vigorously attacks Muḥammad and the Qur’ān.”²⁶ At that time, according to Burman, the consensus among scholars was that the author was most likely a Mozarabic Christian living in or around Toledo. Many skeptics thought that the author’s claim to be a Muslim convert was a mere literary convention. They were also suspicious of the author’s claims to have made the pilgrimage to Mecca. They debated the title of the work because it was unclear if the Latin title *Liber denudationis* was a reference to a specific Arabic title or incomplete. The date of composition and its historical location was unclear because they could not identify Ibn Rajā’s references to his sources and teachers. He only mentioned that he was writing in the fourth century after Muḥammad. The origins of the Latin recension clearly came from an Arabic work, but scholars were troubled that post-conquest Toledo (after 1085) made more sense than 1009 in terms of a setting for the composition date, when an Arabic-speaking Christian would be able to write such material in Spain. They were also puzzled that they could not confirm all of the reports attributed to Muslims as authentic, and they suggested that some materials were fabricated. Finally, most scholars agreed that the Latin translation was incomplete, and that some sections of the Arabic original were missing from the manuscript. The Latin translation was probably made, according to consensus, during the thirteenth century.

Later publications continued to speculate about the origins, features, and purpose of the work. John Tolan followed the conclusions of Norman Daniel in depicting the *Book of Denuding* as a literary convention of polemic, but noted its affinities with Eastern Christian theological themes.²⁷ Charles Tieszen high-

24 See for example Charles Lohr, “Ramon Lull, Liber Alquindi and Liber Telif,” *Estudios Lulianos* 12 (1968): 153–158.

25 Burman, *Religious Polemic*, 7.

26 *Ibid.*, 51.

27 John Tolan, *Saracens: Islam in the Medieval European Imagination* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002), 148–152. Surprisingly, he does not analyze this work in Tolan, *Faces of Muhammad*.

lighted how its Eastern Christian Christological concerns were adapted into Mozarabic culture and impacted Christian identity in Spain, as well as how the Mozarabs received the text.²⁸ Thomas Burman discussed its reception history in Europe via later Latin Christian authors' adaptations. He has demonstrated how Riccoldo da Monte di Croce's use of its arguments for his own work, *Against the Religion of the Saracens* (*Contra legem Sarracenorum*), contributed to a Qur'an-centered approach to Islam within Europe.²⁹ Jason Basic depicted the *Book of Denuding* as an attempt to other its opponents via literary discourse while also making a genuine attempt to invite a Muslim audience to accept its reasoned claims.³⁰ In 2019, I was investigating possible parallels between Ibn Rajā's Arabic work and earlier polemical texts when I noticed that it contained several similarities to the Latin *Liber denudationis* as described by Thomas Burman.³¹ Upon reading his study and edition, I discovered that the Latin text was a translation of Ibn Rajā's Arabic work. I confirmed this fact with Professor Burman and published my findings.³² The present publication is meant to bring this information to the attention of scholars and highlight the importance of Ibn Rajā's work across the Middle East and Europe.

The Truthful Exposer was a catalyst in the process by which intra-Islamic dispute texts were later adapted for Christian Arabic argumentation and subsequently disseminated and reworked into medieval Latin Christian texts about Islam. It circulated in Arabic and later in its Latin recension due to Mediter-

28 Charles Tieszen, *Christian Identity amid Islam in Medieval Spain* (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 172–189; Tieszen, “Re-planting Christianity in New Soil.” His arguments about the Eastern Christian origins of the text are confirmed. However, the Latin version changed some of its theological content to accommodate western Chalcedonian Christology and to revise the vocabulary of Coptic Miaphysitism.

29 Burman, “Two Dominicans, a Lost Manuscript, and Medieval Christian Thought on Islam”; Thomas Burman, “How an Italian Friar Read His Arabic Qur’an,” in *Dante and Islam*, ed. Jan Ziolkowski (New York: Fordham University Press, 2014), 78–91.

30 Jason Basic, “Christianity, Islam, and Muḥammad in the Mozarabic *Liber denudationis* (XI or XII Century),” in *Revisiting Convivencia in Medieval and Early Modern Iberia*, ed. Connie Scarborough (Newark, DE: Juan de la Cuesta, 2014), 77–105, esp. 77. Discourse theory such as Bhabha's on identity and othering related to Ibn Rajā is problematic because he belonged to the dominant Muslim Other, and joined the marginalized Copts, giving up political power for persecution. He did not exert a will to power over his adversaries; he became the Other. Here, the theoretical construct breaks down in light of historical evidence.

31 Thomas Burman, “*Liber Denudationis*,” in *CMR, Volume 3 (1050–1200)*, eds. David Thomas and Alex Mallett (Leiden: Brill, 2011), 414–417.

32 David Bertaina, “The Arabic Version of the *Liber Denudationis*: How Fatimid Controversies shaped Medieval European Views of Islam,” *Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations* 31 (2020): 425–443; <https://doi.org/10.1080/09596410.2021.1872925>.

ranean networks. Ibn Rajā' and his successors probably did not distribute his work in a strategic manner; rather, the work spread via sharing across influential network nodes. There is ample evidence that trading networks were active between Fatimid Egypt and Umayyad Spain.³³ There were Jewish merchants based in Old Cairo who traded between the regions.³⁴ Syriac Christians also had connections between their homelands and Fustāt, where they had their own churches.³⁵ Monastic networks transmitted ideas and materials as well. But *The Truthful Exposer's* greatest impact came through later western Christian adaptations of its arguments. We can now say that European arguments about the Qur'an, Muḥammad, and Islam, originating with Ibn Rajā', were not tedious or fictive attacks.³⁶ Rather, his material would have been widely recognizable to medieval Muslims as products of their own internal polemics and reflective of real discussions initiated and debated between Muslim communities. Western Europeans had in fact found a common ground for disputation via *The Truthful Exposer*.

Mozarabic Christians and the Dominican order were likely the key transmitters of this Christian Arabic Egyptian work into Catholic Europe.³⁷ According to this hypothesis, the work was sufficiently well regarded in its Arabic ver-

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- 33 See the examples of travelers and exchanges in Juan Pedro Monferrer Sala and María Dolores Rodríguez Gómez, eds., *Entre Oriente y Occidente: Ciudades y Viajeros en la Edad Media* (Granada: Universidad de Granada, 2005); Maribel Fierro, "The Fatimids and the Islamic World," in *The World of the Fatimids*, ed. Assadullah Souren Melikian-Chirvani (Toronto: Aga Khan Museum/Munich: Hirmer, 2018), 230–245, esp. 233; and David Braoullé, "Itinerant Objects in the Fatimid World: From Cairo to al-Andalus to Sicily and Back," in *The World of the Fatimids*, ed. Assadullah Souren Melikian-Chirvani (Toronto: Aga Khan Museum/Munich: Hirmer, 2018), 246–255.
- 34 Jessica Goldberg, *Institutions and Geographies of Trade in the Medieval Mediterranean: The Business World of the Maghribi Traders* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), especially chapters 7 (The geography of information) and 10 (The contracting geography of the eleventh-century merchant network); Olivia Remie Constable, *Trade and Traders in Muslim Spain: The Commercial Realignment of the Iberian Peninsula, 900–1500* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 37, 90.
- 35 den Heijer, et al, "Christian Art and Culture," 193; Lucas van Rompay, and Andrea Schmidt, "Takritans in the Egyptian Desert: The Monastery of the Syrians in the Ninth Century," *Journal of the Canadian Society for Syriac Studies* 1 (2001): 41–60.
- 36 It should be granted, too, that later reproductions of his material became tedious and fictive attacks in their new western European environment.
- 37 Dominicans traveling to the Holy Land had stopped in Egypt as part of their pilgrimage. Western Christians also used Egyptian ports such as Alexandria as stopping points on their way to and from Jerusalem. See Jonathan Rubin, "A Missing Link in European Travel Literature: Burchard of Mount Zion's Description of Egypt," *Mediterranea* 3 (2018): 55–90. On the translation movement, see the contributions in Charles Burnett and Pedro Mantas-España, eds., *Ex Oriente lux: Translating Words, Scripts and Styles in Medieval*

sion as to inspire bilingual Christians to translate it into Latin. Given the fact that Petrus Alfonsi's (d. 1140) critique of Islam appears incorrectly as the final chapter of the *Book of Denuding* in its only surviving manuscript, a Dominican translation team may have copied them together. One possibility is that Mark of Toledo and/or his team translated the work, which was circulating in Arabic in Spain, alongside Mark's Latin Qur'an, around 1210.³⁸ According to Thomas Burman, the sixteenth-century Latin version (in which Mark of Toledo's Qur'an translation immediately precedes the *Liber denudationis* in the manuscript) likely originates from a thirteenth-century translation completed in Dominican circles supported by the Toledan Archbishop Rodrigo Jiménez de Rada (d. 1247).

Ibn Rajā's arguments were certainly known in Spain by the latter half of the thirteenth century. The Dominican Ramon Martí (d. after 1284) incorporated some of his ideas into his arguments in *Explanation of the Apostles' Creed* (*Explanatio simboli apostolorum*) and his work *On the Sect of Muḥammad* (*De seta Machometi*).³⁹ Ramon Martí knew of other Copto-Arabic treatises, perhaps suggesting that some networks with Coptic authors were established at the time of the Fifth Crusade to Egypt (1217–1221). Martí incorporated arguments indirectly from Ibn Rajā' as well as al-Kindī, choosing a number of key themes around which to structure his arguments.⁴⁰ For instance, his section on the origin of Muḥammad echoes that his parents were consigned to hell as polytheists (Q 2:119; 9:113). The final paragraph (supposedly taken from al-Bukhārī according to Martí, but actually following Ibn Rajā') explains that Muḥammad was a polytheist for forty years, and Martí quotes the same Qur'anic passage: "You did

Mediterranean Society (Córdoba: UCO Press – CNERU (Córdoba Near Eastern Research Unit)/London: The Warburg Institute, 2016).

38 For the connection between Mark's Qur'an and the *Book of Denuding* in manuscripts, see Burman, "Two Dominicans, a Lost Manuscript, and Medieval Christian Thought on Islam," 72. On their translations and readings of the Qur'an, see Thomas Burman, *Reading the Qur'an in Latin Christendom, 1140–1560* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2007), 60–87, 122–133.

39 Thomas Burman, "Ramon Martí," in *CMR, Volume 4 (1200–1350)*, ed. David Thomas and Alex Mallett (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 381–390. See the text and Spanish translation in Josep Hernando, "Ramón Martí (s. XIII): *De seta Machometi o de origine, progressu et fine Machometi et Quadruplici reprobatione Prophetiae eius*: Introducción, transcripción, traducción y notas por Josep Hernando," *Acta historica et archaeologica medievalea* 4 (1983): 9–63.

40 See Ryan Szpiech, "Translation, Transcription, and Transliteration in the Polemics of Raymond Martini, O.P.," in *Translating the Middle Ages*, ed. Karen Fresco and Charles Wright (Farnham: Ashgate, 2012), 171–187, esp. 175–177; John Tolan, *Sons of Ishmael: Muslims through European Eyes in the Middle Ages* (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 2008), 35–45.

not know what the book is, nor what is faith” (Q 42:52). In the section on the inspiration of Muḥammad, Martí again cites al-Bukhārī but follows Ibn Rajā’ in discussing how, according to ‘Ā’isha, Muḥammad’s revelation would come like the ringing of a bell, the appearance of an angel, and a cold sweat. These details follow Ibn Rajā’’s order of argumentation exactly.

The Mallorcan theologian Ramon Llull (d. 1316) was also familiar with the Arabic version of the text. In his *Book on the Major Purpose of Intelligence* (*Liber de fine*), he proposed obligating Muslim captives to read *Kitāb al-Wāḍiḥ bi-l-Ḥaqq* in Arabic, in order to convert them to the Catholic Church, and then sending them to evangelize other Muslims.⁴¹ Thomas Burman has highlighted these links in Ramon Llull’s thought as well as his reading of *Kitāb al-Wāḍiḥ bi-l-Ḥaqq* (*Contrarietas Alfolica*) as a resource for his own systematic arguments regarding Jesus Christ, the Virgin Mary, and Qur’anic passages about them.⁴²

The Dominican Riccoldo da Monte di Croce also reworked portions of Ibn Rajā’’s arguments into his works, sometimes word-for-word, in *Against the Religion of the Saracens* (*Contra legem Sarracenorum*)⁴³ and *Pilgrimage* (*Itinerarium*).⁴⁴ Jean-Marie Mérioux has outlined many of these adaptations in his edition of the former work. For instance, Riccoldo takes chapter thirteen of *Against the Religion of the Saracens* from Ibn Rajā’’s section on the canonization of the Qur’an.⁴⁵ Mérioux identifies 51 occasions where Riccoldo either

41 Ramon Lull, *Raimundi Lulli Opera Latina: In Monte Pessulano anno MCCCV composita 120–122*, ed. Alois Madre (Turnhout: Brepols, 1981), 283.

42 Burman, “The Influence of the *Apology* of Al-Kindī and *Contrarietas Alfolica* on Ramon Lull’s Late Religious Polemics, 1305–1313.”

43 See the primary source in Jean-Marie Mérioux, “L’ouvrage d’un frère prêcheur florentin en Orient à la fin du XIII^e siècle: Le *Contra legem Sarracenorum* de Riccoldo da Monte di Croce,” *Memorie Domenicane* 17 (1986): 1–144, esp. 60–142. Confirming an argument by d’Alverny, Burman has noted that Riccoldo probably obtained a copy that had made its way from Spain to Italy via Dominican circles where he studied it in Florence; that copy was an archetype of the sole extant manuscript. See Burman, “Two Dominicans, a Lost Manuscript, and Medieval Christian Thought on Islam,” 72.

44 Rita George-Tvrtković, *A Christian Pilgrim in Medieval Iraq: Riccoldo da Montecroce’s Encounter with Islam* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2012), 175–227. See also Burman, “How an Italian Friar Read His Arabic Qur’an,” 85–88; Thomas Burman, “*Inspicientes – et non inspicientes – eius legem*: Thirteenth-Century Dominicans, the Qur’an, and Islam,” *Journal of Qur’anic Studies* 20 (2018): 33–50; Thomas Burman, “Riccoldo da Monte di Croce,” in *Christian–Muslim Relations: A Bibliographical History*, vol. 4 (1200–1350), ed. David Thomas and Alex Mallett (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 678–691.

45 Mérioux, “L’ouvrage d’un frère prêcheur florentin en Orient à la fin du XIII^e siècle,” 31–32, 117–121.

repeats or reworks material from *Liber denudationis*.⁴⁶ These examples include Muḥammad's prophetic status and alleged miracles (e.g., the moon legend), the integrity of the Bible, Muḥammad's use of the sword, forced conversion, Mary the Copt, divorce and remarriage laws, rules governing wine, the four types of people who convert to Islam, the Zaynab affair, the Abū Hurayra account, the Baḥīrā legend, the Night Journey (*mi'raj*), and allegations about Muḥammad's polytheist family, and his status as a former polytheist, among others. Riccoldo essentially recapitulates the arguments he found in Ibn Rajā's work. *Against the Religion of the Saracens* enjoyed a wide circulation with thirty-one extant Latin manuscripts.⁴⁷ Demetrius Kydones later translated this influential work into Greek, whereupon the Byzantine emperor Manuel Paleologus II (d. 1425) made use of it. This version was translated back into Latin in the sixteenth century, from which Martin Luther commissioned a German translation. Theodore Bibliander published both the Greek and Latin versions in 1543.⁴⁸

Ibn Rajā's arguments also had an impact on Riccoldo's *Pilgrimage*. Riccoldo mentions Ibn Rajā' in this work, but his name is not properly transmitted in the manuscripts – some copyists left the space for his name blank while one has a garbled version of his name: "This is likewise attested to by their great pontiff, a former Saracen and convert to Christianity, whose name is not able to be written or pronounced in Latin letters, but his name in Arabic is ... [al-Xazi bi l'wazih]."⁴⁹ Michael Pritchard has noted that, in one manuscript, Riccoldo names Ibn Rajā' as "al-Fāḍiḥ al-Wāḍiḥ," which is a repeated designation of one who is "The Exposer."⁵⁰ In his discussion of the Saracens in the *Pilgrimage*, Riccoldo uses arguments from *The Truthful Exposer* approximately a dozen times. These examples include a hadith suggesting a Muslim will be saved even if they commit sins; permissiveness regarding sex and divorce; the problems of the moon verse; sexual imagery in Paradise; a confirmation that the Qur'an finds

46 Ibid., 143.

47 Kate Waggoner Karchner, "Two New Manuscript Copies of Riccoldo da Montecroce's *Contra legem Sarracenorum*." *Manuscripta* 63.2 (2019): 231–246; see also Maciej Dawczyk, "The Image of Muhammad in Riccoldo da Monte di Croce's *Contra legem Sarracenorum*," *Studia Ceranea* 9 (2019): 391–405.

48 Mérioux, "L'ouvrage d'un frère prêcheur florentin en Orient à la fin du XIII^e siècle," 51–58; George-Tvrtković, *A Christian Pilgrim in Medieval Iraq*, 26.

49 George-Tvrtković, *A Christian Pilgrim in Medieval Iraq*, 220. Interestingly, he claims Ibn Rajā' here as an authority that the Qur'an condones sodomy, but the extant Arabic versions of the text do not make this accusation.

50 Berlin Staatsbibliothek, MS lat. 4^o 466 (*Liber peregrinationis*), ff. 20^vb–21^rb. See Michael Pritchard, *Polemic Against Islam in the 12th Century Iberian Peninsula* (MPhil thesis, University of Cambridge, 2021), 70.

the Bible authoritative; a critique of the Night Journey narrative; a claim that Muḥammad did not bring miracles but a sword; the Zayd affair; the affair of Mary the Copt; the Jews and Christian monk Baḥīrā as sources for the Qur'an; and the division of Islam into seventy-three sects.⁵¹ This reworking facilitated the influence of Ibn Rajā's ideas among Latin Christians in the West.

The Truthful Exposer emerged out of early eleventh-century Coptic relations with the Fatimids. But its enduring value to later Christians in the Middle East and western Europe was due to its use of genuine Islamic sources to evaluate the Qur'an, appraise Muḥammad as a religious leader, and assess Islamic religious and legal doctrines. As a former Muslim, Būluṣ ibn Rajā' wrote in an Islamic idiom while revising intra-Islamic disputes to accurately depict the kinds of arguments that Muslims were making against one another in Fatimid Cairo. One of the ironies is that Ibn Rajā's work developed and circulated due to his time, place, and prestige living in Fatimid Egypt, which suggests the importance of his individual agency. Yet *The Truthful Exposer* became anonymized as Christian Arabic knowledge networks disseminated its content across the Mediterranean and Europe. Its later success was dependent on authors citing his Islamic sources while also adapting and reworking his arguments to suit their own needs. In other words, Ibn Rajā's framework for understanding Islam was integrated into the European worldview through a three-stage process that began with Islamic sources and intra-Islamic disputes, which were then revised via Eastern Christian critical reflection. The final stage was the transmission and dissemination of his work via Christian Arabic networks, later to be adapted and reworked into various western treatises. Būluṣ ibn Rajā' was one of the accidental architects of European Latin Christian attitudes towards Islam.

These examples show that Ibn Rajā's ideas crossed linguistic, denominational, political, and geographical lines, with manuscripts being located at some time in Egypt, Syria, Lebanon, and Spain. But *The Truthful Exposer* only became influential in the first place because Ibn Rajā' was a key individual in Fatimid Egypt with many links to prestigious figures across the political and religious landscape of turn-of-the-millennium Cairo. His place in time and space made him a connector, and that factor led to the dissemination of his ideas.

51 George-Tvrtković, *A Christian Pilgrim in Medieval Iraq*, 216–226.

2 A Comparative Analysis of the Arabic and Latin Versions

Upon investigation, it appears that the Latin translation known as the *Book of Denuding* is mostly reliable and does not merely paraphrase the content found in the Arabic *The Truthful Exposer*. The copyist notes in his colophon that it is a literal translation because he “followed a translator who translated word for word.”⁵² But he also admits that he abbreviated the text at a number of points, which will be confirmed below, and there are a number of important differences. By examining Ibn Rajā’s Arabic text alongside its Latin translation, historians can trace how his work moved across religious, political, and linguistic lines. By surveying what Latin Christians chose to retain, change, or omit in their translation and adaptation of his work, we can understand what was important to medieval European intellectuals.

One immediate difference between the Arabic *The Truthful Exposer* and the Latin *Book of Denuding* is that their organization by chapter differs, even while arranging the content in the same order. There are thirty chapters in the Arabic version and only twelve chapters in the Latin version. Both texts appear to have later artificial divisions. These differences also extend to chapter titles. In some cases, the Latin titles describe the subject in more detail – but the translators added these headings, according to Burman.⁵³ For instance, the second chapter in the Arabic version has no title, but in the margin the scribe noted it was a “refutation against whoever says that the Torah and the Gospel have been altered.”⁵⁴ In contrast, the equivalent Latin chapter is titled, “that neither the Old Testament nor the New nor any miracles bears witness to Muḥammad.”⁵⁵ Each title focuses on a different aspect of the chapter’s content.

The Latin version appears to have several polemical additions or elaborations that later copyists added during the translation process. For instance, in the Arabic text, Ibn Rajā’ notes that there are four types of people who convert to Islam. But the Latin version (2.1) adds that these four groups “hold to the error of Muḥammad.”⁵⁶ Later in the section, the fourth group is accused of having greater concern for the present life than eternal life. The Latin version adds that this group prefers “a multitude of women” (i.e., polygamy), while the Arabic manuscripts mention no specifics for this group.⁵⁷ In a quotation from

52 Burman, *Religious Polemic*, 56, 384–385.

53 *Ibid.*, 39–40.

54 2.16.

55 Burman, *Religious Polemic*, 250–251.

56 *Ibid.*, 244–245.

57 *Ibid.*, 244–245.

Q 15:9, the Latin text (3.4) not only quotes the verse but adds in a polemical aside that “We” is not referring just to God but also to the fact that Muḥammad was “impersonating God” (*in persona Dei*) in his recitation.⁵⁸ This elaboration is not in the Arabic text, which simply quotes the Qur’an. In 7.11 of the Latin text, the translator mentions he is moving material on divorce in the Qur’an from the penultimate chapter of the work to this location because it fits better. This material does appear in the last chapter (30) of the Arabic version.

Concerning Latin additions, the translators state that the commandments governing divorce in Q 2:230 should be considered “most filthy” and an “irrational law.”⁵⁹ In an analysis of the incommensurability of the Qur’an (based upon Q 17:88), the Latin version adds that Muslim arguments are “great monstrosities of lies with so much impudence” (8.1).⁶⁰ In the section on repetitions in the Qur’an, the Latin translation includes: “Likewise in the Chapter of Jonah regarding those living in hell: ‘They will hide their penitence’ (10:54); he meant to say ‘they will make manifest.’”⁶¹ In one instance, the Arabic version explains the meaning of *hudnā ilayka* (Q 7:156) as “becoming Jews,” while the Latin translation misses the point of the argument – that the verb means the Israelites were becoming Jews and not Muslims (i.e., Islam did not exist prior to Muḥammad). Whenever Ibn Rajā’ chose to label a Muslim reader as an “opponent” (*mukhālif*), the Latin translators selected the word “infidel” (*infidelis*).⁶² In another aside, the Latin text explains, “since in the Orient they used to call priests and monks *rabbān*, the simple believed them to be called gods.”⁶³ This is a misinterpretation of the Syriac word *rabbān* indicating “master” or “teacher” (the Latin elaboration is absent in the Arabic version).⁶⁴

In the section that addresses whether Muḥammad split the moon (9.13–9.15), the Latin version contains some additions. In short, 9.13 explains that any change to the moon would cause changes to tidal patterns, resulting in worldwide tidal waves and mass destruction of the land, and since that has not occurred, it did not happen. 9.14 reasons that any division of the moon would

58 Ibid., 254–255.

59 But in 30.228, Ibn Rajā’ calls it a “shameful and despicable tradition.”

60 Burman, *Religious Polemic*, 296–297.

61 Ibid., 298–299. This may be a Latin addition. However, even modern English translators of the Qur’an are still divided over whether, on account of punishment, the wrongdoers will hide their remorse (Qarai) or they will be secretly remorseful (Arberry) or they will confide regret/declare repentance (Sahih International, Ali).

62 22.188; Burman, *Religious Polemic*, 356–357.

63 Burman, *Religious Polemic*, 314–315.

64 See Michael Sokoloff, *A Syriac Lexicon* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns / Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias Press, 2009), 1425.

not cause it to fall; rather, it would remain in orbit. 9.15 contends that, according to “the Philosopher” (i.e., Aristotle), the size of the moon is one-sixth of the earth and would, therefore, not fit in the regions indicated in the story. Neither the methods of argumentation nor the scientific approach fits Ibn Rajā’s style or vocabulary.

On at least one occasion, the Latin additions reveal Christological differences between Catholic and Coptic theologians. This process of intra-Christian editing for the purposes of maintaining orthodoxy was important for Latin Catholic communities. In his description of Jesus Christ, Ibn Rajā’ uses Q 4:171 to argue that Jesus is the Word of God and dissimilar from Adam. The Latin translation (10.9–10.10) takes time to contextualize the statement and then adds, “And we would not attack so forcefully the word of the infidel here, except that Christians use this word against Muslims for the purpose of destroying the divinity of Christ,”⁶⁵ which suggests the translators were bothered by accommodationist positions among certain Christians. The most noticeable example of a reworking is Ibn Rajā’s Christological statement: “He was one God perfectly incarnate with one nature, one hypostasis, and one will,” which became “He was, therefore, the perfect and one God incarnate with two natures and two wills, a divine and a human.”⁶⁶ The Arabic version describes Jesus Christ using biblical passages from Isaiah 7:14, Psalm 33:6, and John 1:1–3, while the Latin translation selects Luke 1:35 and Romans 7:25.

On numerous occasions, the Latin translation omits important information from the Arabic version for various reasons. For instance, after Ibn Rajā’ explains one hadith, he notes that “I have already written on that in another book known as *The Book of Demonstration [on the Contradiction of the Hadith]*.”⁶⁷ The absence of this book title in the Latin text may indicate that the translators were unfamiliar with the work and chose not to render it in Latin. At another point, both versions mention that more than forty Muslims had commented on the Qur’an but could not come to an agreement on its interpretation. In the Arabic version, Ibn Rajā’ explains the different Arabic dialects as a reason for this controversy. The Latin version glosses over this information, and moves to the next example without analyzing the introduced subject.⁶⁸ A significant portion of the third chapter in the Arabic text was not translated. Thomas Burman correctly suggested that there was a lacuna in the Latin text at

65 Burman, *Religious Polemic*, 348–349.

66 21.179; Burman, *Religious Polemic*, 352–353.

67 1.9. Based upon the title of this work, it probably used intra-Islamic controversies as sources to undermine Islamic claims. See Swanson, “Būluṣ ibn Rajā’,” 545–546.

68 1.10–11; Burman, *Religious Polemic*, 246–247.

this point.⁶⁹ This section in the Arabic cites hadith reports about Muḥammad, crypto-Christians, a reference to Ibn Rajāʾ's conversion to Christianity, and the legend of the convert al-Hāshimī.

The fifth chapter in the Arabic version is missing from the Latin text – it contains some interesting anecdotes about the self-proclaimed Arabian prophets Musaylima and al-ʿAnṣī, who were prophetic rivals of Muḥammad. In the seventh chapter of the Arabic version, Ibn Rajāʾ specifies the historical figures who disagreed over certain passages in the Qurʾān. Then he lists those passages along with their historical context derived from Islamic hadith accounts. Most of this information on the compilation of the Qurʾān is missing from the Latin translation (it would have been located between 6.2 and 6.3).⁷⁰ In another instance, the Latin translator conflated Abū Bakr's collection of the Qurʾān with the burning of manuscripts by ʿUthmān. However, in the Arabic version, it is clear that Ibn Rajāʾ treated each case as a separate event.⁷¹ Chapter 11 in the Arabic lists eight examples of repetitions in the Qurʾān which Ibn Rajāʾ deemed superfluous; this chapter is absent from the Latin translation.⁷² The beginning of chapter 13 in the Arabic version is not in the Latin translation – including an entertaining story of how Abū Hurayra was notorious for showing up at Muḥammad's house uninvited for dinner until Q 33:53 suggested guests should only enter upon invitation.⁷³

69 Burman, *Religious Polemic*, 263.

70 7.58–76; Burman, *Religious Polemic*, 276–277.

71 Ibn Rajāʾ mostly follows the traditional Islamic account of the collection of the Qurʾān, but his point is that each editorial stage introduced differences into the scripture; therefore, Muslims cannot claim the Bible was corrupted by this process without acknowledging that their own scripture has undergone editorial changes and disagreements among leaders about its contents, all of which is admitted in the tradition. According to Islamic sources, Abū Bakr and ʿUmar originally asked Zayd ibn Thābit, a former scribe of Muḥammad, to collate together the verses from believers in the community. After their deaths, this collection passed into the possession of Ḥafsa bint ʿUmar, daughter of ʿUmar and wife of the deceased Prophet. Later, ʿUthmān consulted this collection as the basis for his codex, which was again edited by Zayd ibn Thābit. Then he had all variant versions of the Qurʾān burned. Many scholars are dubious about the harmonized double collection legend, and regard the ʿUthmānic codex (or later) as the earliest attempt at a collection of the text. On these sources, see “al-Kurʾān,” *ET²*, 5:400–432; and Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūṭī, *The Perfect Guide to the Sciences of the Qurʾān: Kitāb al-Itqān fī ʿulūm al-Qurʾān* (Reading: Garnet, 2011), 137–143.

72 11.87–95.

73 The occasion for this verse is usually attributed to a wedding reception when Muḥammad married Zaynab bint Jaḥsh and a number of unnamed wedding guests stayed for conversation. See the hadith in Muḥammad ibn Ismāʿīl al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī: The*

The fifteenth chapter, which adduces examples of repetition in the Qur'an, is mostly missing from the Latin translation. The Latin section (7.13) summarizes the Arabic version's allegation that Muḥammad plagiarized the Bible.⁷⁴ In the next chapter, the Latin translation is missing Ibn Rajā's compliments about the attractiveness of the Arabic in some Qur'anic passages, such as Q 12:80 and 11:44.⁷⁵ Another section missing in the Latin translation is a summary of disagreements between Islamic interpreters over the meaning of the punishment verses in Q 16:90 versus 17:16, and whether God grants authority for humans to sin.⁷⁶ In chapter 18, the Arabic text cites Q 3:169–170 to argue that the Qur'an contradicts itself concerning whether the dead will receive physical delights between death and final judgment.⁷⁷

There are several occasions when information was left out of the Latin translation because it did not change the content of the argument. Whenever Ibn Rajā notes that it would take some time to explain his justifications, those asides were not translated.⁷⁸ The Latin translators also summarized a refutation of the Islamic claim that the prophets preceding Muḥammad were Muslims.⁷⁹ Regarding Q 7:156, Ibn Rajā explains that, when Moses and the Israelites repented from worshipping the golden calf, God accepted their repentance as Jews and not Muslims. He cites several Muslim commentators to reinforce his argument.⁸⁰ The paragraph is not in the translation. In a chapter on the superiority of Jesus Christ and his family over Muḥammad and his family (Arabic ch. 19; Latin ch. 10), the Arabic version cites three hadiths about Muḥammad's status as the most favored prophet.⁸¹ Presumably since these quotations were

Translation of the Meanings of Sahih al-Bukhari: Arabic-English, 9 vols., ed. Muhammad Muhsin Khan (Riyadh: Darussalam, 1997), 7:227 (Book 59, #5466).

74 15.118. A Latin annotator noted more charitably that Muḥammad interwove biblical and non-biblical material together in the Qur'an.

75 16.125.

76 18.140.

77 18.146.

78 For example, he writes in 18.151: "And this argument, were I to finish it, would require a number of justifications which would take a long time to explain. Such minds that do not use this common sense are feeble minds. As for me, I would prefer not to mention anything about this ignorance. I don't want whoever reads this book of mine among our Christian brothers to listen to that."

79 18.155–158; Burman, *Religious Polemic*, 332–333.

80 He mentions al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī, Muḥammad ibn Sīrīn, Abū al-Āliya al-Riyāhī, al-Baḍī' ibn al-Yusr, Mujāhid, 'Aṭā' ibn Abī Rabāh, 'Aṭā' ibn al-Khurāsānī, and 'Aṭā' ibn Yasār.

81 Ibn Rajā even mentions an Ismā'īlī hadith describing the names of the imams on the canopy over God's throne. On this hadith, see Mohammad Ali Amir-Moezzi, *The Spirituality of Shi'i Islam: Beliefs and Practices* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2011), 137–138.

meant to commend Muḥammad, the translators omitted them from the Latin version. While the material in both chapters is nearly identical, their order does not parallel each other perfectly.

There are other cases where the Latin translators left out portions of the Arabic text. When Ibn Rajā' explains how Christians (and Muslims) disagreed over the precedence of the angel Gabriel compared to Michael, this was likely considered irrelevant to a Latin audience.⁸² On whether Jesus was crucified, the subtlety of Ibn Rajā'’s dialectical argument (“if they say ... then we respond ...”) is removed, as well as the quotation of the verse Q 4:157.⁸³ The Latin translation leaves out key details about the 930 pillaging of the Ka'ba by the Qarmatians.⁸⁴ On the alleged divine origins of the Black Stone, the Arabic text contains an extensive critique, but the Latin text skips most of the refutation. When Ibn Rajā' lists a series of Muslim jurists who condone the drinking of alcohol as long as one does not get drunk, the Latin translation skips the section.⁸⁵

In the final chapter on the legend of Muḥammad’s Night Journey, the accounts are essentially identical in both versions. However, the Arabic version not only describes the event but also explains the alleged logical inconsistencies in the account.⁸⁶ The Arabic version recounts the story of Abū Jahl ‘Amr ibn Hishām (d. 624), who was a Meccan polytheist opponent of Muḥammad. After the alleged event, he challenged Muḥammad to elevate a bit above the ground. This information is absent from the Latin translation.⁸⁷ The Latin translation also omits Ibn Rajā'’s concluding remarks. There, he asks God to keep him resolute in his Christian faith and to preserve him in order to study the Bible. Lastly, he prays for mercy on account of his earlier sins as a Muslim and maintains that *The Truthful Exposer* is not the product of his Islamic education but of God’s grace.⁸⁸

In some cases, the Latin version likely preserves passages from the original Arabic text that are not in the extant Arabic versions. For instance, the following passage (3.4) is not in the Arabic manuscripts, and yet it is found in the Latin text as well as in *Against the Religion of the Saracens* by Riccoldo da Monte di Croce:

82 23.193. On the archangels in the Coptic tradition, see Juan Pedro Monferrer Sala, “The Creation of Seven Archangels and their Hosts in a Coptic-Arabic Hexaemeron Attributed to Epiphanius of Cyprus,” *Journal of Coptic Studies* 14 (2012): 63–84.

83 24.198–199; Q 4:157: “They did not kill him or crucify him but it appeared so to them.”

84 25.205.

85 29.221–226.

86 30.235–238.

87 30.244.

88 30.250.

Therefore God always preserved the testimony of His scripture among His faithful before Muḥammad and will preserve it incorrupt after. Indeed how could the Christians and the Jews, who oppose each other in the extreme – both the former and the latter – everywhere have falsified their holy scripture in the same way (and these falsifiers before God stand in the hatred of Muḥammad), while dispersed throughout the world by the decree of the centuries? For either this happened secretly, and some codex would have remained intact, or it was publicly well-known, and these things would not have been concealed from the histories of the nations.⁸⁹

In the conclusion of the eighth chapter in the Latin translation (Arabic chapter 17), the final sentence argues, “Muḥammad knew nothing of his state and [the state] of all Muslims or of what would happen to him after death,” which fits sensibly as a closing statement.⁹⁰ In another place, the Latin translation claims that the Qur’an is inconsistent about whether the judged will be able to speak on Judgment Day. Unlike the Arabic version, the Latin translation provides several scriptural examples, quoting Q 77:35–36; 39:31, 23:65, and 37:27, which fit the argument logically.⁹¹ In a justification of Old Testament prophecy about Jesus Christ, the Arabic mentions that there were twenty-four typological figures prefiguring Christ (he does not explain the identity of these figures or their symbols), but the Latin translation specifies Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Zechariah son of Jehoiada,⁹² Jehu son of Hanani,⁹³ and Uriah⁹⁴ as types of Christ.

The largest portion preserved in the Latin translation but not in the extant Arabic text is a collection of alleged contradictions in the Qur’an (9.4–9.8). In summary, these sections address: 9.4: a criticism of fasting during Ramaḍān (Q 5:97); 9.5: a criticism of comparing God to the firmament of the sea (Q 31:31); 9.6: a criticism of the concept that the passage of time (day and night) occurs in heaven (Q 19:62; 11:107); 9.7: a criticism of the Qur’an’s claim that spiritual angels were to worship the physical (and thus inferior) Adam (Q 7:11, 7:37–38); 9.8: a criticism of Muslims for mistakenly believing that Christians worship Mary as part of the Trinity (Q 5:116) and worship their priests and monks as

89 Burman, *Religious Polemic*, 256–257.

90 *Ibid.*, 302–303.

91 *Ibid.*, 306–309.

92 2 Chronicles 24:20–22.

93 2 Chronicles 19:2, 20:34.

94 Jeremiah 26:20–23.

gods (Q 9:31).⁹⁵ These sections were probably part of the original Arabic text of *The Truthful Exposer*, since Riccoldo da Monte di Croce repeated these same passages in his work *Against the Religion of the Saracens*.⁹⁶ A further confirmation of this argument is the fact that many of the same Qur'an passages appear to be taken from critiques also found in Ibn Qutayba's *Explanation of Difficult Passages of the Qur'an* (*Ta'wīl Mushkil al-Qur'ān*), which Ibn Rajā' had done at other points in his work.⁹⁷ This fact suggests that there were two recensions of Ibn Rajā's work, with a longer version including more data which is no longer preserved in the extant Arabic manuscripts.

Sometimes, there are discrepancies between the Arabic and Latin versions where the original context is not clear. For instance, the Arabic text claims that originally *sūrat al-Ṭalāq* (Q 65; The Divorce) contained 285 verses instead of the twelve verses it now contains. But the Latin translation insists that it was originally *sūrat al-Taḥrīm* (Q 66; The Forbidding) which contained 230 verses instead of the twelve that now comprise it. Neither the chapter nor its length are consistent.⁹⁸ In the next passage, the Arabic notes that *sūrat al-Baqara* (Q 2; The Cow) contains 285 verses, while the Latin translation states it contains 270 verses (the modern edition contains 286 verses). At one point, the Arabic version cites a hadith on the authority of Abū 'Ubayda Ma'mar ibn al-Muthannā (d. 824), while the Latin cites the tradition on the authority of Abū Mas'ūd al-Anṣārī.⁹⁹ This information suggests again that there were two recensions of the work.

The unique aspects of the Latin *Book of Denuding* help explain the reception history of Ibn Rajā's *The Truthful Exposer* and reveal how it shaped European approaches to Islam. This evidence suggests that the extant Arabic versions belong to a family of copies that were close to but not identical with the Arabic base text for the *Book of Denuding*. Manuscript copies in Arabic were known alongside a Latin translation in Spain by the early thirteenth century. They were

95 Burman, *Religious Polemic*, 308–315.

96 Mériçoux, "L'ouvrage d'un frère prêcheur florentin en Orient à la fin du XII^e siècle," 31–32. Mériçoux notes that Riccoldo's work provides another witness to the Arabic version, allowing for further comparison of the Latin translations. He also notes that the *Book of Denuding* is connected closely with the work of Petrus Alfonsi (d. 1140) in the manuscript, suggesting they may have been copied together as a unit.

97 See Q 5:97, 31:31, 11:107, and 19:62 all appearing together in Ibn Qutayba, *Ta'wīl mushkil al-Qur'ān*, 22–23.

98 8.80; Burman, *Religious Polemic*, 276–277.

99 There are several Islamic sources that suggest that some suras were longer until portions were abrogated. See, for instance, al-Suyūṭī, *The Perfect Guide to the Sciences of the Qur'ān*, 155–167.

not identical, because the Latin version was edited to make it appropriate for a Catholic audience. The work came to serve different functions in its new life settings. The editing process freed the text from its Fatimid Egyptian moorings (even eliminating the author's identity) and universalized its arguments for all Christians. This process made its ideas accessible to medieval Catholics who could now engage the Qur'an and Islam through an appropriation, adaptation, and recontextualization of *The Truthful Exposer*.

3 The Arabic Manuscripts and Notes

There are four extant Arabic manuscripts of *The Truthful Exposer*. In the edition, C = MS Cairo, A = MS Aleppo, and P = MS Paris.

3.1 [C =] MS Cairo, Private Collection, fols. 13^v–77^r

This is an uncatalogued photocopy of a manuscript, preserved in a private copy that includes the entire work. The origin and whereabouts of the original manuscript are currently unknown. It may very well be a copy of the lost manuscript from the collection of Paul Sbath or Yuḥannā Balīṭ.¹⁰⁰ The manuscript likely dates to the 18th–19th centuries.¹⁰¹ Manuscript C is the only complete copy of Ibn Rajā's work, and its authenticity is uncontroversial. First, the extant manuscripts overlap and correspond to the contents of the complete manuscript (A = The introduction and Chapters 1–3; P = Chapters 21–26; albeit in a somewhat different order in places). Second, the *History of the Patriarchs of Alexandria* – whether it was composed by Michael of Damrū in his eleventh-century biography of Ibn Rajā, or added by its Arabic translator and editor Mawhūb ibn Maṣṣūr ibn Mufarrij al-Iskandarānī a few decades later – quotes from *The Truthful Exposer*, which verifies another part of the work. Third, the Latin translation known as the *Liber denudationis* follows the same structure on nearly a point-by-point basis. No further evidence is required, as every text corroborates its authenticity.

100 Paul Sbath, *Al-Fihris (Catalogue de Manuscrits Arabes), Première Partie: Ouvrages des Auteurs antérieurs au XVIIe siècle* (Cairo: Al-Sharq, 1938; Reprint Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias Press, 2010), 11–12. While Paul Sbath mentioned in a footnote in his catalogue that he had prepared an edition of the work, it was never published.

101 I would like to thank a scholar who wishes to remain anonymous for providing me with images of this uncatalogued manuscript from an unknown private collection. I have only seen a copy of this portion of the manuscript in digital form, and I do not know if the rest of the manuscript is extant or what other works might be contained in the original manuscript.

The copyist opens with:

In the name of God, the gracious, the merciful. We begin with the assistance of Almighty God with the contents of *The Exposer's Book in Truth*, which is *The Confession*, of Yūsuf¹⁰² ibn Rajā', the witness¹⁰³ from the people of the city of Miṣr, based on the contents of the biography of the worthy and venerable Father Patriarch Anbā Philotheus.¹⁰⁴ He was the sixty-third in number among the Father Patriarchs. May his intercessions be with us. Amen.¹⁰⁵

The copyist ends with:

The Exposer's Book in Truth and its testimony are finished and completed. Many thanks be to God, the possessor of might and power, forever and ever unto the ages of ages. Amen, Amen, Amen.¹⁰⁶

3.2 [A =] *Ms Aleppo, Fondation Georges et Mathilde Salem, Salem Arabic 202 (Sbath 1004), fols. 111^v–121^v (pp. 222–243)*

This manuscript (Figure 4) includes the introduction and most of the first three chapters of the work. Immediately preceding this section is a biography of Ibn Rajā' (fols. 86^r–110^r), which appears to be copied from the version in the *History of the Patriarchs of Alexandria*. It was completed in 1565.¹⁰⁷ There is no closing comment by the copyist.

The copyist 'Abd al-Masīḥ al-Mahdī opens with:

This book was edited by 'Abd al-Masīḥ al-Mahdī through the Holy Spirit and by its divine power, that clarified the virtues of the Christian reli-

102 Recall that Ibn Rajā's given name was Yūsuf (Joseph), and that Būluṣ (Paul) was his baptismal name.

103 While the manuscript suggests he was a martyr (*shahīd*), there is a strong possibility that this refers to him also as a *shāhid* or witness. This refers to a specific class of leading legal persons within Islamic law. Since his biography indicates that his father was in this legal ruling class in Cairo under the Fatimids, it is possible that he also earned this title, although the editor subsequently assigned it a double meaning by giving it the sense of a martyr/witness.

104 See Atiya, 'Abd Al-Masīḥ, and KHS-Burmester, eds., *HPEC*, 101–113 (Arabic), 151–170 (English).

105 MS Cairo, 13^v.

106 MS Cairo, 77^r.

107 Francisco del Río Sánchez, *Catalogue des manuscrits de la fondation Georges et Mathilde*



FIGURE 4 MS Sbath 1004 / Salem 202. Syria, Aleppo, Fondation Georges et Mathilde Salem, AR 202 HMML Project Number: GAMS 01004

gion. He elevated it over Judaism¹⁰⁸ and spoke through his own tongue, of the spiritual testimony. So we ask the One who helped him and opened his heart that [God] may guide us as He guided him and direct us as He directed him. Praise to our Lord and King Jesus Christ the Eternal One, forever and ever and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

This addresses the words of an unbeliever. Al-Wāḍiḥ¹⁰⁹ mentioned in this book, that he composed three books. The first of these books is this one which he named *The Exposer*. The second is the book *Demonstration on the Contradiction of the Hadith* and it is [known as] *The Confession*.¹¹⁰ He defeats his opponents from their own books in it. The third one is the

Salem (Alep, Syrie) (Wiesbaden: Reichert Verlag, 2008), 111–112. See the older entry in Sbath, *Al-Fihris*, 11–12.

108 By “Judaism” the author means “Islam.” Muslims were sometimes known as the “new Jews,” and this term made the title of the text subtler.

109 Ibn Rajā’s nickname “al-Wāḍiḥ” means “the one who exposes, unveils, or makes things clear.”

110 This colophon suggests that *The Confession* is really another name for the *Demonstration on the Contradiction of the Hadith*, while he composed another work entitled *Disclosure of the Veiled*. However, *Disclosure of the Veiled* is most likely the alternative title for his work on the hadith while *The Confession* is an alternative name for *The Truthful Exposer*.

book *Amusing Anecdotes of the Commentators* and [*The Truthful Exposer*] notes that he mentions in it the disagreements of the Qur'an commentators. This book is known by the people as *Amusing Anecdotes of the Commentators and Corruption of the Opponents*. This is what is stated in this book of his, that he has two more books. One of them is known as *The Disclosure of the Veiled*. The other is known as his biography, from what he mentioned. Praise is due God forever!¹¹¹

3.3 [P=] *MS Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Syriac 203, fols. 149^v–163^r*

This section of the manuscript is written in Serto Karshūnī script. The section corresponds to chapters 21 through 26 in the complete work and is the final entry in the manuscript. It was copied in AD 1470 at the Maronite monastery of Our Lady of Qannūbīn in the Qadisha Valley in northern Lebanon.¹¹² The site served as the seat of the Maronite patriarchate from the Mamluk period until the nineteenth century.¹¹³ The codex contains ten works. They have a common theme in theological instruction known as the question-and-answer genre.¹¹⁴ For instance, the work includes objections to Miaphysites and Nestorians, a treatise on God's unity, and master-disciple discussions. Based upon the question-and-answer material and the master-disciple dialogues, the manuscript was most likely a school book for the monks of the monastery.

The copyist opens with:

From the *Book of the Exposer*.

111 MS Aleppo, fols. 110^v–111^r.

112 Hermann Zotenberg, *Catalogue des Manuscrits Syriaques et Sabéens (Mandaïtes) de la Bibliothèque Nationale* (Paris: Imprimerie Nationale, 1874), 154–155.

113 The Qannūbīn Monastery was established as early as the fourth century (although an early sixth-century establishment under Theodosius the Cenobite's followers is more likely), becoming the center of monastic life in the region. Persecution was a significant causal factor in relocation to the region. In 1268 and 1283, the Mamluks instituted raids into the villages and monasteries. In response to Mamluk policy in the early fifteenth century, the Maronite patriarchate moved to the monastery of Qannūbīn. The patriarch mentioned in the colophon dated to 1470 is named Butros, or Peter, which was the title for all Maronite patriarchs, who traced their origins to Peter. His given name was Yūsuf al-Ḥadathī, and he went by Ibn Ḥassan as well. See the background in Edward Farrugia, Gianpaolo Rigotti, and Michel Van Parys, eds., *The Catholic East* (Rome: Valore italiano, 2019), 220–224.

114 The book was bound together in the BNF on 27 January 1873, so it is unclear if all of the texts were originally together.

Since this is the final work in the manuscript, the copyist ends with a colophon writing:

The completion of this blessed book was in the middle of the second Tishrīn [November], corresponding to the date of Alexander the Greek in the year 1781 [= AD1470], by the hand of the poor, the contemptible, the elderly, the lowly sinner in a sea of offenses and sins, who [does not] deserve to write his name in this spiritual book ... And he asked every father to read about it without blame as a student because he is a skilled writer (all who are educated and a few of the workers). Written by the Father, the exalted, the superior, the ... the shepherd of Christ ... Peter the Patriarch ... in the holy monastery [of the Mother of God] ... the monastery of Qannūbīn upon ... the Lady Mother ... of God, and may her prayers bless ... and sustain for us as head ... the Patriarch and ... his holiness and upon ... and pray for [h-t-a, d-t-r] ... his prayers we may spread out in ...¹¹⁵

3.4 *MS Monastery of St. Antony, History 11, fols. 49–57*

This manuscript is a partial copy of the work made in 1760. The manuscripts at Dayr al-Anbā Antuniyus were not accessible to me. Adel Sidarus has seen this incomplete portion of the text.¹¹⁶

3.5 *General Remarks*

In the two oldest manuscripts, the name Muḥammad is used throughout the text. The Cairo Manuscript (C), on the other hand, uses the Coptic form of his name, Mamadeus, in approximately seventy instances. Further, the scribe employs the generic term “so-and-so” (*fulān*) about thirty times in reference to Muḥammad. Sometimes, the scribe uses both terms together, such as “so-and-so Mamadeus.” MS Aleppo Salem Arabic 202 (Sbath 1004) (A) and MS Paris BNF Syriac 203 (P) do not use either of these terms for Muḥammad; instead, they use the formal Arabic spelling of his name. Since MS Cairo (C) is the most recent manuscript, these differences are most likely scribal changes to the original text. This edition will use the name Muḥammad wherever the other terms appear throughout the text, as this is most likely what Ibn Rajāʾ originally wrote in his work.

¹¹⁵ MS Paris, fol. 163^r.

¹¹⁶ Sidarus, “Les débuts de la littérature copte de langue arabe (mi-xe–xIe s.).” See also the second chapter, note 128 in his forthcoming book, Adel Sidarus, *Petite histoire de la littérature copto-arabe médiévale*.

As for the Qur'an, Ibn Rajā' cites it extensively throughout the work. However, when comparing the quotations in the extant manuscripts with the standard edition of the Qur'an, there are often differences. It is unclear whether these are due to the fact that Ibn Rajā' was reciting from memory and made mistakes, or because he was citing from a Fatimid Qur'an with variants, or due to later copyists emending the text. When Ibn Rajā' cites the Qur'an, I have chosen to quote it in the main text as it appears in the modern standard edition of the Qur'an and translate it according to that tradition. However, I have included the differences in wording in the footnotes for comparison and analysis. These differences are substantial enough that I have chosen not to quote the Qur'an using traditional quotation marks, but only by adding vowelings to signify to the reader that the passage is qur'anic.

The Arabic edition is based upon MS Cairo (C) since it is the only complete version of the text. However, MS Aleppo (A) is an older version (1565 vs. 18th–19th c.); therefore, where it provides a better reading, it is included in the main text. At certain points, I have emended the text in order to clarify arguments. All differences between the three manuscripts are included in the footnotes. The Arabic text was copied in the style of Middle Arabic, and in some instances the words have been corrected directly in the edition without being noted in the apparatus for the text. These changes include:

1. Words of praise alongside the name of God are not translated, such as عز وجل، تعالى.
2. Various forms of the word *sūra* are standardized from: صورة، صورت، سورة، to: سورة.
3. The *tā' marbūṭa* is changed from *tā' maftūḥa*, such as: ليلت/ليلة.
4. The *hamza 'alā nabra* is included instead of ي e.g.: ملايكة/ملائكة.
5. The letters ث and ذ are used instead of instances with ت and د.
6. The points are included under ي.
7. The letter ي (الف لينه) is updated in the text from the manuscript, which generally has الف (*alif maqṣura* and *alif ṭawīl*, respectively); e.g.: عسا/عسى.
8. The word هذه was written as هذا and vice versa.
9. The word الذي was written التي and vice versa.
10. The word ابو was written in general ابوا.
11. The words كذلك/كذلك were written in general كذلك.
12. The word حينئذ was written in general حينئذا.

PART 2

The Truthful Exposer
(*Kitāb al-Wāḍiḥ bi-l-Ḥaqq*)



كِتَابُ الْوَاضِحِ بِالْحَقِّ

[مقدمة]

[١] بِسْمِ الْآبِ أَبِ الدَّهْرِيِّ، وَالْإِبْنِ، ابْنِ النَّشُورِ، وَرُوحِ الْقُدْسِ، الْحَيِّ مِنْ فِي الْقُبُورِ، الْمُوَحَّدِ
بِالتَّثْلِيثِ، الْمَثَلُ بِالتَّوْحِيدِ، رَبِّ الْأَرْبَابِ وَإِلَهِ الْعَالَمِ وَالْأَحْقَابِ. الَّذِي خَلَقْنَا مِنْ تَرَابٍ، وَصَوَّرَنَا
فِي الْأَحْشَاءِ وَالْأَصْلَابِ. وَيَلْقِينَا فِي التَّرَابِ، وَصَوَّرَنَا كَيْفَ شَاءَ فِي الْأَرْحَامِ. وَجَعَلَ لَنَا الْأَسْمَاعَ
وَالْأَبْصَارَ وَالْأَفْتِدَةَ وَالْأَفْهَامَ. وَجَعَلْنَا مِنْ خَيْرِ الْأَنْعَامِ، إِذْ شَاهَدْنَا مِنْ مَجَائِبِهِ وَقُدْرَةِ أَعْمَالِهِ مَا عَايَنَاهُ 5
وَشَاهَدْنَا بِإِقْنَانِهِ. وَفَضَّلْنَا بِذَلِكَ عَلَى جَمِيعِ خَلْقِهِ. وَعَرَفْنَا سَبِيلَ الْحَقِّ، وَأَزَالَ عَنَّا طَرِيقَ الْجَهْلِ.
[٢] وَأَرَانَا آثَارَ قُدْرَتِهِ بِرَهَانًا، وَبَدَائِعَ صُنْعِهِ وَمَنَافِعَ حِكْمَتِهِ. وَزَادَنَا بِهَا بِرَهَانًا عَلَى رَبِّوَيْتِهِ وَالْآهِيَّتِهِ،
بِمَنْتِهِ، وَرَحْمَتِهِ. وَجَعَلَ لَنَا الْإِنْجِيلَ إِمَامًا نَهْتَدِي بِهِ وَسَرَاجًا نُسْتَضِيءُ بِنُورِهِ. وَمَا لَّا نَرْجِعُ فِي أُمُورِ دُنْيَانَا
إِلَيْهِ وَوَزِيرًا نَعْتَمِدُ فِي طَاعَةِ رَبِّنَا عَلَيْهِ. وَهُوَ جَبَلُ اللَّهِ الْمُبِينِ، وَسَرَاجَةُ الْمُنِيرِ. وَسَائِقُ أَوْلِيَائِهِ وَقَائِدُهُمْ إِلَى
جَنَّاتِ النَّعِيمِ.

10

A [الأرحام] 4 الإله A [والله] 3 الواحد A [الموحد] || محيي A [الحَيِّ] || النور C [النَّشُور] || الله C [بِسْمِ] 2
عِينَاهُ C [عَايَنَاهُ] || مَا أَمَانَا بِهِ عَيْنَانًا وَ A [الْأَنْعَامِ] 5 وَيَلْقِينَا فِي التَّرَابِ، وَصَوَّرَنَا كَيْفَ شَاءَ فِي الْأَرْحَامِ
C [و] 7 سَبِيلَ A [سَبِيلِ] || وَ C [و] || إِذْ شَاهَدْنَا، مِنْ مَجَائِبِهِ وَقُدْرَتِ أَعْمَالِهِ، مَا عَايَنَاهُ وَ C [و] 6
إِضَاحًا وَبَيَانًا A [بِرَهَانًا] || مَوَاقِعَ A [وَمَنَافِعَ] || صُنْعَتِهِ A [صُنْعِيهِ] || بَدِيعَ A [وَبَدَائِعَ] || أَرَهَانًا A [بِرَهَانًا] 14^ف
أَوْلِيَائِهِ C [أَوْلِيَائِهِ] || الْمُنِيرِ C [الْمُبِينِ] || فَهُوَ C [وَهُوَ] 9 يَرْجِعُ A [نَرْجِعُ] || مَوْلَانًا A [وَمَا لَّا] || بِمَنْتِهِ A [بِمَنْتِهِ] 8

The Book of the Truthful Exposer

[Introduction]

[1] In the name of the Father, the Father of Ages, and of the Son, the Son of Resurrection, and of the Holy Spirit, the Enlivener of those who are in the tombs, united in Trinity, triple in unity, the Lord of lords and the God of the world and the ages. He was the One who created us from dust, and formed us in our inmost parts.¹ He cast us in the dust and He fashioned us as He willed in the womb.² He gave us hearing, sight, hearts, and understanding.³ He made us among the best people, for we have witnessed His miracles and the power of His deeds, which we have seen and observed with certainty. By that He has favored us over all of His creation. He taught us the way of truth, and kept us from the path of ignorance.

[2] He has shown us the effects of His power as proof, the wonders of His creation, and the benefits of His wisdom. Through them he gave us further evidence of His lordship and divinity by His kindness and mercy. He gave us the Gospel as a counselor⁴ by which we might be guided rightly, and a lamp by whose light we might be illuminated, a source to which we have recourse in matters of religion, and as a minister upon which we depend, in obedience to our Lord.⁵ It is the clear Mount of God, and His illuminating lamp. It directs His friends and leads them to “the gardens of bliss.”⁶

1 Psalm 139:13.

2 Psalm 139:13. References to God shaping humans in the womb for a special task are also found in Genesis 2:7, Job 10:8–9, 31:15, Isaiah 49:1, and Jeremiah 1:5.

3 The words here correspond to the sense of “ears, eyes, hearts, and minds.”

4 Ibn Rajā’ chooses the Arabic word “imam” here as an allusion to the Gospel as the true imam, counselor, guide, and leader, in contrast to the Ismā’īlī imams ruling Fatimid Egypt at that time.

5 This passage evokes Q 42:52 only now in reference to Ibn Rajā’ and the Bible: “You did not know what the Book is [i.e., the Bible], nor what is faith [i.e., Christianity]; but We made it a light that We may guide by its means whomever We wish of Our servants.”

6 On believers led to the gardens of bliss which is an eschatological image of heaven, see Q 5:65, 10:9, 22:56, 31:8, 37:43, 56:12, and 68:34.

[٣] فنعمة الله - جلّ جلاله - بنا سابعة، وحجته علينا ظاهرة بالغة. نحمده على أنعامه المتظاهرة، ونشكره على إحسانه المترادف. ونرغب إليه في تثبيتنا على ما هادانا إليه، ويوفّقنا في القول والعمل لما يقرب منه، حتى يختم لنا خاتمةً سالحةً، ويجمع لنا بفضل خير الدنيا والآخرة. إنّه غفور رحيم.

[٤] أعلم - وفقك الله لطاعته كما وفقنا، وعرفك سبيل الحق كما عرفنا، وهداك لدينه الذي اختاره

لنفسه كما هادنا - أنا قد تكّأ من المعرضين عن ذكره، والكافرين بدينه الذي اختاره لنفسه وملائكته 5 وأنبياؤه وأصفيائه، متمسكين بالكفر. وقد طبع الشيطان على قلوبنا، فزينا لنا سوء أعمالنا. فظللنا نشطح في عمانا وجهلنا. فأحكمتنا شروط ما تكّأ فيه من القرآن والأحاديث، واختلاف الفقهاء المضلين، من أول دين محمد إلى زماننا هذا أول ورود هذه الأخبار إلى زماننا هذا.

[٥] أول فأول، ندين لله عز وجلّ بذلك. ونجهد أنفسنا بالعمل، ونأمر من لا يعمل أن يعمل.

نرى أنّ ذلك هو الحق لا الكذب، والجد لا اللعب. فأفينا ما مضى من عمرنا في الخسران والعمى، 10 إلى أن منّ الله علينا ونظر إلينا بعينه الرحيمة. فاستنقذنا من ذلك كلّه بغير يد سبقت منا إليه، ولا إحساناً لنا تقدّم لنا لديه، بل بفضلته ورأفته وتحنّنه. لم يؤاخذنا بما تكّأ فيه من الكفر والجهالة فبرئنا إليه مما كآ فيه، وتنصّلنا إليه مما كآ عليه. فتحققنا أنه قد قبل ذلك منا برأفته ورحمته، لعلنا بقبول التوبة من المخطئين، وحمله على الجاهلين.

على اما اهدانا A [إليه] نيتنا C تثبيتنا 2 المتظاهر A [المتظاهرة] || علينا A [علينا] || سابقه C [سابعة] 1
 لنفسه 5 سبل A [سبيل] 4 رؤوف A [غفور] || خيرى C [خير] 3 من A [في] || نوقنا A [ويوفّقنا] || له
 14^v C [نشطح] || قد طبع A طرح C adds [طبع] || اصفياه A [وأصفيائه] 6 C omits [و] || A omits
 من اول لدين A omits محمد || لدين C [دين] 8 المصلين A [المضلين] || شرفط A [شروط] 7
 [لله] || اولاً فاولاً يدين A [ندين] 9 الي زماننا هذا A omits هذا || هذا C [هذه] || أول C omits [أول] || محمد
 C [الخسران] || فافيتا C [فأفينا] 10 بالعمل A [يعمل] || يأمر A [ونأمر] || يجهد فيه A [ونجهد] || الله C
 [ورأفته] || A omits [لنا] || احسان A [إحساناً] 12 من غير A [بغير] || ونظر إلينا C omits [إلينا] 11 انخسران
 A [المخطئين] 14 بقبولة A [بقبول] || أنا C [أنه] || كما A [كما] || وردنا اليه كما كآ فيه A [فيه] 13 ارافته A
 حكمه A [وحمله] || المخطئين C [وحمله] || المخطئين

[3] The grace of God – great is His glory – is abundant for us, and His proof overwhelms and convinces us.⁷ We praise Him for His apparent graces and we give thanks to Him for His long-lasting kindness. We desire that He keep us firm in that towards which He guided us, and that He would grant us success in speaking and doing that which brings one close to Him, so that He will provide a good ending for us, and by His favor, assemble the best of this world and the hereafter for us. Truly He is forgiving, merciful.⁸

[4] Know – may God guide you to His obedience just as He guided us, and show you the way of truth just as He showed us, and guide you to His religion, which He chose for Himself, just as He guided us – that we had formerly been among those who turned from His remembrance and disbelieved in His religion – which He chose for Himself and His angels and His prophets and His chosen friends – committed to unbelief.⁹ Satan had sealed our hearts, presenting our evil works to us in a favorable light. So we continued to stray in our blindness and ignorance. We mastered the principles of our former [faith], such as the Qur'an and the hadith reports,¹⁰ and the differences in opinions of the misleading jurists, from the beginning of Muḥammad's religion until this time of ours, and the transmission of these reports until our present time.

[5] First of all, we owe these things to God. We exhort ourselves to labor, and command whoever is not working to work.¹¹ We see that as the truth and not the lie; and earnest, not jesting. For we wasted our earlier years in depravity and blindness until God blessed us and He looked upon us with His merciful gaze. He saved us from all of that, not because our hand had already reached out to Him, or because our good deeds proceeded to Him, but only through His favor, mercy, and affection. He did not hold against us the unbelief and ignorance in which we were and we repented to Him from that in which we were and we turned away from that [Islam] to Him. And we were certain that He had accepted that from us through His mercy and His compassion, because we know [He] accepts repentance from transgressors and [grants] clemency to the ignorant.

7 Q 6:149.

8 All of the language in this paragraph echoes qur'anic phrasing, such the title of exaltation for God, the concept of divine proof, being guided and favored, the concept of the hereafter, and God's attributes as forgiving and compassionate.

9 Here he directs his words toward a Muslim audience and alludes to his time as a Muslim as a time of unbelief in Jesus Christ.

10 The hadith are oral traditions passed down about the life of Muḥammad and later codified for Islamic legal rulings.

11 Q 9:105.

- [٦] ونحن نسأله أن يثبتنا على ذلك، وأن يمنّ عليك - أيها الناظر في كتابنا هذا المخالف لدينا - بما منّ به علينا. واستقداك من ظلام الباطل إلى الحق بمنّته ورحمته، لأنّه على ما يشاء قدير. ثمّ منّ الله علينا من رحمته ونعمته الظاهرة والباطنة إنه لما نظرنا لعتب ما كتّاب فيه، وجب علينا أن نبيّن ذلك لانكتمه، ليعلم ذلك من هو على غير يقين من ضلّالته. فعسى أن يمنّ الله عليه كما منّ علينا ويهديه كما هدانا. فيكون لنا في ذلك من الثواب ما يخصّ عنا ما مضى من خطايانا وكفرنا إن شاء الله تعالى. 5
- [٧] فوضعنا هذا الكتاب وسمّيناه كِتَابَ الْوَاضِحِ بِالْحَقِّ. وأوضحنا فيه على مخالفتنا خطأهم وكفرهم. واستفرغنا في ذلك مجهودنا بعون الله وتوفيقه. فإن يكن ذلك صواباً فمن الله، وإن يكن خطأً فنّا. وإنا نعلم أنّنا لا نسلم من جهال مخالفتنا أن يعيبوا ذلك علينا. ونعلم أيضاً أنّهم لا يقدرّون على نقض ذلك بحجج ظاهرة ولا باطنة إلا بالسيف لا غير. فلم نفرع من ذلك، وكان الله في قلوبنا أعظم من السيف ومن جميع العذاب كلّه. فإن كذبوا ذلك، فقد كذبوا قرآنهم ونبّيهم، وما نقل عنه أصحابه وتابعوهم 10 إلى وقتنا هذا، لأنّنا لم نورد عليهم إلا من كتابهم وأحاديث صاحبهم.

[الفصل الأوّل]

[٨] وقد وجدنا مخالفتنا اقتصروا على أربعة أصناف. فأما الصنف الأوّل فإنهم دخلوا في الإسلام بالسيف قسراً. وأما الصنف الثّاني فإنهم دخلوا فيه ديانةً ووقع لهم أنّه الحقّ. فزين لهم الشيطان أعمالهم

A [لأنّه] B منه C يمنه A [بمنّته] || نور الحق A [الحق] || استقداك A [واستقداك] 2 علينا C [عليك] 1 فيه || ما C [ما] || نظر بالغيب C [لعتب] || رحمته ورحمته و A omits [و] 3 فإنا A [منّ] || كل شيء A [يشاء] || انه A [يخصر] C [يخصّ] 5 فعسا C [فعسى] || ضلالته CA [ضلّالته] || يعلم A [ليعلم] 4 و A [ذلك] || 15^r C [صواباً] || يكون C [يكن] 7 و A omits [و] || كتابنا هذا C [الكتاب] 6 ان نشأ A [إنشاء] C [إنشاء] || يحض علينا. ونعلم أيضاً أنّهم لا يقدرّون على نقض ذلك A omits [ذلك] || يقدرّوا C [يقدرّون] 8 من C [فمن] || ثواباً C [قد] omits [كذبوا] 10 قلبنا A [قلوبنا] || فكان A [وكان] || نروع A [نفرع] || لمحجج A [بمحجج] 9 ذلك قهراً A [قسراً] 14 15^v C [الإسلام] || لصف C [الصنف] 13 تقول A [نقل] || صاحبهم C [ونبيهم] || كذبوا

[6] We ask Him to keep us firm in that and to bless you – you who read my book and who are in a different religion – with what He has bestowed on us. May He lead you from the darkness of error to the truth through His favor and His mercy, because He can do whatever He wants. Then God bestowed upon us, by means of His mercy and His grace both visible and invisible, [the understanding] that when we realized the fault in which we were, it was mandatory for us to reveal this and not keep it hidden, so that anyone who is not sure of his misguidance would know. Perhaps God will bestow this upon him as He did on us and will guide him as He guided us, so that we would have a sufficient reward to wash away our past sins and unbelief, if it be God's will.

[7] I have written this book and named it *The Book of the Truthful Exposer*.¹² In it, I clarify to my opponents their error and their unbelief. I put all of my effort into that with God's assistance and His aid. If that matter is correct then it is from God, and if it is wrong then it is from me. I know indeed that I am not safe from the ignorant among my opponents, that they might hold that against me. I also know that they are not capable of refuting that with clear or concealed arguments, except by the sword, and nothing else.¹³ But I do not fear that, for in my heart God is mightier than the sword and all torments. If they deny that, then they have denied their Qur'an and their prophet, and whatever his companions and their followers¹⁴ transmitted from¹⁵ him until our time, because I only convey to them what is from their book and their companion's hadith.

[Chapter 1]

[8] We have found that our opponents can be classified into four categories. As for the first category, they entered into Islam by the sword via assault. As for the second category, they entered into it out of conviction and it seemed to them that it was the truth. Although they were capable of discernment, Satan

12 The more literal translation of the title is *The Exposer's Book in Truth*. In the Latin version, the title is given as “[*The Book*] of *Denuding or Exposing, or The Discloser*” (*Liber denudationis siue ostensionis aut patefaciens*). See Burman, *Religious Polemic and the Intellectual History of the Mozarabs*, 242–243.

13 This may be a reference to the fact that the Fatimid caliph al-Ḥākim was persecuting Christians and Muslims were accepting conversions under coercion at the time of this writing.

14 Ibn Rajā' is referring to the first and second generations of Muslims, who were said to be authoritative sources for much of the material about Muḥammad transmitted in hadith collections.

15 The Arabic *naqala 'an* could mean “transmitted on his authority” but it could also mean “transmitted about” Muḥammad.

فَأَضَلَّهُمْ عَنِ السَّبِيلِ، وَكَانُوا مُسْتَبْصِرِينَ. وَأَمَّا الصَّنْفُ الثَّلَاثُ فَدَخَلُوا فِي الْإِسْلَامِ اتِّبَاعاً لِآبَائِهِمْ. فَقَالُوا: إِنَّا وَجَدْنَا آبَاءَنَا عَلَى أُمَّتِهِمْ، وَإِنَّا عَلَى آثَارِهِمْ مُقْتَادُونَ. فَتَلَكَ فِرْقَةً كَالْأَنْعَامِ. أَخَذُوا دِينَهُمْ تَقْلِيداً. وَقَلَّدُوا آبَاءَهُمْ وَالَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ. وَأُولَئِكَ أَيْضاً قَلَّدُوا نَبِيَّهُمْ بِغَيْرِ دَلَالَةٍ وَلَا نُبُوَّةٍ. وَالصَّنْفُ الرَّابِعُ فَلَيْسَ مِنْهُمْ آثَرٌ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَعَاجِلُهَا عَلَى الْآخِرَةِ وَأَجْلُهَا.

- 5 [٩] ثُمَّ إِنَّ صَاحِبَهُمْ قَالَ لَهُمْ: إِنَّكُمْ سَتَفْتَرِقُونَ بَعْدِي عَلَى ثَلَاثَةِ وَسَبْعِينَ فِرْقَةً، مِنْهَا فِرْقَةٌ وَاحِدَةٌ نَاجِيَةٌ، وَالبَاقِي فِي النَّارِ. وَهَذَا حَدِيثٌ مَشْهُورٌ عِنْدَهُمْ لَا يَدْفَعُهُ عَالِمُهُمْ وَلَا جَاهِلُهُمْ. حَدَّثَنِي بِهِ أَبِي قَالَ حَدَّثَنِي أَبُو مُحَمَّدٍ الْحَسَنُ بْنُ رَشِيقٍ الْعَسْكَرِيُّ، قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا أَبُو الزُّرَّافِ، قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا يَحْيَى بْنُ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ بَكِيرٍ،

A [مقتادون] CA [أمتهم] 2 على السبيل كانوا متنصرين C [مستبصرين] || فضلهم CA [فأضلهم] 1
 [و] || نبوة C [نبوة] || من غير A [بغير] || أبناءهم C [بنبيهم] || أيضاً قلدوا من قبلهم A adds [قبلهم] 3 مقتدون
 C [أبو] 7 به C omits [حدثني] A [به] || الباقيون A [والباقى] 6 ناحية A [ناجية] || ثلث A [ثلاثة] 5 اما A
 عبيد A [عبد] || الدمراق C [الزفراف] || رسيق C [رشيق] || ابو C [ابن] || ابوا

portrayed their affairs to them favorably, and led them astray from the way. As for the third category, they entered into Islam following their fathers. They said: “We found our fathers following their community, and and upon their footsteps we were carried along.” But that group is like cattle. They adopted their religion via imitation.¹⁶ They imitate their fathers and those who preceded them. They also imitate their prophet without proof or prophethood. As for the fourth category, they prefer this world and its immediate concerns rather than the hereafter and its afterlife.¹⁷

[9] Then their companion [Muḥammad] said to them: “You will indeed become divided after me into seventy-three sects of which one sect will be saved and the remainder will be in Hell.”¹⁸ This hadith is well-known among them and neither the learned nor the ignorant among them reject it. My father reported it to me from Abū Muḥammad al-Ḥasan ibn Rashīq al-‘Askarī¹⁹ from Abū al-Zafzāf/al-Damrāq²⁰ from Yaḥyā ibn ‘Abd Allāh ibn Bukayr²¹ from Mālik

16 The Arabic term here *taqlīd* refers to imitation in the sense of blind obedience, or following customs and traditions. Also, this is considered belief and not certitude and therefore does not demonstrate knowledge of God. See Richard Frank, “Knowledge and Taqlīd: The Foundations of Religious Belief in Classical Ash‘arism,” *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 109 (1989): 37–62.

17 Ḥunayn ibn Ishāq lists six categories in his work; see Samir Khalil Samir, “Maqālat Ḥunayn ibn Ishāq fi ‘Kayfiya idrāk ḥaqīqat al-diyāna,” *al-Mashriq* 71.2 (1997): 345–363.

18 On this hadith in the canonical collections, see G.H.A. Juynboll, *Encyclopedia of Canonical Ḥadīth* (Leiden: Brill, 2007), 436–438, 458 (henceforth *ECH*).

19 Abū Muḥammad al-Ḥasan ibn Rashīq al-‘Askarī (896–980) was an Egyptian traditionist and instructor of hadith teachings under the Fatimids. See Sezgin, *GAS*, 201–202; al-Dhahabī, *Tārīkh al-Islām*, 26:437–438. He was also a student and transmitter of the traditions of al-Nasā‘ī. This would have made Ibn Rajā’ a contemporary of Ibn Rashīq al-‘Askarī’s other students: al-Dāraquṭnī (d. 995; Sezgin, *GAS*, 206–209), ‘Abd al-Ghanī ibn Sa‘īd al-Azdī (d. 1018), Abū Muḥammad ibn al-Naḥḥās (d. 1025), Ismā‘īl ibn ‘Amr al-Maqburī, Yaḥyā ibn ‘Alī ibn al-Taḥḥān (d. 1025; Sezgin, *GAS*, 358), Muḥammad ibn Mughallīs al-Dāwūdī, Muḥammad ibn Ja‘far ibn Abī al-Mudhakkār, ‘Alī ibn Rabī‘a al-Tamīmī, Abū al-Qāsim ‘Alī ibn Muḥammad al-Fārisī, and Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥasan ibn al-Ṭuffāl.

20 The name in the transmission line is inconsistent because the vowel markings and consonants must not have been clear to the copyists. I have not identified the historical figure.

21 Yaḥyā ibn ‘Abd Allāh ibn Bukayr al-Qurashī (771–845) was an Egyptian Mālikī scholar of the Quraysh tribe, student of Mālik ibn Anas, and a common source for hadith in the collections of al-Bukhārī and Muslim. See Sezgin, *GAS*, 460, 472, 475.

عن مالك ابن أنس (عن) ابن شهاب الزهري، عن أنس ابن مالك قال: سمعت محمداً يقول: ستفترق أمّتي على ثلاثة وسبعين فرقة، منها فرقة واحدة ناجية والباقي في النار. فقد شهد عليهم نبّيم أنّهم في النار. وكلّ فرقة من هذه الثلاث وسبعين فرقة تقول أنّها هي الفرقة الناجية. وهؤلاء الفرق كلّهم، يأخذون بالقرآن المجمع عليه عندهم والأحاديث، التي لا خلاف بينهم فيها. فأما تناقض الأحاديث فقد صنعنا في ذلك كتاباً مفرداً يعرف بـكِتَابِ الْإِبَانَةِ.

5

[10] ولو كان القرآن في حالته صحيحاً، لكان ذلك أقلّ اختلافاً. غير أنّ فيه من التناقض والاضطراب والتكرير ما لا خفاء به على من تدبره. وأنا أذكر في كتابي هذا من ذلك ما يكون فيه مقنع لمن تدبره. ولو كان صاحبهم لما جاءهم بهذا القرآن المتناقض فسره لهم على أيّ حال كان، لأجمعوا كلّهم على التفسير ولم يختلفوا. ولكن لم يفسره، ولا فسره بعده رجل اقتدوا به كلّهم. بل فسره بعده أكثر من أربعين رجلاً. لم يتفق اثنان منهم على تفسير آية، وكأنّ كلّهم استوى له تفسير، على آية حال شاء فسره.

10

[11] فواحد منهم يحمل لفظ القرآن على لغة طائفة من العرب وهم هذيل. فيفسر الآية بلغتهم. ويستشهد من الأشعار بما وافق تلك اللغة. وآخر يفسر القرآن على لغة قريش ويستشهد من الأشعار بما

A [ناجية] || فرق A [فرقة] || ثلث A [ثلاثة] 2 فلان C [يقول] || محمد A [محمداً] || النهري CA [الزهري] 1
 C omits [الناجية] || هذا الفرق C [ثلث] A [الثلاث] 3 صاحبهم C [نبّيم] || الباقون A [والباقي] || ناحية
 [عندهم] || يأخذون C [يأخذون] 4 كل فرقة من هذا C [وهؤلاء] || in margin تقول اننا في الفرقة الناجية
 الأمانة C [الإبانة] || صنعنا A [صنعنا] 5 الذي A [التي] || C 16^f، لأحاديث C [والأحاديث]، C omits ||
 C [يتفق] || رجل A [رجلاً] 10 ولكنه A [ولكن] 9 C omits [من] || لاختلافهم A [اختلافهم] 6
 [منهم] 12 وكأنّ كلّهم استوى له تفسير على C omits [على] 11 آية C omits [آية] || اثنين C [اثنان] || تنفق
 C [ويستشهد] || ذلك C [القرآن] || وبما يوافق C [وافق] 13 لفظة C [لغة] || تجعل A [يحمل] || يحمل C adds
 C 16^v [بما] || القرآن A [الأشعار] || يشهد

ibn Anas²² [from] Ibn Shihāb al-Zuhrī²³ from Anas ibn Mālik²⁴ who said: “I heard Muḥammad say: ‘My community will indeed be divided into seventy-three sects of which one sect will be saved and the remainder will be in Hell.’” Thus their prophet has testified against them that they will be in Hell. Every one of these seventy-three sects claim that it is the saved sect. All of these sects have accepted the Qurʾan as a point of consensus among them as well as the hadith reports, about which there is no disagreement between them. As for the contradictions of the hadith reports, I have already written on that in a separate book known as *The Book of Demonstration [on the Contradiction of the Hadith]*.²⁵

[10] Even if the Qurʾan were considered trustworthy as it is, then that would be the least of their disagreements. But within it are contradictions and confusion and repetition which are obvious to whoever examines it. I shall mention part of that in the present book of mine, which is sufficient for whoever examines the matter. If their companion – when he brought them this contradictory Qurʾan – had interpreted it to them in any way, then all of them would have agreed about the interpretation and they would not disagree. However, he did not explain it, and not one man – whom they all followed – after him interpreted it. But more than forty men interpreted it after him. Not even two of them could agree about an interpretation of any single verse, as if every one of them was convinced of his interpretation, according to the way he wanted to interpret it.²⁶

[11] One of them traced back the Qurʾan’s pronunciation to the dialect of a particular Arab group, who are the Hudhayl.²⁷ So he interprets the verse through their dialect. He cites from the poetic works whatever agrees with that dialect. Another interprets the Qurʾan according to the Quraysh dialect and he

22 Mālik ibn Anas (ca. 711–795) was a Medinan imam and well-known collector of traditions that were published in his *al-Muwattaʾa*. He was the founder of the Mālikī legal school that was widespread among Sunnīs in Fatimid Egypt. See Sezgin, *GAS*, 457–464.

23 Ibn Shihāb al-Zuhrī (d. 742) was a source for oral traditions in Damascus under the Umayyads to figures such as Mālik ibn Anas and he studied under Saʿīd ibn al-Musayyab. See Sezgin, *GAS*, 280–283.

24 Anas ibn Mālik (d. 709) was a companion to Muḥammad and many oral traditions are attributed to him; see *ET*², 1:482.

25 Based upon the title of this work, it probably uses hadith material to undermine Islamic claims and defend Christianity. See Swanson, “Būluṣ ibn Rajāʾ,” 545–546. The Latin version of the text does not mention this work.

26 This passage is a recapitulation from the argument of Ibn Qutayba, *Taʾwīl mukhtalaf al-ḥadīth*, 22–23; Ibn Qutayba, *Traité des divergences*, #24–25.

27 Ibn Rajāʾ is referring to some Islamic explanations that certain parts of the Qurʾan reflect different dialects of Arab tribes, such as the Hudhayl.

يوافق ذلك. وآخر يفسّر القرآن على الأحاديث الصادقة والكاذبة، وذلك غير موافق للغات العرب. وآخر يفسّره بعقله وتمييزه، وذلك غير موافق لكل ما ذكرناه.

[١٢] كما أنّ داوود - وهو عندهم إمام من أئمة العراق - أحلّ لهم أكل شحم الخنزير وحرّم عليهم لحمه. فقبيل له: ما الدليل على أنّك حرّمت لحمه وحلّلت شحمه؟ فقال: ما أنا الذي حلّلت شحمه، ولكن الله الذي أحلّه. لأنّه قال في القرآن في غير موضع: **حُرِّمَتْ عَلَيْكُمُ الْمَيْتَةُ وَالْدَّمُ وَلَحْمُ الْخِنزِيرِ**. فحرم لحم الخنزير لا غير، وصار شحمه حلالاً. ولو كان ذلك حراماً كان يقول: **حُرِّمَتْ عَلَيْكُمُ الْمَيْتَةُ وَالْدَّمُ وَالْخِنزِيرُ** ولكنّه قال: **وَلَحْمُ الْخِنزِيرِ**. فحرم لحمه باللفظ وعفا عن شحمه. وأخذ بهذا القول عامّة أصحابه. [١٣] وأحلّ لهم أيضاً أن يتزوّجوا تسعة نسوة. فأنكروا الناس عليه ذلك، وقالوا أنّه خالف القرآن. إنّما قال الله: **فَانكِحُوا مَا طَابَ لَكُمْ مِنَ النِّسَاءِ مَثْنَى وَثُلَاثَ وَرُبَاعَ**. كم تكون جملة ذلك؟ فقالوا: تسعة. فقال لهم: لم نخالف القرآن، وأخذ بهذا عامّة أصحابه كلهم. ومثل هذا كثير، ولو شرحنا لأطلنا.

[أئمة 3 ذكرناه] C ذكرناه || يفسر القرآ A يفسره 2 من C على || يفسره C [يفسّر || وافق A] يوافق 1
 A [كان 6 احللت] A [حلّلت || احللت A] وحلّلت || حرمة C [حرّمت 4 حل C] [أحلّ || اهل A
 C [جملة || فَ C omits] [فَانكِحُوا 9 إنّهُ يخالف A] خالف || خمسة A [تسعة || حل A] [وأحلّ 8 لكان
 C] [وأخذ || تخالف C] [تخالف || ولم C omits] || لم || و A adds] [لهم 10 فقالوا C omits] [فقالوا || الجملة في
 شرحناه بكآله A] [شرحنا || و A omits] [ولو || C 17^r و] || اصحابه أصحابهم C [أصحابه || اخذوا

cites from the poetic works what agrees with that. Another one interprets the Qur'an according to the authentic hadith reports as well as the false ones, and that [interpretation] does not agree with the Arab dialects. Another one interprets it by means of his own reason and discernment, and that does not match anything that we have just mentioned.

[12] In addition, Dāwūd – who is one of the imams of Iraq according to them²⁸ – made it permissible for them to consume pork fat but forbade them its meat. So it was said to him: “What is the evidence for you to forbid its meat while you permit its fat?” He replied: “I am not the one who permitted its fat, but God is the one who permitted it. For he said in the Qur'an in another place: ‘You are forbidden carrion and blood and pork meat.’²⁹ So he forbade pork meat, nothing else; as a result its fat is permissible. If that were forbidden, he would have said: ‘You are forbidden carrion and blood and pork’, but he said: ‘pork meat’. So he forbids its meat by declaration and condones its fat.”³⁰ All of his adherents accepted this statement.

[13] In addition, [Dāwūd] allowed them to marry nine women. Now people objected to him, saying that it is at odds with the Qur'an insofar as God said: “Marry whoever is pleasing to you among the women, a second and third and fourth.”³¹ [He responded to them:] “What is the total number of that?” They replied: “Nine.”³² So he said to them: “We are not contradicting the Qur'an,” and all of his adherents accepted this. There are many examples like that and if I described them, then I would go on and on.

28 This is a reference to the qur'anic literalist Dāwūd al-Ẓāhirī (d. 884). We know from the Ismā'īlī writings of the legal scholar al-Nu'mān (d. 974) in his *Differences Among the Schools of Law* that the Fatimids were critical of Dāwūd and other Sunnī schools. Given the fact that Ibn Rajā' may have studied under al-Nu'mān or his son Muḥammad al-Nu'mān, who was the Fatimid chief judge from 984–999, it is possible that he is repeating critiques of Dāwūd's interpretations that he read from al-Nu'mān's book while he was a Muslim.

29 Q 5:3.

30 The fact that this was clearly a matter of dispute among Muslims is demonstrated by fabricated hadith forbidding its usage. See for instance the Arabic text and English translation in Muḥammad ibn 'Īsā al-Tirmidhī, *English Translation of Jāmi' at-Tirmidhī*, 6 vols., ed. Abū Khalīl and Abū Ṭāhir Zubayr 'Alī Za'ī (Riyadh: Darussalam, 2007), 3:98–99 (Book 12, #1297).

31 Q 4:3.

32 Besides the numbers adding up to nine, the argument may have been based on the tradition that Muḥammad was married at least nine times during his life.

[١٤] ثم حصل لكلِّ صنف من هذه الأصناف إمام يقول بتلك المقالة. فأصبحوا طوائف كثيرة، فكفر بعضهم بعضاً، وجهل بعضهم بعضاً. وقد ذكرت اختلاف مفسري القرآن في كتاب صغير يعرف بِكِتَابِ نَوَادِرِ الْمُفَسِّرِينَ.

[١٥] غير أننا نسألهم عن صاحبهم الذي اتبعوه. فنقول لهم: أخبرونا عن حقيقة ما ادعاه من النبوة، وما الذي وجدتموه من البيان في ذلك حتى تبتموه؟ فإن الله - جلّ وعز - لم يرسل نبياً إلا وكان قبله نبيٌّ يبشّر به، وكتاب يشهد له بالنبوة، ودلائل يظهر بها في زمانه لأهل عصره. وكلّ ذلك رحمة من الله - عزّ وجلّ - لعباده، وليكلا يكون للناس على الله - عزّ وجلّ - حجة. فأخبرونا عن نبيكم. أي نبيّ بشّر به، وأيّ دلالة أو أعجوبة أظهرها في زمانه، وأيّ كتاب يشهد له بنبوته؟

الفصل الثاني

10

[١٦] الرد على من يقول أن التوراة والإنجيل مغيران.

[١٧] فإن قال قائلهم: قد بشّر موسى في التوراة به وبشّر به المسيح في الإنجيل، ولكنكم غيرتم الإنجيل وحرقتموه، وكذلك اليهود غيروا التوراة وبدّلوها. فإننا نجيبهم على ذلك، نقول لهم: متى تدعون تغيير التوراة والإنجيل؟

1 A omits [بعضاً] || بعض C [بعضاً] 2 وأنصتوا CA [فأصبحوا] || هذا C [هذه] || نصف C adds [لكلّ] 1 اتبعتموه A [تبتموه] 5 فنقول C [فنقول] 4 نوارد CA [نَوَادِر] 3 صغير C omits [صغير] || بعضاً ولا C; ليلأ A [وليكلا] || بعباده A [لعباده]، 7 يظهرها A [بها] || على نبوته A [بالنبوة] || بشر A [يبشّر] 6 [به] C in margin [مغيران] 10 فصل C [الثاني] 9 عجوبة C [أعجوبة] 8 صاحبكم C [نبيكم] || يكون تدعوا C [تدعون] || أنا C 17; ذلك || بدلتها A [وبدّلوها] || غيرت A [غيروا] 12 in margin

[14] In every one of these groups is an imam who will support that teaching. So they became [divided into] many sects, calling each other unbeliever and ignorant. I have mentioned the disagreements between the Qur'an's interpreters in the little book known as the *Book of Amusing Anecdotes of the Commentators*.³³

[15] But we ask them about their companion whom they have followed. So we say to them: Tell us the truth about his claim to prophethood, and what kind of evidence you have found about that, which led you to follow him? Because God did not send a prophet unless there had been a prophet before him bringing news about him, and an [earlier] scripture testifying to his prophethood, and proofs which he reveals to the people of his age during his lifetime. All of that is a mercy from God for his servants, so that people would not have an argument with God.³⁴ Tell us about your prophet. Which [earlier] prophet had prophesied about him, and what kind of proof or miracle did he reveal during his life, and which scripture testifies to his prophethood?

Chapter 2

[16] The refutation against whoever says that the Torah and the Gospel have been altered.³⁵

[17] Suppose someone says: "Moses brought news about him in the Torah, and Christ brought news about him in the Gospel, but you altered the Gospel and corrupted it, and likewise the Jews altered the Torah and changed it."³⁶ We answer them about that saying to them: "When do you claim the Torah and the Gospel were altered?"

33 See Swanson, "Būluṣ ibn Rajā'," 545. This work may have utilized content from Ismā'īli sources that Ibn Rajā' read as a Muslim, such as the work of al-Nu'mān, which criticized Sunnī commentators and legal scholars.

34 Throughout the text, Ibn Rajā' uses the Islamic titles of esteem for God as almighty and exalted (*azza wa jalla*). These epithets are not translated in the English version.

35 This verse and the theme of corruption (*tahrif*) became part of an extensive discussion in the hadith and fiqh literature on the permissibility of consulting the People of the Book regarding their sources, doctrines, and laws.

36 The Islamic claim that the Bible originally had references to Muḥammad which Jews and Christians subsequently altered in their texts is found in places such as Q 61:6 and Q 26:196–197. Muslims believed Muḥammad was referred to as the prophet in Deuteronomy 18:15, the camel rider in Isaiah 21:7, and the Advocate/Paraclete mentioned in John 14–16.

[١٨] فَإِن قَالَ قائلهم: تَغَيَّرَتِ التَّوْرَةُ بَعْدَ مَوْتِ مُوسَى وَ الْإِنْجِيلِ بَعْدَ ارْتِفَاعِ الْمَسِيحِ، فَهَذَا رَدُّ الْقُرْآنِ وَ بَطْلَانُهُ صِرَاحاً، لِأَنَّهُ ادَّعَى عَلَى اللَّهِ أَنَّهُ قَالَ فِي الْقُرْآنِ فِي سُورَةِ يُوسُفَ: فَإِن كُنْتُ فِي شَكِّ مِمَّا أُنزِلُنَا إِلَيْكَ فَاسْأَلِ الَّذِينَ يَقْرَأُونَ الْكِتَابَ مِنْ قَبْلِكَ. فَإِن كَانَ مَا يَقُولُ مِنْ تَغْيِيرِ التَّوْرَةِ وَ الْإِنْجِيلِ حَقًّا - وَ أَنَّهُمَا كَذِبٌ - فَقَدْ ادَّعَى عَلَى اللَّهِ أَنَّهُ أَمَرَهُ أَنْ يَسْأَلَ الْكَذَّابِينَ. أَفَلَا يَتَدَبَّرُ أَوْلِيَاءُ الْعُقُولِ هَذَا الْحَالَ الْبَيِّنَ! حَيْثُ يَدَّعِي عَلَى اللَّهِ أَنَّهُ أَخْبَرَهُ أَنَّ التَّوْرَةَ قَدْ تَغَيَّرَتْ بَعْدَ مَوْتِ مُوسَى وَ كَذَلِكَ الْإِنْجِيلِ، وَ أَنَّهُمَا كَذِبٌ. 5
ثُمَّ ادَّعَى عَلَى اللَّهِ فِي عَقْبِ ذَلِكَ أَنَّهُ أَمَرَهُ إِنْ كَانَ فِي شَكِّ مِمَّا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْهِ، (أَنْ) يَسْأَلَ الَّذِينَ يَقْرَأُونَ الْكِتَابَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِ، وَ هُمُ النَّصَارَى وَ الْيَهُودُ. وَ كَيْفَ يَنْبَغِي أَنْ يَكُونُوا عِنْدَهُ فِي أَوَّلِ الْكَلَامِ كَاذِبِينَ، وَ فِي آخِرِ الْكَلَامِ صَادِقِينَ!

[١٩] وَ كَيْفَ يَنْبَغِي أَنْ يَكُونَ مِنْ يَدَّعِي النَّبُوَّةِ شَاكِّاً فِي اللَّهِ مَعَ هَذِهِ الدَّعَاوِي الْكَاذِبَةِ الَّتِي يَدَّعِيهَا حَيْثُ يَقُولُ: أَنَا سَيِّدٌ وَ لِدِ آدَمَ مِنَ النَّبِيِّينَ وَ الشُّهَدَاءِ وَ الصَّالِحِينَ. وَ لَوْلَا هَؤُلَاءِ لَمْ يَخْلُقِ اللَّهُ السَّمَاءَ وَ لَا الْأَرْضَ، وَ لَا مَا بَيْنَهُمَا. مِمَّا انْضَافَ إِلَى ذَلِكَ مِنْ دَعَاوِيهِ، أَنَّهُ طَلَعَ إِلَى سَبْعِ سَمَوَاتٍ، بَيْنَ كُلِّ سَمَاءٍ إِلَى سَمَاءٍ مَسِيرَةَ خَمْسِمِائَةِ عَامٍ. وَ رَأَى فِيهَا مِنَ الْعَجَائِبِ مَا أَنَا ذَاكَرُهُ فِي كِتَابِي هَذَا فِي مَوْضِعِهِ إِنْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى. وَ كَيْفَ يَنْبَغِي لِمَنْ كَانَ فِي هَذِهِ الْحَالَ الْجَلِيلَةِ، وَ ظَهَرَتْ لَهُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ وَ الرَّسُلُ، وَ خَاطَبَهُ اللَّهُ شَفَاهاً، وَ وُضِعَ يَدُهُ بَيْنَ كَتْفَيْهِ حَتَّى وَجَدَ بَرُودَتَهَا فِي ثَدْيَيْهِ - عَلَى زَعْمِهِ الْحَالَ - أَنْ يَكُونَ شَاكِّاً فِي

[على || صراحاً] CA [صرحاً، || بإبطاله] A [وبطلانه] 2 غيرتم A [و || غيرت] A [تغيَّرت] C [وإن] 1
A [يقرؤون] || فصل] A [فأسأل] 3 فمما C [وإن] A [وإن] A [القرآن] C [وإن] C
[العقول] || يتدبروا أولو A [أولياء] || يسأل] A [يسأل] C [فقد] 4 تغيير A [تغير] || عن A [من] || يقرون
كذابين C [كاذبين] 7 في عقب ذلك على الله A [عقب] 6 بعد موس قد غيرت A [موسى] 5 إلى A
دعايه C [دعاويه] 11 سيولد C [ولد] 10 يتدعيها C [يدعيها] || الذي A [التي] 9 [الكلام] C [الكلام] 8
[وخطاب] || تعالى A [تعالى] 13 إنشاء CA [شاء] || ذكر ذلك في ذكر المعراج A [عام] || C18f [مسيرة] 12
بيدته A; بندرته C [ثدييه] || برود A [برودتها] || دخل وحل C [وجد] 14 خاطبها A

[18] Now if one of them says: “The Torah was altered after Moses’ death and the Gospel after Christ’s ascension,” then this is the Qur’an’s answer which annuls it clearly, because it claims about God that he said in the Qur’an in sura “Jonah”: “If you are in doubt about what we have revealed to you, then ask those who have been reading the Scripture before you.”³⁷ If what he says about altering the Torah and the Gospel is true – and they are lies – then he has brought an accusation against God for commanding [Muḥammad] to ask the liars. How can those intellectuals not comprehend this clear impossibility! For he claims that God informed him that the Torah had been altered after Moses and likewise the Gospel, and they are lies. Then after that he brought an accusation against God for commanding [Muḥammad] that if he was in doubt about what He revealed to him, [then] he should ask those who were reading the Scripture before him, and they are the Christians and the Jews. How can it be that, according to him, they are liars at the beginning of the conversation and they are telling the truth at the end of the conversation!

[19] How can one who proclaims prophethood express doubt in God with these false assertions which he claims, since he says: “I am the master of the children of Adam, among the prophets and martyrs and the righteous.”³⁸ And were it not for him, “God would not have created the Heavens or the earth or anything between them.”³⁹ What was added to his claims was that he ascended to seven Heavens, [and the distance] between each Heaven was a five-hundred-year march.⁴⁰ He saw some of the miracles in it, which I will mention in my book in another place, God willing. How can [Muḥammad], who was in this glorious state, and the angels and the messengers appeared to him, and he spoke to God directly, and [God] put his hand between his shoulders until

37 Q 10:94. Throughout the treatise, Ibn Rajā’ uses the first line of a sura for its title.

38 This reference is based upon a hadith on the authority of Abū Hurayra on the virtues of Muḥammad: “I will be the leader of the sons of Adam on the Day of Resurrection.” See the Arabic text and English translation in Muslim ibn al-Ḥajjāj al-Qushayrī, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim: English Translation of Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, 7 vols., ed. Abū Ṭāhir Zubayr ‘Alī Za’ī, Nasiruddin Khattab, Huda Khattab, and Abū Khalīl (Riyadh: Darussalam, 2007), 6:134 (Book 43, #5940). The hadith is also found in the collection (Arabic text and English translation) of Abū Dāwūd, *English Translation of Sunan Abu Dawud*, 5 vols., ed. Abū Ṭāhir Zubayr ‘Alī Za’ī (Riyadh: Darussalam, 2008), 5:195 (Book 39 #4673).

39 Q 32:4.

40 The scribe notes that this incident is alluded to in al-Mirāj Q 17:1. This topic is analyzed in chapter 30 later.

الله؟ فإن لم يؤمن بهذا كله، ولا اطمانت نفسه إليه حتى أمره الله أن يسأل الكذابين فيزول حينئذ الشك عنه، فهذا عجز وجهل. وإن كانوا هؤلاء ليسوا بكذابين وإنما هم صادقون، ولصدقهم أمره أن يسألهم، فحينئذ تقوى نفسه الضعيفة، فلم نسبهم إلى الكذب وآتهم غير ما هم به متمسكون من التوراة والإنجيل؟

[٢٠] ودليل أحسن من هذا يدل على اضطراب قوله، حيث يقول في سورة المائدة لما كان اليهود يحتكمون إليه. وذلك أن أبا هريرة - واسمه عبد شمس، ويقال عبد نهم، ويقال جندب - جعله محمد يقضي بين الناس. فجاءه اليهود مختصمين. فقال: لا أحكم بينكم حتى أسأل محمد، فجاء إليه. فقال له: إن اليهود قد جاؤوني محتكين ولست أحكم بينهم إلا بإذنك. فقال له: قد أنزل الله علي في سورة المائدة في شأن اليهود يقول: فَإِنْ جَاءُوكَ فَاحْكُم بَيْنَهُمْ أَوْ أَعْرِضْ عَنْهُمْ وَإِنْ تُعْرِضْ عَنْهُمْ فَلَنْ يَضُرُّوكَ شَيْئًا وَإِنْ حَكَمْتَ فَاحْكُم بَيْنَهُم بِالْقِسْطِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُقْسِطِينَ. وكيف يحكمونك وعندهم التوراة وفيها حكم الله؟ وقد شهد محمد بذلك، أن التوراة فيها حكم الله في وقته، وآنها لم تغير. فإن ادعيت أنها غيرت بعد موت موسى، فقد كذبتكم الله تعالى في قوله. وقد ذكر في وقت محمد أن فيها حكم الله أيضاً. فبطل الآن قولكم أن التوراة والإنجيل مغيران.

[٢١] ودليل آخر حيث يقول في سورة الحجر: إِنَّا نَحْنُ نَزَّلْنَا الذِّكْرَ وَإِنَّا لَهُ لَحَافِظُونَ. والتوراة والإنجيل

C [على] 5 متمسكين C [متمسكون] || ينسبهم C [نسبهم] 3 الله C omits [الله] || نفسك C [نفسه] 1 فلان C [محمد] || فهم CA [نهم] || هم يرده C [هريرة] 6 صورة A [سورة] || إطراب C [اضطراب] || ما adds C [عنهم] 9 صورة CA [سورة] C 18^v [فقال] 8 له A omits [له] || فلان C [محمد]، || أسأل A [أسأل] 7 A in margin المقسطين [المقسطين] || بالحق وقيل C adds [بالمقسط] 10 يضرك C [يضرك] || omits بذلك A [بذلك]، || فلان C [محمد] 11 وفيها C [وفيها] || فكيف A [وكيف] || وارده على هذه الحكم في كتابهم [محمد] || C omits [وقت] || كذبتهم A [كذبتهم] 12 تغيرت A [غيرت] || نغيرها C [تغير] || أننا C [وأنها] || محمد C [سورة] 14 إنها C [أن] || ماماديوس C gives Muhammad's name in a transliterated Coptic form: حافظون C [لحافظون] || نحن C [وإننا] || صورة

[Muḥammad] felt its coolness in his chest⁴¹ – according to his impossible allegation – have had doubts about God? If he did not believe all of this, and his soul was not comforted until God commanded him to ask the liars to remove his doubts at that time, then this is weakness and ignorance. If these [Jews and Christians] were not liars but they were telling the truth, and it was for their sincerity that [God] commanded him to ask them so it would strengthen his weak soul at that time, then why did he associate them with lying and [claim] that they altered what they embrace from the Torah and the Gospel?

[20] There is a proof even better than this which demonstrates the confusion of his claims, where it says in sura “The Table”⁴² that the Jews appealed to him for a legal decision. That matter was before Abū Hurayra⁴³ – whose name was ‘Abd Shams or it is said ‘Abd Nahm⁴⁴ or it is said “Grasshopper” – whom Muḥammad appointed to judge between the people. So the Jews opposing each other came to him. He said: “I cannot judge between you until I ask Muḥammad,” so he went to him. Then he said to him: “The Jews have come as litigants and I will not judge between them without your permission.” He said to him: “God has revealed to me in sura “The Table” concerning the Jews, saying, ‘If they come to you, then judge between them or turn away from them. If you turn away from them, they will never harm you at all. If you judge between them, judge with equity, for God loves those who act with equity. How can they ask you for judgment when they have the Torah and God’s judgment is in it?’”⁴⁵ Muḥammad had already testified to that, namely that the Torah had God’s judgment in his time and that it was not altered. So if you claim that it was altered after Moses’ death, then you have made God into a liar in his words. It already mentioned in Muḥammad’s time that [the Torah] contains God’s judgment as well. So now, your claim that the Torah and the Gospel are altered is invalidated.

[21] Another proof is where it says in surat “al-Ḥijr”: “It is we who revealed the reminder and we will indeed be its guardian.”⁴⁶ For you, the Torah and the

41 He is referring to a hadith relating a dream Muḥammad had in which this event took place, according to Ibn ‘Abbās. See al-Tirmidhī, *Jāmi‘ at-Tirmidhī*, 5:540–541 (Book 44, #3233). See also the text and translation in Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal, *English Translation of Musnad Imam Ahmad bin Hanbal*, 3 vols., ed. Nasiruddin Khattab and Huda Khattab (Riyadh: Darus-salam, 2012), 3:238–239 (#3484).

42 Q 5.

43 On Abū Hurayra al-Dawsī (d. 678/681), see *ET*², 1:129.

44 Both manuscripts give his nickname as ‘Abd al-Fahm, or “Servant of Understanding.”

45 Q 5:42–43.

46 Q 15:9.

عندكم هما الذكر المنزل. فإن كان ذلك قد غير فقد بطل حفظ الله لهم. وكذبتهم الله - تعالى - في قوله: وَإِنَّا لَهُ لَحَافِظُونَ. فإن كان ذلك غير مغير ورجعتم إلى الحق وذعنتم، فإننا لم نجد لصاحبكم فيها ذكراً ولا ما يستدل على نبوته ولا غيرها، إلا ما قاله سيدنا المسيح - تعالى عز وجل - في الإنجيل الطاهر حيث يقول: تحرزوا من الأنبياء الكذبة، الذين يأتونكم لا بسين جلود الحملان، وهم في الباطن يشبهون الذئاب الضارية. ومن قبل أفعالهم تعرفونهم. وقال - جلّ وعلى - في الإنجيل أيضاً أنّ الأنبياء الكذبة يقولون له يوم القيامة: ربنا ربنا، أليس بإسمك كما تنبأ، وبإسمك كما نخرج الشياطين؟ فيقول لهم: الحق أقول لكم أنّي ما أعرفكم، تباعدوا عني يا عمال الإثم. وقال - جلّ اسمه - في موضع آخر: دين الخنفاء لا تسلكون ومدن السامرة لا تدخلون. فأعلمنا أنّ دين الخنفاء كدين السامرة، وحذرنا من دين الخنفاء كما حذرنا من دين السامرة واليهودية.

- 10 [٢٢] مما انضاف إلى ذلك من إعلامه - عز وجل - أنّ يحيى ابن زكريّا خاتم الأنبياء. ولا نبي بعده، لأنّ الأنبياء أربعة وعشرين نبياً، أولهم موسى وآخرهم يحيى ابن زكريّا. فن هؤلاء الأنبياء من خاطب الله شفاهاً ومنهم من أوحى إليه بملائكته الأطهار، ومنهم من نطق بروح القدس. فتكلّموا على

[وذعنتم || لم غير C] مغير || بحافظون C [لحافظون 2 أكذبتهم CA وكذبتهم || لهما A] لهم || A omits [كان 1 C] تحرزوا 4 A omits [عزّ || يسوع C] سيدنا || به A [يستدل 3 أولاً C] ولا || ادعنتم له A C [وعلى || يعرفونهم C] تعرفونهم || الظارية A [الضارية 5 لابسون A] لابسين C [19^r من] || التحرزوا A [تباعدوا || لا بحق ما A] أنّي 7 فاقول A [فيقول || أخرجنا C] وبإسمك || تنبينا C [تنبأ 6 أعلا A] [تدخلون || تسلكوا A] تسلكون 8 الحنيفية A [الخنفاء || سبيل C] دين || الخلطية A [الإثم || تباعدوا C] [من] || ومن C [من] 10 A omits [السامرة 9 الحنيفية A] [الخنفاء || الحنيفية A] [الخنفاء || تدخلوا C] [أنّ] || فاتكلّموا C [فتكلّموا 12 يوحنا C] يحيى || نبي A [نبياً 11

Gospel are the revealed reminder.⁴⁷ If that has been altered, then it has nullified God's protection for them. You made a liar of God in his statement, "We will indeed be its guardian."⁴⁸ If that [Scripture] was not altered, and you returned to the truth and would yield to it, then [you would acknowledge that] we did not find any mention of your companion in it nor that which can establish the proof of his prophethood or anything else; only what our Lord Christ says in the pure Gospel, where he says: "Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing but inwardly are ravenous wolves. You will know them by their actions."⁴⁹ The exalted and elevated one also said in the Gospel that on the Day of Resurrection, the false prophets will say to him: "Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name?" Then he will declare to them, "Truly I tell you, I never knew you; go away from me, you evil-doers."⁵⁰ And he said – exalted be his name – in another place: "Do not follow the religion of the *Ḥunafā'*⁵¹ and do not enter the cities of the Samaritans." He told us that the religion of the *Ḥunafā'* is like the Samaritans' religion, and he told us to be wary of the religion of the *Ḥunafā'* just as he told us to be wary of the Samaritans' and Jews' religions.

[22] Adding to that, he told us that John the son of Zechariah was the seal of the prophets.⁵² There is no prophet after him, because the prophets are twenty-four in number, the first of them was Moses and the last of them was John the son of Zechariah. Some of these prophets talked to God directly, and some of them received [God's message] through his pure angels, and some of them spoke through the Holy Spirit. They foretold the incarnation of our Lord

47 The title of *al-dhikr* given to earlier scriptures such as the Torah and Gospel as a "recollection" or "remembrance" that the Qur'an recalls in its verses is well known. See for instance Griffith, *The Bible in Arabic*, 54–96.

48 The Latin version also adds: "Therefore God always preserved the testimony of His scripture among His faithful before Muḥammad and will preserve it incorrupt after. Indeed how could the Christians and the Jews, who oppose each other in the extreme – both the former and the latter – everywhere have falsified their holy scripture in the same way (and these falsifiers before God stand in the hatred of Muḥammad), while dispersed throughout the world by the decree of the centuries? For either this happened secretly, and some codex would have remained intact, or it was publicly well-known, and these things would not have been concealed from the histories of the nations." See Burman, *Religious Polemic*, 254–257.

49 Matthew 7:15.

50 Matthew 7:22–23.

51 Matthew 10:5. The Arabic word *ḥunafā'* has a double meaning here. It refers to pagan religions of the ancient gentiles, but also refers in coded terms to Muslims.

52 Note that Ibn Rajā' appropriates this Islamic title for Muḥammad (*khātām al-anbiyā'*) for use in his Christian theological argument.

تجسّد سيّدنا المسيح من العذرى الطاهرة، وحملها به وولادتها له ومقامه بين الناس، وما جرى من أعدائه اليهود الملاعين إليه، من صلبه وموته وطعنه ودفنه وقيامته وطلوعه. فتكلّم كلّ واحد منهم بما اختصّه الله به، ما لا يغادر بعضه بعضاً، ولا ينقض بعضه بعضاً. وكان - تبارك وتعالى - يفعل ذلك شيئاً بعد شيء ليكلل جميع النّبوات كلّها.

- 5 [٢٣] كمثل الملك إذا أراد أن يسير، سارت جنوده بين يديه. فيخبرون أنّ الملك سيأتي في آخرهم. فإذا ساروا بأجمعهم، أتى الملك في آخرهم يحقّق قولهم. وهكذا سيّدنا المسيح تنبّت الأنبياء عليه بأجمعهم. ثمّ أتى في آخرهم، فحقّق نبواتهم. ثمّ انقطعت النّبوات بعده. لا يظهر نبي له آية ولا دلالة إلاّ الأنبياء الكذبة الذين خبرنا بهم سيّدنا المسيح.

الفصل الثالث

- 10 [٢٤] فلما لم يكن لصاحبهم كتاب يشهد على نبوته ولا نبي يبشّر به، ولا دلالة أظهرها، أشهر السيف. وادّعى النّبوة بعد أن كان كافراً يدين بدين قومه الكفّار أربعين سنة. وقتل الأوّل فالأوّل من قومه ومن غيرهم. وقال: أمرني الله أن أقاتل الناس بالسيف حتى يشهدوا أنّ لا إله إلاّ الله، وأني رسول الله. فإذا قالوا ذلك منعوني دماءهم وأموالهم، إلاّ حقّاً، وحسابهم على الله. يريد بقوله هذا أنّ مراده تصحيح الملك، وأن يقبلوا ما دعاهم إليه. فحينئذ لا يكون له على دماءهم ولا أموالهم سبيل، لا يبالي كان ذلك بنية أو بغير نية. ألا تسمع إلى قوله: وحسابهم على الله يريد في النية. فلما دخل ذلك في عقول
- 15

[به] 3 واحداً واحداً C [منهم] 19٧ C [كلّ] A omits [اليهود] 2 جراً A [جرى] || يسوع C [سيّدنا] 1
 C adds [سيّدنا] || والتحقّق C [يحقّق] C omits [الملك] 6 تنقيض C [ينقض] || ما A [ما] || C omits
 دالة C [دلالة] || آية A omits [لا] A omits [لا] || يحقّق A فتتحقّق C [حقّق] 7 C omits [عليه] || يسوع
 A [يبشّر] || له نبوة C [نبوته] || لصاحبك C [لصاحبهم] 10 أخبرنا A [خبرنا] || الكذابين A [الكذبة] 8
 C [من] || منهم A [فالأوّل] || تدين A [يدين] || أنه C [أن] 11 شهر A [أشهر] || بل C adds [أظهرها] || بشر
 C [إذا] 13 لا يشهدوا C [يشهدوا] || الناس A adds in margin [الناس] || C omits [ومن] 12 قوله C
 C omits [ذلك] 15 بحقّها: Ed. in hadith report: بحصينا C [حقّاً] 20٢

Christ from the pure Virgin, and her pregnancy with him and her birth-giving and his life with the people, and what happened to him from his enemies the accursed Jews, from his crucifixion and his death and his piercing and his burial and his resurrection and his ascension. Every one of them foretold what God favored him with, which was perfectly complete, and they did not contradict one another. The blessed and exalted one accomplished these things one after another in order to fulfill all of the prophecies.

[23] An example of that is if a king wanted to march, his troops would go before him. So they would announce that the king is going to come after them. When they march all together, the king would come after them and confirm that their statement was true. In the same fashion, all the prophets prophesied about our Lord Christ. Then he came after them so he confirmed their prophecies. Then the prophecies ceased after him. No prophet will appear with a sign or a proof except for the false prophets about whom our Lord Christ informed us.

Chapter 3⁵³

[24] When their companion did not have a book testifying to his prophethood and no prophet foretelling of him and he revealed no proof, he wielded the sword. He claimed prophethood after being an unbeliever, adhering to the religion of his unbelieving people for forty years. One by one he killed those of his people and others. He said: "God commanded me to fight people with the sword until they testify that there is no god but God and that I am God's messenger. If they say that, they will safeguard their blood and their possessions from me (except for a right that is due), and their judgment belongs to God."⁵⁴ By saying this, [Muḥammad] shows his intention is the rectification of rule, and that they should accept what he asks of them regarding it. Therefore, he would not have a way to [obtain] their blood or their possessions, not caring whether [their profession of faith] was sincere or not. Can't you listen to his words: "and

53 Not all chapters are given subject headings. This chapter is on the topic of the violence of Muḥammad and his followers. The Latin version gives it the title: "That [Muḥammad] gathered people by means of the sword and false visions." See Burman, *Religious Polemic*, 260–261.

54 This hadith is found in the canonical versions belonging to Muslim and al-Bukhārī, although without the reference to a sword. See the traditions in Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, 1:116–119 (Book 1, #125–131).

النَّاسِ، قَالَ: مَنْ قَالَ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ دَخَلَ الْجَنَّةَ وَإِنْ زَنَا وَإِنْ سَرَقَ. وَأَمْرٌ مُنَادِيًا يَنَادِي بِذَلِكَ. فَدَخَلَ ذَلِكَ فِي عَقْلِ الْجَهْمَالِ مِنْهُمْ. وَأَسْلَمَ عِنْدَ ذَلِكَ خَلْقٌ كَثِيرٌ.

[٢٥] جَاءَ إِلَيْهِ أَبُو الدَّرْدَاءِ، وَاسْمُهُ عُوَيْرٌ، وَقَالَ: يَا مُحَمَّدُ، مَنْ قَالَ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ دَخَلَ الْجَنَّةَ، وَإِنْ زَنَا وَإِنْ سَرَقَ؟ قَالَ: نَعَمْ يَا أَبَا الدَّرْدَاءِ. وَإِنْ شَرِبَ الْخَمْرَ؟ قَالَ: نَعَمْ. وَإِنْ زَنَا أَوْ سَرَقَ وَإِنْ شَرِبَ خَمْرًا وَإِنْ قَتَلَ؟ قَالَ: نَعَمْ، وَإِنْ رَغِمَ أَنْفُ أَبِي الدَّرْدَاءِ. وَمَنْ هَاهُنَا قَالَتْ طَوَائِفُ مِنْهُمْ: إِنَّمَا اللَّهُ عَلَيْنَا، أَنْ نَقْرَأَهُ بِالْوَحْدَانِيَّةِ وَهَذَا - مُحَمَّدٌ - بِالنَّبِيَِّّةِ. ثُمَّ لَا نَبَالِي بَعْدَ هَذَا مَا صَنَعْنَا مِنَ الزَّانِ وَالسَّرِقَةِ وَالسُّكْرِ مِنَ الْخَمْرِ وَالْقَتْلِ. وَإِنَّمَا نَهَانَا اللَّهُ عَنْ هَذَا كُلِّهِ، عَلَى سَبِيلِ السَّتْرَةِ، لَا عَلَى سَبِيلِ الْحَتْمِ اللَّازِمِ. وَأَخَذُوا بِهَذَا الْحَدِيثِ، الَّذِي ذَكَرْنَاهُ، عَنْ أَبِي الدَّرْدَاءِ.

[٢٦] هَذِهِ الطَّوَائِفُ يَقُولُونَ أَيْضًا أَنَّ اللَّهَ خَلَقَ الدُّنْيَا كُلَّهَا خَلْقًا وَاحِدًا، لَا دَمَ وَحْدَهُ. فَلَمَّا مَاتَ آدَمُ حَصَلَتْ الدُّنْيَا بَعْدَهُ لَبْنِيهِ، يَتَقَاسَمُونَهَا بَيْنَهُم بِالسُّوِيَّةِ. وَسَنَوُا الْمِيرَاثَ عَلَى هَذَا السَّبِيلِ. فَمَا كَانَ فِي يَدِ أَحَدِهِمْ وَلَيْسَ ذَلِكَ فِي يَدِ غَيْرِهِ مِنْ مَالٍ أَوْ زَوْجَةٍ أَوْ غَيْرِ ذَلِكَ، فَلَا جُنْيَةَ أَنْ يَأْخُذَ ذَلِكَ مِنْهُ، إِمَّا بِرِضَاهُ أَوْ بِغَيْرِ رِضَاهِهِ أَوْ بِسُرْقَةٍ أَوْ بِقَتْلِ كُلِّ ذَلِكَ يَحْتَجُّونَ فِيهِ بِحَدِيثِ أَبِي الدَّرْدَاءِ. فَاسْتَوَى لَهُ مَا أَرَادَ، لَمَّا وَجَدَ عَقُولًا دَنِيَّةً مِثْلَ هَذَا لَا يُمَيِّزُونَ وَلَا يَعْقِلُونَ.

[٢٧] وَلَقَدْ بَلَّغْنِي أَنَّ عُمَرَ ابْنَ الْخَطَّابِ، لَمَّا فَتَحَ مَدَائِنَ كَسْرَى، وَجَدَ فِي خَزَائِنِهِمْ وَمَطَابِحِهِمْ الرِّقَاقَ.

فَلَمْ تَعْرِفْ ذَلِكَ مِنْهُمْ طَائِفَةً، وَقَالُوا: نَرْتَقِعُ بِهَذَا ثِيَابَنَا. وَلَمْ يَعْلَمُوا أَنَّهُ خَبْزِي يُؤْكَلُ. فَلَمَّا جَفَّ فِي أَيْدِيهِمْ وَعَلِمُوا

لَهُمُ النَّاسِ قَالَ مَنْ قَالَ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ دَخَلَ الْجَنَّةَ وَإِنْ زَنَا وَإِنْ سَرَقَ وَأَمْرٌ مُنَادِيًا يَنَادِي [النَّاسِ] 1
 C [وقال] عوثرم C [عوير] الدرذاء C [الدرداء] 3 عقول الناس C [عقل] 2 بذلك فدخل ذلك في عقل
 زنا وسرق وإن شرب خمر A [وإن] 5 Comits [نعم] C [وإن] 4 فلان C [محمد] A فقا
 A [محمد] والطاعة C [بالوحدانية] 6 Comits [أن] Comits [منهم] A [أرغم] ابن عمر الف C [وإن] A
 [اللازم] A [النزلة] A [السيرة] على C [عن] A [نهانا] 7 السرقة A [والسرقة] ينال C [نبالي] A
 Comits [السبيل] 10 Comits [خلقاً] وهذا C [هذه] 9 عن A [عن] 8 Comits [بهذا] A
 عقلاً دينه A [دنيّة] 13 A [فيه] A [يحتجون] A [يحتجون] A [أما] A [أو] 12 الميراث على هذا السبيل
 به C [يعلموا] A [يعرف] 15 وجدوا A [وجد] C [كسرة] C [كسرى] 14

their judgment belongs to God,” meaning [their] sincerity. When that entered the people’s minds, he said: “Whoever said there is no god but God enters Paradise, even if he commits adultery and steals.” He commanded an announcer to proclaim that. So that entered into the minds of the ignorant among them. Many people entered Islam on account of that.

[25] Then Abū al-Dardā’, whose name was ‘Uwaymir, came to him, and said: “Muḥammad, whoever says that there is no god but God will enter Paradise, even if he commits adultery and if he steals?” He replied: “Yes, Abū al-Dardā’.” “Even if he drinks wine?” He replied, “Yes.” “Even if he commits adultery or he steals or he drinks wine or he commits murder?” He replied: “Yes, and that is even if you don’t like it, Abū al-Dardā’.”⁵⁵ From here a group among them said: “God only requires of us that we ascribe monotheism to him and prophethood for this one – Muḥammad. Then we do not care after this about what we engage in: fornication, and theft, and getting drunk from wine, and murder. God only forbade us from all of that as a way of protection, not as a way of required obligation.” They took this hadith, which we have mentioned, from Abū al-Dardā’.

[26] These groups say as well that God created all of the world at one time, for Adam alone. When Adam died, the world belonged to his children after him, dividing it between themselves equally. They introduced inheritance in this way. Whatever belonged to one of them and did not belong to another one, such as money or a wife or other things, then it was not a crime that he take that from him, whether he approved or not, by theft or murder. All of that they argued based on Abū al-Dardā’'s hadith. So he got what he wanted, when he found lowly minds like this that could not make distinctions and were irrational.

[27] I learned that ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb, when he conquered Khosrau’s Ctesiphon,⁵⁶ found flatbread in their storehouses and their kitchens. But a group of them did not recognize that, and they said: “We will patch our clothes with this.” They did not know that it was edible bread. When it became dry in their hands, and they learned that it was bread, they marveled at that. This hadith is

55 In the canonical hadith collections, this saying is attributed to Abū Dharr, another one of Muḥammad’s companions. See Juynboll, *ECH*, 549; and the text and translation in Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, 1:181 (Book 1, #272–273). Abū al-Dardā’ (d. 652; see *ET*² 1:113–114) and Abū Dharr were both companions of Muḥammad to whom hadith are ascribed and the similarities of their names either led to scribal confusion of their names or the historicity of the individuals may actually represent a single person who has been conflated by later authors into two people.

56 Literally, “al-Madā’in.”

أنه خبز، تعجبوا من ذلك. وهذا حديث لا خفاء به. حدثني به الحسن بن إسماعيل، قال حدثني أحمد ابن مروان المالكي، قال حدثنا الرياشي عن الأصمعي عن حدثه أن: عمر ابن الخطاب لما فتح مدائن كسرى، وساق الحديث الذي ذكرناه. فمن كان عقله بهذا الوصف، لم يستعظم له أن يجيء إليه رجل بغير دلالة ولا بينة فيقول له: أنا نبي فيصدقني على ما قال.

- [٢٨] ثم أتى بعد هؤلاء القوم المغفلين، قوم فهما أفاضل العقول. فمنهم من طبع على قلبه كسائر من مضى من حكام الكفار، وعبدة الأوثان، والهند الذين هم إلى وقتنا هذا يعبدون الأصنام. وكل صنف من هؤلاء الذين ذكرناهم لهم من الحكمة المتقدمة. وآثارهم باقية في الأرض إلى وقتنا هذا. يعجز كل من في عصرنا هذا عن تدبير ذلك، فلا يأتي بجزء منه. ولا يكون ذلك إلا من عقل باهر، وحكمة معجزة. قد كان أحدهم يعمد إلى صنم من ذهب أو حجر أو فضة أو غير ذلك، فيعبده ويسجد له. ويقرب له القرابين، ويدعو الناس إلى عبادته. فيقتل من امتنع من ذلك قتلاً. وقوم كانوا يعبدون البقر وغير ذلك من أنواع الأنعام.

عمن || الاعصمي A [الأصمعي || الرقاشي C [الرياشي 2 ابن حمدان A adds [أحمد || اسمعيل A [إسماعيل 1 C [القوم 5 رجلاً C [رجل || يستعظم C [يستعظم || كسرة C [كسرى، 3 C 21^r [مدائن || عنمن C [حجر || كانت C [كان 9 بنجر C [بجزء || كلهن A [من 8 عقله A [قلبه || منهم C adds [قوم || القول الأنواع C [أنواع 11 Manuscript A ends here. [ذلك || حجر أو ذهب

quite recognizable. He reported it to me – al-Ḥasan ibn Ismā‘īl,⁵⁷ reporting from Aḥmad ibn Marwān al-Mālikī,⁵⁸ reporting from al-Riyāshī⁵⁹ from al-Aṣma‘ī,⁶⁰ from whoever told him, that: “Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb, when he conquered Khosrau’s Ctesiphon,” and the rest of the hadith which we have already mentioned. Anyone whose mind fits this description [above], would not regard it as remarkable that a man would come to him without proof or evidence and says to him: “I am a prophet,” so he thinks what he said is true.

[28] Then, after those gullible people, came a people with more intelligence. Among them were those whose hearts were hardened like the rest of the ancient, wise unbelievers,⁶¹ and the worshippers of idols, and the Hindus who worship idols until our time. Every type of those whom we have mentioned is in possession of advanced wisdom. Their legacies have endured upon earth until our time.⁶² Everyone in our time is incapable of understanding this, and he cannot come up with part of it. That can only come from a brilliant mind and marvelous wisdom. One of them will approach an idol of gold or stone or silver or other such things, then he will worship it and bow to it. He will make offerings to it, and he will call people to worship it. Then he will kill whoever abstains from that.⁶³ Other people have been worshipping cows and other types of cattle.

57 Abū Muḥammad al-Ḥasan ibn Ismā‘īl al-Ḍarrāb (or al-Ḍurrāb, 925–1002) was an Egyptian traditionist and a student of Aḥmad ibn Marwān al-Mālikī al-Dīnawarī. Ibn Rajā’ would have been in the same circle of his students, including his son ‘Abd al-‘Azīz, Aḥmad ibn ‘Alī Ḥishām al-Muqri’, Rashā’ ibn Naẓīf al-Dimashqī (d. 1052), and even briefly al-Ḍarrāb’s contemporary al-Dāraqutnī. See Sezgin, *GAS*, 213; al-Dhahabī, *Tārīkh al-Islām*, 27:265.

58 Aḥmad ibn Marwān al-Mālikī al-Dīnawarī (d. 944/5) was a judge in Old Cairo and his father was the well-known Ibn Qutayba (d. 889). The other manuscript has Aḥmad ibn Ḥamdān ibn Surwān al-Mālikī, who was an Egyptian judge in Aswan.

59 Abū al-Faḍl al-‘Abbās ibn Faraj al-Riyāshī (d. 871) was a traditionist and grammarian from Basra. His lines of transmission are typically connected with al-Aṣma‘ī. See Sezgin, *GAS*, 18.

60 Al-Aṣma‘ī (d. 826/8) was a traditionist and grammarian from Basra who flourished in Baghdad. See *ET*², 1:717.

61 Ibn Rajā’ is referring to the Greco-Roman tradition here and its intellectual and architectural achievements.

62 The word here connotes the effects, or remnants, of past civilizations. Here he is likely referring to the remnants of the Roman and ancient Egyptian learning and monuments in Egypt.

63 This seems to refer to the persecution of Christians by the Romans in the pre-Constantinian era.

[٢٩] فإذا ذكر لهم ذاكر عبادة الله - عزّ وجلّ - وأراهم من إحياء الموتى وإبراء الأكمه والأبرص، ما أنا لوصفنا ذلك شيء بعد شيء، لطال فيه الشرح، وهم في ذلك على لغطهم وعنوهم. وما لقي منهم من صلبهم له بعد ضربهم له، وتفلمهم في وجهه، ثمّ قبروه، وقام بقوة لاهوته. وعلّموا بذلك فغيّبوا الأمر وغالطوا أنفسهم ولم يدعنا إلى الحقّ. ثمّ الحواريون من بعده، مما لقيوا منهم ومن غيرهم. وهم مع هذا يظهرن الآيات والعجائب من إقامة الموتى وغير ذلك مما يطول له الشرح. 5

[٣٠] وهكذا عقل مخالفينهم في دينهم - لهؤلاء الذين ذكرناهم. ومنهم من ميّز بعقله فعلم أنّ هذا الدين لا أصل له. فأقام في أوساطهم، يدين بدينهم رياءً ويدين لله - فيما بينه وبينه - بدين النصرانية.

[٣١] منهم معاوية ابن أبي سفيان، هو إمام المسلمين والمسّمى عندهم أمير المؤمنين. قد توارث الأخبار والأحاديث، الذين لا يشكّون في صحتها، أنّه مات نصرانياً. قال حدّثني به بفمه حدّثني بصحّة ذلك أبو بشر محمّد ابن أحمد ابن حماد الدّولابي قال حدّثني محمّد ابن جعفر، قال حدّثنا محمّد ابن بشّار 10

المثلمين C [المسلمين 8 الله C [لله 7 عتوهم C [وعنوهم || لغتهم C [لغظهم 2 C 21^v و] || اذكر C [ذكر 1

فلان C [محمّد || الدولاني C [الدّولابي || أحمد ابن بشير C [بشر 10

[29] If someone mentioned to them the worship of God, and showed them the reviving of the dead, and the healing of the blind and the lepers – which were I to describe one thing after another, then the explanation about it would take a long time – their own nonsense and their arrogance in that matter would remain.⁶⁴ [Consider] what [Jesus] underwent, starting with their crucifying him after beating him and spitting in his face, then they buried him and he rose by the power of his divinity. They learned about that but they ignored the matter and they deceived themselves and they would not submit to the truth. Then the disciples after him underwent [this persecution] from them and from others. Despite this, the signs and miracles of the resurrection from the dead and other such things were revealed, which would take a long time to explain.

[30] Therefore [the disciples'] opponents in religion – those whom I have mentioned before – came to their senses. Some of them could discern by reason, and knew that this religion [of Islam] had no basis to it. [They] remained in their midst, professing their religion hypocritically and professing to God – privately for himself – the Christian religion.⁶⁵

[31] Among them was Mu'āwiya ibn Abī Sufyān, who was the imam of the Muslims and whom they called the Commander of the Believers. The inherited accounts and hadith reports, of which they do not doubt their veracity, [reveal] that he died a Christian.⁶⁶ I heard it from his mouth.⁶⁷ He reported that to me

64 Here Ibn Rajā' is pointing out that the Greco-Romans, even though they possessed advanced learning and wisdom, still rejected the miracles and clear evidence for Jesus Christ in the past, and so that can happen in the present as well. In other words, there are gullible people who will believe anything, including what is false, and then there are wise people who will not believe in anything, including what is true.

65 Ibn Rajā' is referring to the existence of crypto-Christians. He may have known some crypto-Christians personally, given the fact that he was a convert himself and moved in these circles.

66 On a Christian-friendly account of Mu'āwiya's visit to Jerusalem where he prayed at Christian holy sites, see the Syriac Maronite Chronicle in Andrew Palmer, Sebastian Brock, and Robert Hoyland, eds., *The Seventh Century in the West-Syrian Chronicles* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1993), 31. Mu'āwiya had a Syriac Orthodox Christian wife, the mother of his son and successor Yazīd, and generally treated Arab and Syriac Christians and their sites with tolerance according to Christian sources.

67 His source is probably Abū Muḥammad al-Ḥasan ibn Rashīq al-'Askarī (d. 980). Although no name is given for his report here, later in the work Ibn Rajā' cites a hadith from al-Dūlābī via al-Ḥasan ibn Rashīq al-'Askarī. Islamic sources confirm the fact that Ibn Rashīq's hadith reports narrated on the authority of al-Dūlābī as a transmitter. Ibn Rajā' also cited a hadith from al-'Askarī in the first chapter.

(ومحمد ابن) المثني، وقال حدثنا، شعيب عن جعفر ابن محمد الحسين ابن علي ابن أبي طالب، أنه ذات يوم مع أصحابه جالسا، فتذاكروا معاوية. فقال بعضهم: صلى الله عليه. فقال علي ابن الحسين: لا صلى الله عليك ولا عليه، ولم يؤمن بنبوّة محمد. قال: تصليّ علي من مات نصرانياً والصليب في عنقه؟ حدثني أبي، الحسين ابن علي، عن أخيه الحسن كان يرى الصليب في عنقه أكثر أوقاته في مجالسه. ولقد حدثني بعض مواليه أنه كان يراه أكثر الليل وهو مستقبل الشرق وقد صفّ يديه وجسده ومنكبيه وهو ساجد راعع. ولقد استقبلوا به القبلة عند موته. فقال لهم: حرفوا بي إلى الشرق. فقالوا له: القبلة يا أمير المؤمنين؟ فقال لهم: احرفوني إلى الشرق من حيث رأيناكم، وربنا هو رب العالمين. فهذا واحد من

22^r C [مات || فلان C [محمد || يأمن بنبت C [بنبوّة 3 جعفر ابن محمد ابن علي ابن الحسين Ed. [طالب 1

ريناكم C [رأيناكم 7

in truth from Abū Bishr Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad ibn Ḥammād al-Dūlābī,⁶⁸ who reported from Muḥammad ibn Jaʿfar,⁶⁹ who reported from Muḥammad ibn Bashshār⁷⁰ [and Muḥammad ibn] al-Muthannā,⁷¹ who reported from Shuʿayb⁷² from Jaʿfar ibn Muḥammad al-Ḥusayn ibn ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib.⁷³ One day he was sitting with his companions, and they mentioned Muʿāwiya. Some of them said, “God prayed over him.” ʿAlī ibn al-Ḥusayn said: “May God’s prayer neither be over you or him, and he did not believe in the prophethood of Muḥammad.” He said: “How can you pray for someone who died Christian with a cross upon his neck? It was reported by my father, al-Ḥusayn ibn ʿAlī from his brother al-Ḥasan who saw the cross upon his neck many times at his gatherings. It was reported by some of his servants that they saw him many nights and he would face the east, straightening his hands and his body and his shoulders while he was making kneeling prostrations. They turned him towards the *qibla* upon his deathbed.⁷⁴ But he said to them: ‘Turn me to the east’. They said to him, ‘[What about] the direction of prayer, Commander of the Believers?’ So he said to them: ‘Turn me to the east from where we saw you, for our Lord is the Lord of the world.’”⁷⁵ This is one of their leaders and their companions, and the

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- 68 Abū Bishr Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad ibn Ḥammād al-Dūlābī (d. 923), was a historian and copier and seller of books from the province of Rayy and a student of Muḥammad ibn Bashshār. He studied traditions in Syria and Iraq before he came to Egypt. He was said to be loyal to the Shīʿa traditions, as seen in the above transmission line. See Sezgin, *GAS*, 172; *ET*², 8:516.
- 69 I have not identified Ibn Jaʿfar.
- 70 Muḥammad ibn Bashshār Bundār (d. 866) was a Basran traditionist attached to the collectors al-Bukhārī, Muslim, and Abū Dāwūd; see Sezgin, *GAS*, 113–114.
- 71 Muḥammad ibn al-Muthannā (d. 866), was a Basran transmitter. The text may have originally indicated Muḥammad ibn ʿAbd Allāh ibn Muthannā al-Anṣarī, a Basran judge who died in 829/830.
- 72 I have not identified Shuʿayb.
- 73 Jaʿfar ibn Muḥammad al-Ṣādiq (d. 765), was the sixth imam in the Shīʿa tradition and considered a reliable transmitter for hadith among Sunnīs as well, including the Mālikī school. See Sezgin, *GAS*, 528–531; *ET*², 2:374.
- 74 The *qibla* is the direction of Muslim prayer, which faces toward Mecca and its Kaʿba. See the life of David of Dwin, a Muslim convert to Christianity who was martyred, for an account in which his crucifixion took place upon a cross that turned to face the east upon his death in Sahner, *Christian Martyrs under Islam*, 93–96, 250–251.
- 75 This hadith account claiming that Muʿāwiya died a Christian, with a transmission line connected with ʿAlī ibn al-Ḥusayn, was a product of anti-Umayyad Shīʿi tradition, not Christian origin. See Cook, “Apostasy from Islam: A Historical Perspective,” 262. Interestingly, this hadith made its way from Ibn Rajāʾ back into the Shīʿi tradition, where it was repeated in a footnote. There *Kitāb al-Wāḍiḥ* is attributed to John the [Muslim] Apostate Christian, and a summary of the above text follows. See Sulaymān ibn ʿAbd Allāh ibn ʿAmmār al-Baḥrānī, *al-Arab ʿin ḥadīth fi ithbāt imāmat Amir al-Muʿminīn*, 89, n. 1.

أثمتهم وأصحابهم وأمير المؤمنين، قد كان يرائيهم. وهو حدثني به المأمون - من طرق بأخبار صحيحة لا اختلاف فيها - أنه مات نصرانياً. وقد ذكر ذلك عن سعيد ابن المسيب. وهو عندهم في عداد الأنبياء. هذا الظاهر للناس سوي، لما قد خفي إليهم وأطلع عليه عالم الغيب والشهادة.

[٣٢] ومنهم من استنقذه الله من الضلالة إلى الهدى، ومن العذاب إلى المغفرة. فرحمه الله وأظهر له من عجائبه وحكمته وقدرته ما أظهره. فعابن الملكوت، فعلم حينئذ أنه على يقين من الله. ففارق 5 وطنه وماله وأحبته وبرئ من جهالته وضلالته. وأظهر معموديته وسهل عليه إراقة دمه وبدل مهجته. فعذب بأنواع العذاب وهو صابر محتسب مستبشر لما علم عند الله.

[٣٣] وكما أن بولص، الذي التعت عنه جليل والمدح لأفعاله يطول، مما كان فيه من عنوة وجهلة وغلظة. وإقدامه على قتل النصارى وهدم الكنائس، مقر بذلك في بعض رسائله. فيما هو في ذلك، أنه 10 سمع صوت من السماء يناديه وهو يقول له: شاوول شاوول لم تعاندي؟ فقال: من أنت يا رب؟ فقال: أنا يسوع المسيح الذي أنت تعانده. فتدبر - وفقك الله - قول سيدنا المسيح بلفظه وفضله وحكمته، حيث قال: أنا يسوع ولم يقول: أنا الله. ولو قال له أنا الله، لم يتبين له أنه المسيح. فلما سمع النداء من العلا يقول: أنا يسوع المسيح الذي أنت معانده، لم يخالطه في سيدنا المسيح شك وبان له سفيه وجهله. فحينئذ علم أن المسيح إلهه وتحقق ذلك. وتيقن أنه الذي كان يعانده. فخر على وجهه مغشياً عليه. وجعل

C [أنه 9 C 22^v] و || ضلالته C [وضلالته || أحبه C [وأحبته 6 ضلالة C [الضلالة 4 C [عالم 3 أدنوت

Commander of the Believers, and he was a hypocrite to them. Al-Ma'mūn⁷⁶ – who brought truthful reports without discrepancies among them – reported it to me that he died a Christian. He mentioned that according to Sa'īd ibn al-Musayyab.⁷⁷ They consider him among the prophets. [Mu'āwīya] appears good to people because of that which is hidden from them, but strongly seen by the One Who Knows the unknown and the testimony.

[32] Among them is one whom God guided from error to guidance and from torment to forgiveness.⁷⁸ God had mercy on him and revealed His wonders and His wisdom and His power to him. He saw the kingdom; therefore he was certain of God. So he left his home and his possessions and his loved ones and he renounced his ignorance and his error. He declared his baptism and it was made easy for him to shed his blood and he changed his innermost soul. He was tormented in a variety of ways while enduring happily for a reward in the hereafter for what he knew of God.

[33] Likewise Paul, whose description is honorable and praising his works would take some time, used to be in [a state of] violence and ignorance and severity. He would lead the killing of Christians and the destruction of churches, admitting that in some of his letters. While he was in that [state], he heard a voice from Heaven calling him and saying to him, "Saul, Saul, why are you opposing me?" Then he said: "Who are you, Lord?" So he said: "I am Jesus Christ whom you are opposing."⁷⁹ Examine carefully – may God guide you – the statement of our Lord Christ in his word and his favor and his wisdom, since he said: "I am Jesus," and he did not say: "I am God." If he had said to him: "I am God" he would not have revealed to him that he was Christ. So when he heard the voice from the height saying, "I am Jesus Christ, whom you are opposing," he did not have any doubt about our Lord Christ, and [Paul's] folly and his ignorance were clear to him. Therefore, he knew that Christ was his God and he confirmed that was true. He knew for certain that [Jesus Christ] was the one whom he

76 I have not identified al-Ma'mūn. It may be possible that a copyist transposed letters, changing this to al-Ma'mūn from al-Nu'mān (Muḥammad, Fatimid chief judge from 984–999) or his father (d. 974) who founded the school of Ismā'īlī law.

77 Abū Muḥammad Sa'īd ibn al-Musayyab (d. 712/3) was considered a reliable transmitter of hadith and was one of the seven jurists of Medina. He was known for his stories about 'Umar and two of his listeners were 'Umar's grandsons. See Sezgin, *GAS*, 276; *ET*², Supplement: 31.

78 Ibn Rajā's account in this paragraph and the following section on the apostle Paul are clearly autobiographical reflections on his past and present state as a convert from Islam to Christianity.

79 Acts 9:4–5.

له مكان القلب القاسي والطبع الجافي قلباً سليماً وضميراً صادقاً. وحلّ عليه روح القدس، فنطق بقرايين الحكمة وينابيع العلم. وسُمّي عمود الكنيسة. ومن بعده من الملوك وأولاد الملوك وأتباعهم، بدّلوا مهج أنفسهم للقاء المحبوب. فظهرت لهم العجائب في حياتهم. ولن تنقضي عجائبهم إلى يوم القيامة.

[٣٤] ولقد حدّثني أنبا ساويرس المقفّع - رحمه الله - عن من أخبره، أنّ بعض بني العباس كان

له ولداً لا يشتغل بشيء من ملاذ الدنيا. لا لهواً ولا صيد ولا تديير ملكه. ولا علم إلا في قتل النصارى 5
وهدم كنائسهم. قد استفرغ مجهوده في ذلك. وأحرف إليه عقله ولبه.

[٣٥] وكان يترجّى وقت قدّاس الكائس، فإذا علم أنّهم قد استبدوا في شأن القربان. راكب في

غلمانه وحجّابه. فطرق أول كنيسة يلقاها فيدخل بفرسه إلى الكنيسة. ويجازى القسيسين وهم حينئذ
قد فصلوا الجسد فيخلطه بالتراب. ويفعل بالكأس الذي فيه الدم كذلك، وربما قتل من أراد. ويخرج

10 من الكنيسة إلى كنيسة أخرى فلا يزال ذلك صنيعه حتى يبلغ مراده. فحينئذ يرجع إلى مستقرّه. فأقام
على ذلك مدّة من الزّمان. وكادت بغداد تنخرّب من النّصارى إذ لا طاقة لهم به، ولا يمكن دافع
يدفعه عنهم.

[٣٦] فبينما هو ذات يوم قد دخل إلى بعض الكائس هذا الشاب إذ أبصر القسيس وهو يفصل

الجسد. (ثمّ خرج القسيس يقرب الشعب باللّحم وكذلك الشّمس بكأس الدّم.) فتحيّر وبهت فنظر ملياً.

Ed. [الدم] || الخبز. Ed. [الجسد] 9 عن من C [من] 4 C 23^r [حياتهم] 3 مودب C [عمود] 2

This addition clarifies the fracture and distribution of the 14 [الدم] 14 فحفيداً C [فحينئذ] 10 الخمر

the Eucharist during the liturgy. This sentence comes directly from a quotation of Ibn Rajā's work, cited by Michael of Damrū around 1051. See Atiya, 'Abd Al-Masīh, and KHS-Burmester, *HPEC*, 110.

was stubbornly opposing. Then he collapsed losing consciousness. His hardened heart and harsh behavior were replaced with a perfect heart and a true conscience. The Holy Spirit descended upon him, so he spoke with offerings of wisdom and knowledge flowed forth. He was called a pillar of the Church. Those who came after him among the kings and the kings' children and their attendants changed their innermost souls to encounter the Beloved. Miracles appeared to them in their lives. Their miracles will not cease until the Day of Resurrection.

[34] Anbā Severus al-Muqaffā⁸⁰ – may God have mercy upon him – related a story to me, from whoever told him, that someone from the al-‘Abbās tribe⁸¹ had a son who never busied himself with anything from the matters of this world. He did not play games or go hunting or manage his kingdom. He only knew the killing of Christians and the destruction of their churches. He used all of his effort in that matter. He had corrupted his mind and its core.

[35] He used to watch for the time of the churches' liturgies, when he knew that they started the Eucharistic prayer. He would ride with his servant and his guards. He would knock at the first church he came across and he would enter into the church on his horse. He would punish the priests and then they would tear apart the body [of Christ] and then mix it with dust. He would do the same with the chalice which had in it the blood [of Christ], and sometimes he would kill whoever he wanted. He would leave from one church to another church, so his deeds would continue until he got what he wanted. Subsequently, he would return to his residence. So he continued that for some time. Baghdad was almost laid waste of Christians since they could not endure it, and it was not possible for someone to get him away from them.

[36] However, one day he entered into one of the churches, when he saw the priest while he was breaking apart the body of a young man.⁸² [Then the priest went out to communicate the people with the flesh, and in like manner the deacon with the chalice of the blood.]⁸³ He became confused and bewildered

80 The following story, with some notable differences, also appears in Atiya, ‘Abd al-Masīḥ and KHS-Burmeister, eds., *HPEC*, 110–111 (Arabic), 165–167 (English). Michael of Damrū (Mikhā’il al-Damrāwī), the Bishop of Tinnīs, composed a biography of Ibn Rajā’ in 1051, about two or three decades after his death. See Swanson, “Michael of Damrū,” 84–88.

81 The Banū ‘Abbās tribe were part of the imperial family living in Baghdad, suggesting he was an important personage of the time.

82 The Fraction is a liturgical moment in the Coptic Alexandrian rite when the bread is fractured, or broken apart, to be prepared for distribution for the Eucharist.

83 This section of the story is unclear without the addition of some additional information here; however, it is fully explained in the version preserved in *HPEC*.

ثم قال لهم: ماذا تصنعون؟ فلم يخبروا جواباً. فقال لهم: عمدتم إلى صبيّ قتلتموه واجتمعوا على جسده تفصلونه وتطعموه للناس. وعمدتم إلى دمه جعلتموه في هذا الكأس. فما الفائدة في أكل لحوم الناس وشرب دماءهم؟ فقالوا له القسوس: والله يا سيدنا ما هو صبيّ نقطع لحمه. وكيف ينبغي لنا ذلك؟ فازداد تعجبه، وصاح لحجابه وغلطانه وقال لهم: ويحكم، انظروا إلى صنيع هؤلاء. عمدوا إلى صبيّ قتلوه. وقطعوا لحمه وجعلوا دمه في هذا الكأس. فلم ينظروا ذلك صبيّاً، ولا نظروا إلا خبز يكسر. فسجدوا 5 بين يديه وقالوا: والله يا سيدنا ما نظر إلا خبز يكسره، ولا في الكأس إلا خمر. فازداد تعجبه وصاح للنصارى الذين في الكنيسة فقال لهم: ما يصنعون هؤلاء القسوس بهذا الصبيّ، هذا الذي قطعوا لحمه وشفّوا دمه في الكأس؟ فقالوا له: والله يا سيدنا ما نرى إلا خبز ونحمر لا غير. فازداد تعجبه أيضاً وكاد أن يستخفّه العجب. فقال للقسوس: ويحكم أخبروني عن هذا الخبز وهذا الخمر. وكيف كان بدء أمره ومن أسسه لكم وأمر لكم بصنيعه؟ فقالوا له: إن سيدنا يسوع المسيح - ابن الله الحيّ الأزليّ - 10 ليلة أرادوا اليهود صلبه جمع إليه حواريه بين يديه. وأطعمهم خبزاً مثل هذا، ومن بعده سقاهم خمر مثل هذا. وقال لهم: هذا جسدي فكلوه وهذه دمي فاشربوه. فقسّم جسده بين تلاميذه وأسلم نفسه من ذلك الوقت. فنحن نأخذ الدقيق ونعجنه ونخبزه. ونقرأ عليه كتبنا ونقدّس عليه وعلى هذا الخمر. فيصير هذا الخبز جسداً وهذا الخمر دمًا كما ترى بين يديك الساعة. وهذا صنع المسيح بحواريه، ونأخذه 15 بالعهد الذي عهد به حواريه.

[٣٧] فأطرق طويلاً وفكر في أمره. ثم رفع رأسه فقال: أشهد أنّ المسيح ابن الله الحيّ الأزليّ لا شك فيه. ثمّ التفت إلى حجابه وغلطانه وقال لهم: لما (لم) أشاهد قط في دين الإسلام أعجوبة ولا كنت أدين لله لا تقليداً من غير آية. سمعت لمن تقدّم لا من نبيكم، ولا ما من بعده. فأنا الآن قد شاهدت بعيني ما شاهدت. وأشهد الله أنّي معترف بمعموديته موحداً له بثلاثة أقانيم - الأب والابن والروح

while he looked on carefully. Then he said to them: “What have you done?” But they did not give him an answer. So he said to them: “You have taken a child and killed him and then you gathered and divided up his flesh and fed it to the people. You have taken his blood, putting it in this chalice. What is the point of eating people’s flesh and drinking their blood?” But the priests said to him, “By God, our lord, there is no child whose flesh we divided up. Why would we do that?” Then his amazement increased, and he shouted at his guards and his servant and said to them: “Woe to you, look at what those ones have done. They took a child and killed him. They cut up his flesh and they put his blood in this chalice.” But they did not see that child, and they only perceived the bread broken apart. So they bowed before him and they said: “By God, our lord, we only saw bread which he broke apart and only wine in the chalice.” Then his amazement increased and he shouted to the Christians who were in the church and he said to them: “What are those priests doing with this child, this one whom they are dividing his flesh and preparing⁸⁴ his blood in the chalice?” So they said to him: “By God, our lord, we saw nothing more than the bread and the wine.” Then his amazement increased further and he almost lost his mind. So he said to the priest: “Woe to you, tell me about this bread and this wine. How did this matter begin and who established it for you and commanded its practice for you?” So they said to him: “Our Lord Jesus Christ – Son of the Eternal and Living God – on the night the Jews wanted to crucify him, he gathered his disciples around him. He gave them bread like this, and afterward he gave them wine to drink like this. He said to them: ‘This is my body, so eat it; and this is my blood, so drink it’. Then he divided his body among his disciples and he submitted his soul at that time. So we take the flour and we knead it and we make bread. We read over it with our Bible and we sanctify it, and this wine. Then this bread becomes the body and this wine [becomes] the blood just as you have seen for yourself this time. Christ did this with his disciples, so we follow the covenant which he promised his disciples [in the same manner].”

[37] Then he bowed his head in silence a long time and he reflected on the matter. Then he raised his head and said: “I testify that Christ is the Son of the Eternal and Living God without a doubt about him.” Then he turned to his guards and his servant and said to them: “In the religion of Islam, since I never witnessed any miracle, I have only believed in God by imitation without a sign. I listened, not to your prophet or his followers, but to those after him. But now I have witnessed with my own eyes what testifies to it. I testify to God that I am a confessor to his baptism as one in three hypostases – the Father and the Son

84 Literally, “straining.”

القدس - الثالث المعبود. وأني متصل إليه مما جرى مني من جهلي وكفري. فاذهبوا إلى مولاكم أعلموه بما رأيتم.

[٣٨] فتبادروا المحجّاب إلى أبوه وأعلموه بذلك فأرسل وأحضره. وقال له: يا ولدي، ما الذي صنعت؟ فقال له: يا أبتاه، رجعت إلى سيدنا يسوع المسيح، ابن الله الحيّ الأزليّ. فعاقبه بأنواع العذاب، وظهرت له عجائب كثيرة. وشيخ - رحمة الله عليه ورضوانه - فسلمه والده إلى النصارى. 5 وقال لهم: دونكم وجسده. فأخذوه وبنوا عليه كنيسةً تعرف بكنيسة الهاشمي.

[٣٩] ومثل هذا في عصرنا كثير، منهم من شاهدناه ومنهم من سمعنا به. فأولئك قوم استخصّهم الله لنفسه وورّثهم ملكوته. ولم يجيء سيدنا المسيح بالسيف ولا دعا الناس إلى دينه بالقتل. بل أظهر العجائب لهم وجذبهم إليه باللطف فعاشوا سعداء وماتوا شهداء. وإنما كان فعل بينكم من إظهار السيف 10 وقتل أكابرهم وأصاغرهم شبيهه ممن تقدّمه مثل بيلشاصر. حيث دعا الناس إلى عبادة الصنم الذي أصلحه ببابل، فطاوعه من طاوعه مخافة السيف، وامتنع ذوي العقول والألباب. فرزقهم الله الشهادة وحصلوا وارثين ملكوته.

and the Holy Spirit – the worshipped Trinity. I am setting myself apart for him from that which I did in my ignorance and unbelief. So go to your master and inform him about what you have seen.”⁸⁵

[38] So the guards went to his father and they informed him of that so he sent for him. He said to him: “My son, what have you done?” He replied to him: “Father, I have returned to Our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the Eternal and Living God.” Then he inflicted all kinds of torments upon him and many miracles manifested for him. There was a funeral – God’s mercy and blessings be upon on him – and his father consented to give him to the Christians. He said to them: “There, take his body.” So they took him and built a church over him known as al-Hāshimī Church.⁸⁶

[39] There are many examples like this in our time, some of them which I have witnessed and some of them which I have heard about.⁸⁷ God chose those people for Himself and caused them to inherit His kingdom. Our Lord Christ did not come with the sword and he did not call people to his religion through murder. Rather, he revealed miracles for them and he drew them to himself through benevolence so they experienced bliss and they died as martyrs. However, the one who divided you up by wielding the sword and killed your notables and your common folk was like Belshazzar who came earlier.⁸⁸ When he called the people to worship the idol which he renovated in Babylon, those who obeyed him did so in fear of the sword, while those who possessed reason and understanding refused. As a result, God bestowed upon them martyrdom and they ended up inheriting His kingdom.

85 Al-Hāshimī’s discussion with his companions in this paragraph is not in *HPEC*. Instead, Michael of Damrū notes there (p. 167): “The [priest] read to him the books of the Church and explained to him the Mysteries of the Christian belief, so that his heart was reassured to enter it, and he recognized its grandeur and the truth of it and he ascertained its teachings and its soundness. Then he commanded his companions to depart and he spent the night there with the priest, and he baptized him at night and he became a Christian. When the morrow came, his companions brought to him the beast, (but) he sent them away and did not speak to them.” Then the two stories align again with the companions informing his father of the conversion.

86 On the origins of the al-Hāshimī legend and another similar version, see Lamoreaux, “Hagiography,” 115–117, 128–134; Sahner, *Christian Martyrs under Islam*, 108–109.

87 Given that Ibn Rajā’ was writing during the persecutions of al-Ḥākim around 1009–1012, it makes sense that he is referring to martyrdoms he had seen or heard about during this period in Fatimid Egypt.

88 Belshazzar (d. 539 BCE) was the Babylonian co-regent whose kingdom fell to the Persians in 539. He is mentioned in the Book of Daniel 5:1–30 and in Baruch 1:11–12. In Late Antique Jewish, Syriac Christian, and Islamic legends, Belshazzar was known as a tyrant and torturer of the Jews. Ibn Rajā’ is alluding to these martyr tales in his comparison of the Babylonian leader with Muḥammad.

[٤٠] وكذلك فرعون موسى إذ ادعى الربوبية ودعى الناس إلى ذلك. فطاوعه قوم مخافة السيف وقتل من امتنع. وبيان ذلك عندكم في القرآن في غير موضع حيث يقول في سورة البقرة وسورة الأعراف: **وَإِذْ نَجَّيْنَاكَ مِنْ آلِ فِرْعَوْنَ (يَسُومُونَكَ سُوءَ الْعَذَابِ)**. وإنما فعل بهم ذلك حيث لم يتبعوه. وإنما لم يتبعوه لأنه قد بان لهم من سوء مقاتله ما بان. وعلما أن الإله لا يكون بتلك الأوصاف التي كان ذلك عليها.

5

[٤١] وحينئذ نبئكم شهر السيف ودعا الناس إلى دينه بغير دلالة ولا بيّنة. فقال له مخالفوه: إن وجدنا حقيقة ما تقول حتى نتبعك؟ فإن الله لم يرسل نبياً إلا وكان قبله نبي بشر به، وكتاب يشهد على نبوته، ودلائل يظهرها للناس في وقته. فقال لهم: إن الله - عز وجل - قال لي: قد وجهت قبلك أنبياء كذبوهم، وأخشى أن أوجهك بدلالة. فيكذبونك كما كذبوا من كان قبلك. وقد وجهتك بالسيف. وتصديق ما ذكرناه من ذلك في القرآن في سورة بني إسرائيل حيث يقول: **وَمَا مَنَعَنَا أَنْ نُرْسِلَ بِالْآيَاتِ إِلَّا أَنْ كَذَّبَ بِهَا الْأَوْلُونَ**. فن كان من أولي العقول والألباب لم يجيبه إلى ذلك فحينئذ يقتل.

10

[الفصل الرابع]

[٤٢] ذكر من أسلم خوف السيف.

قال C [قد 4 موتكلم C [الْعَذَابِ || بسوء C [فِرْعَوْنَ || الأعراب C [الأعراف 3 C 25^r يقول 2
C [الأولون 11 نرسلك C [نُرْسِلَ || معناها C [مَنَعَنَا || سورة الإسراء Ed. [إسرائيل 10 بني C [نبي 7
ومنهم من أسلم خوف السيف C repeats: [الرابع 12 C 25^v [فحينئذ || يجيبنا C [يجيبه || الاولين

[40] It was the same with the Pharaoh of Moses' [time], since he claimed divinity and he called the people to that. People obeyed him for fear of the sword and he killed whoever refused. That was clarified for you in the Qur'an in another place where he says in sura "The Cow" and sura "The Heights": "We delivered you from Pharaoh's clan [who inflicted a terrible torment on you]."⁸⁹ He only did that when they did not follow him. And they did not follow him because part of his evil teaching was obvious to them. They knew that God could not have these characteristics which that one had [enforced].

[41] Therefore, your prophet wielded the sword and he called the people to his religion without proof or evidence. His opponents said to him: "How can we find what you have said to be true so that we would follow you? God did not send a prophet without a prophet prior to him announcing him, and a book testifying to his prophethood, and proofs revealing it to the people of his time." He replied to them: "God said to me, 'I sent the prophets before you that they called liars, and I worry about sending you with a proof. For they will call you a liar just as they called those who came before liars. So I have sent you with the sword!'"⁹⁰ The proof of what we have mentioned from that is in the Qur'an in sura "The People of Israel" where it says: "Nothing prevented us from sending you signs except that the ancients called them lies."⁹¹ So whoever among those who had reason and understanding that did not answer him about that would be killed.

[Chapter 4]

[42] On those who converted to Islam for fear of the sword.

89 Q 2:49 and Q 7:141.

90 Some of the commentators preface their analysis of Q 17:59 with this scene in which a skeptical audience demands that Muḥammad provide them with evidence from proofs, miracles, and earlier scriptures. The only addition is the final sentence about Muḥammad bringing a sword. The references are found in the *tafsīr* of al-Zamakhsharī (d. 1144) and Naṣīr al-Dīn al-Ṭūsī (d. 1274) and doubtless others that Ibn Rajā' would have read during his studies. See Burman, *Religious Polemic*, 263.

91 Q 17:59.

[٤٣] فلان حدّثني رواه القسّم محمد بن القرطبي ابن شعبان، قال حدّثني أبو عبد الرحمن أحمد ابن شعيب النسائي، قال حدّثنا مالك، عن حميد الطّويل، عن أنس ابن مالك، أنّ أبا سفيان صحرا بن حرب، وهو أبو معاوية ابن أبي سفيان، أنّه لما أسلم جاءت إليه امرأته هند، وهي أم معاوية، فلطمته على وجهه وسخّمته وقالت له: يا شيخ السّوء، أسلمت وزغت عن دين آبائك الأشياخ. فقال لها: يا هند، ما هان عليك السّيف؟ فهذا واحد من أكابرهم ومتقدّمينهم، ما أسلم إلاّ خوف السّيف. 5

[٤٤] والعبّاس ابن عبد المطلب وهو عمّه، عمّ محمد بمكة، جاؤوا به أسيراً إليه يوم فتح مكة. فعرض عليه الإسلام، فقال له: أسلم يا عمّي. قال: أو غير ذلك يا ابن الأخ؟ قال: أقتلك يا عمّي، ما هو يا عمّ؟ قال: أتابعك اللسان ما تريد لا بالقلب مخافة السّيف. قال له: ما يعلم ما في القلوب إلاّ الله، هلّم يا عمّ وأسلم. فأسلم من وقته خوف السّيف.

C [هند 5 امرات C] أم 3 الكساني C [النسائي 2 ابوا C] أبو || القمر C [القرطبي || راه C] رواه 1
 فاعرض عليه السلام C [الإسلام 7 جاوا C] جاؤوا || ماماديوس C [محمد 6 جمعه

[43] Someone told me al-Qasim Muḥammad ibn al-Qurtī ibn Shaʿbān⁹² reported from Abū ʿAbd al-Raḥmān Aḥmad ibn Shuʿayb al-Nasāʿī,⁹³ from Mālik [ibn Anas],⁹⁴ from Ḥamīd al-Ṭawīl⁹⁵ from Anas ibn Mālik⁹⁶ that Abū Sufyān Ṣakhr ibn Ḥarb,⁹⁷ and he was the father of Muʿāwiya ibn Abī Sufyān,⁹⁸ that when he converted to Islam, his wife Hind came to him (and she was Muʿāwiya's mother).⁹⁹ Then she slapped him on the face and she blackened him with soot and she said to him: "Evil old man, you converted to Islam and you left your venerable fathers' religion." So he said to her: "Hind, were you not concerned about the sword?"¹⁰⁰ This is one of their nobles and their leaders, who only converted to Islam for fear of the sword.

[44] And Al-ʿAbbās ibn ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib (and he is his uncle), Muḥammad's uncle in Mecca, was brought as a captive on the day of Mecca's conquering.¹⁰¹ Then he offered him to convert to Islam. So he said to him: "Convert, my uncle." He replied: "Or else what, nephew?" He said: "I will kill you, my uncle. What will it be, uncle?" He said: "I will say what you want me to say, not with my heart, for fear of the sword." He replied to him: "No one knows what is in hearts except God. Come on, uncle, and convert." So he converted at that moment for fear of the sword.¹⁰²

92 Abū Ishāq Muḥammad ibn al-Qāsim ibn Shaʿbān (d. 966) was a tenth-century Egyptian Mālikī jurist known as Ibn al-Qurtī. One of his known works is on the principles of Islamic law.

93 On Abū ʿAbd al-Raḥmān Aḥmad ibn Shuʿayb al-Shaybānī al-Nasāʿī (d. 915), see Sezgin, *GAS*, 167–169. Al-Nasāʿī spent time in Egypt and is most famous for his collection of hadith known as the *Sunan al-Nasāʿī*. It has been translated into English as Aḥmad ibn ʿAlī al-Nasāʿī, *English Translation of Sunan an-Nasāʿī* (Riyadh: Darussalam, 2007). See also Christopher Melchert, "The Life and Works of al-Nasāʿī," *Journal of Semitic Studies* 59 (2014): 377–407; reprinted in Christopher Melchert, *Hadith, Piety, and Law: Selected Studies* (Atlanta: Lockwood Press, 2015), 89–115.

94 Mālik ibn Anas, Sezgin, *GAS*, 457–464.

95 Ḥamīd al-Ṭawīl (d. ca. 760).

96 Anas ibn Mālik, *ET*², 1:482.

97 Abū Sufyān Ṣakhr ibn Ḥarb (d. ca. 652); *ET*², 1:151.

98 Muʿāwiya ibn Abī Sufyān (d. 680) was the founder of the Umayyad dynasty in Damascus; see *ET*², 7:263.

99 Hind bint ʿUtba was employed in fabricated stories to defame the Umayyads. See El-Cheikh, *Women, Islam, and Abbasid Identity*, 17–37.

100 I have not been able to identify the source for this narrative but it is likely a product of Islamic anti-Umayyad legends.

101 Other Islamic sources put his capture at the battle of Badr in 624 or Uḥud in 625. On Ḥamza ibn ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib, who became a faithful Muslim according to Islamic lore, see *ET*² 3:152–154.

102 This account is a Christian interpretation based upon the story of the conversion of al-Muṭṭalib to Islam. See Burman, *Religious Polemic*, 265.

[٤٥] وعمر وابن معد الزبيديّ جاء به عليّ ابن أبي طالب وهو أسيراً إلى محمّد. فعرض عليه الإسلام فأبأ. فقال له: إنك إن لم تسلم قتلتك. فقال له: تعلم أنّي ما أسلم إلا مخافة السيّف.

[٤٦] وخاطب ابن أبي بلتعة أسلم أيضاً خوف السيّف. فلمّا أراد محمّد فتح مكة عزم على أن يطرقهم ليلاً وهم لا يعلمون. فكتب خاطب ابن أبي بلتعة - هذا الذي ذكرناه - كتاباً إلى أهل مكة يخبرهم بحجّ

5 محمّد إليهم. ودفع الكتاب إلى امرأة وأمرها أن تنفر إلى مكة. فتركت الكتاب في عقوصها، وتوجّهت تريد مكة. فجاءت العين وأخبرت محمّداً فأخبرته. فوجه بعليّ ابن أبي طالب والزبير ابن العوام في طلبها. فلقيها في موضع يقال له عقبه صاح. فقالا لها: أعطينا الكتاب الذي معك. فقالت: ما معي كتاب. فقالا: لتدفعين الكتاب وتقلعين الثياب. فلمّا رأت الجدّ دفعت إليهما الكتاب من عقاصها. فجأوا به إلى محمّد فلمّا قرأه قال: ما هذا يا خاطب؟ فأطرق نجلاً. فقال عمر ابن الخطّاب: أتأذن لي أن أضرب

10 عنق هذا المنافق؟ إنّه ما أسلم إلا خوف السيّف. ففعا عنه ولم يقتله.

[محمّد 3 فأعرض C [فعرض || ماماديوس C [محمّد || C26^r] طالب || عمر ابن معدي الربيدي C [الزبيديّ 1

C [محمّداً || مكّي C [مكة 6 تنفذ C [تنفر || سراييدس C [محمّد 5 خطاب C [خاطب 4 ماماديوس C

ماماديوس C [محمّد 9 الزهري C [والزبير || ابيطالب C [طالب || ماماديوس

[45] ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib brought ‘Amr ibn Ma’d al-Zubaydī¹⁰³ as a captive to Muḥammad. So he offered him to convert to Islam but he refused. He said to him: “If you do not convert to Islam, I will kill you.” So he replied to him: “You know that I will only convert to Islam for fear of the sword.”

[46] Khāṭib ibn Abī Balta’a also converted to Islam for fear of the sword.¹⁰⁴ When Muḥammad wanted to conquer Mecca, he decided to come upon them at night so that they would be unaware. So Khāṭib ibn Abī Balta’a – this one whom we have already mentioned – wrote a letter to the people of Mecca telling them about Muḥammad coming to them. He handed over the letter to a woman and commanded her to rush to Mecca. So she hid the letter in her braid and she set out for Mecca. Then a scout came and informed Muḥammad about it. He commanded ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib and al-Zubayr ibn al-‘Awām to search for her. The two of them encountered her in a place said to be the Ṣāj mountain pass. They said to her: “Give us the letter which you have with you.” She replied: “I don’t have a letter.” They said: “Hand over the letter or take off your clothes.” When she saw the seriousness of the matter, she handed the letter over to them from her braid. They brought it to Muḥammad and when he read it he said: “What is this, Khāṭib?” So he bowed his head in shame. ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb said: “Will you permit me to cut off this hypocrite’s head? He only converted to Islam for fear of the sword.” But he forgave him and he did not kill him.¹⁰⁵

103 ‘Amr ibn Ma’d al-Zubaydī (d. 642) was a pre-Islamic leader from Yemen, mentioned in Muḥammad’s biography, who later was part of the Islamic conquest of the Middle East. See Guillaume, ed., *The Life of Muhammad*, 20.

104 Khāṭib (Ḥāṭib) ibn Abī Balta’a is known as an early convert who fought at the Battle of Badr. When he learned of Muḥammad’s planned attack on Mecca, he composed a letter to the Quraysh explaining Muḥammad’s intentions. When his letter with a female messenger was discovered, he explained that he was only trying to ensure that his family would be safe and Muḥammad forgave him. According to Islamic tradition, later he wrote a letter to Egypt that resulted in Mary the Copt coming to Yathrib/Medina as a gift for Muḥammad.

105 This accurate retelling (other than the reference to conversion for fear of the sword) is found in the hadith collection of al-Bukhārī and they were said to be the occasion for the revelation of Q 60:1. See al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, 4:154–155 (Book 56, #3007); 5:191–192 (Book 64, #3983); and 6:344–345 (Book 65, #4890).

[٤٧] ولقد نظرت ذات يوم وكان يوم الجمعة، والناس يتقادون إلى الصلاة. فقال لحاشيته ولمن حضر من أتباعه: أنظروا إلى هؤلاء البقر، ماذا صنع بهم هذا العربيّ محمد؟ ولقد سأله بعض أصحابه ذات يوم فقال له: أترا الله يعاقبنا إذ لم نتبع هذا الذي يدعي النبوة من غير دلالة ولا آية؟ فقال: لا والله ما يعاقبنا، ولكن ما نقدر نتكلم.

[فصل خامس]

5

[٤٨] ذكر مسيلة الكذاب والعنسيّ.

[٤٩] ولقد كان في عصره رجلان ادّعا النبوة. أحدهما مسيلة الكذاب والآخر العنسيّ، وكان لهما ولمحمد قوم يؤذنون على المنابر بأسمائهم. وكان أصحاب مسيلة يقولوا في آذانهم أنّ مسيلة رسول الله. وأصحاب محمد يقولون هو رسول الله. وأصحاب العنسيّ يقولون أنّ العنسيّ رسول الله. فأما العنسيّ فظفر به محمد في أيامه فقتله. ولم يزال مسيلة على حاله في حياة محمد كلّها. وأصغوا إليه مع جمع كبير من بني حنيفة. فلما مات محمد وولي بعده أبو بكر قتله في وقعة اليمامة. ولقد كان مسيلة الكذاب، يجلس في ملأ من أصحابه وتحت ثوبه حمامتان. قد جعل في أجنحتهما وربشهما من المسك والكافور

بتبع C [تبع 3 بعد C [بعض || ماماديوس C [محمد || الله C adds: [صنع 2 26^v C [يوم 1
C [ولمحمد 8 القبسي C [العنسيّ || مسيلة C [مسيلة 7 القبسي C [والعنسيّ || مسيلة C [مسيلة 6
[العنسيّ || القبسي C [العنسيّ || ماماديوس C [محمد 9 مسيلة C [مسيلة || مسيلة C [مسيلة || ماماديوس
[وأصغوا || ماماديوس C [محمد || مسيلة C [مسيلة || ماماديوس C [محمد 10 القبسي C [العنسيّ || القبسي C
رمشهما C [ريشهما || C 27^r [و || املاه C [ملأ 12 مسيلة C [مسيلة || ماماديوس C [محمد 11 انصغوا C

[47] Now one day, which was a Friday, [Thumāma ibn Ashras] saw the people were heading to prayer.¹⁰⁶ So he said to his entourage and to those who were present: “Look at these cattle, what did this Arab man Muḥammad do to them?” Some of his companions asked him one day saying to him: “Do you think God will punish us since we are not following this one who claims prophethood without proof or sign?” He replied: “No, by God, he will not punish us, but we cannot say anything.”¹⁰⁷

[Chapter 5]

[48] On Musaylima the False Prophet¹⁰⁸ and al-‘Ansī.¹⁰⁹

[49] It was in [Muḥammad’s] lifetime that two men claimed prophethood for themselves. One of them was Musaylima the false prophet and the other was al-‘Ansī. The adherents of the two of them and Muḥammad would make the call to prayer upon platforms in their names. Musaylima’s companions would say in their call to prayer that Musaylima was God’s messenger. Muḥammad’s companions would say he was God’s messenger. Al-‘Ansī’s companions would say that al-‘Ansī was God’s messenger. As for al-‘Ansī, Muḥammad captured him during his lifetime and killed him. Musaylima continued his [prophetic] affair through Muḥammad’s entire life. A large number of the Ḥanīfa tribe listened to him. When Muḥammad died and Abū Bakr took over after him, he killed [Musaylima] at the Battle of al-Yamāma. Musaylima the false prophet used to sit in the midst of his companions and beneath his garments were two pigeons.

106 The manuscript is missing some context. However, this passage is taken from Ibn Qutayba, *Taʾwīl mukhtalaf al-ḥadīth*, 47–48; Ibn Qutayba, *Traité des divergences*, #55. Ibn Qutayba criticizes the Abbasid Muʿtazilī court theologian Thumāma ibn Ashras (d. 828), commenting: “Let us move on to Thumāma, who was poorly religious, scorned Islam and mocked it, and made his tongue speak like no man would who knew God and believed in Him. This well-known account is preserved: One Friday, he saw people rushing to the mosque, for fear of missing prayer. He said, ‘Look at those cattle! Look at those donkeys!’ Then he said to one of his colleagues: ‘[Look at] what this Arab [i.e., Muhammad] has done done with [these] men.’”

107 Ibn Rajāʾ is commenting on the fact that Thumāma ibn Ashras was said to have held the position that non-Muslims would not be condemned if they did not explicitly reject the revelation of God. Ibn Qutayba barely considered Thumāma a Muslim, and Ibn Rajāʾ exploits this point for his argument.

108 On Musaylima/Maslama ibn Ḥabīb (d. ca. 633), see *ET*², 7:664; and al-Makin, *Representing the Enemy: Musaylima in Muslim Literature* (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2010).

109 Al-Aswad ibn Kaʿb al-‘Ansī (d. 632); *ET*², 1:728.

شيء كثير. فيقول لمن حوله: هذا جبرائيل وميكائيل تحت ثيابي يسلمان عليكم، فيسجدون له. ثم يفتح طوقه فيخرج الحمامتان طائرین. فيسقط على الناس من ذلك الطيب، فيتكأون عليه ويتباركون منه.

[فصل سادس]

[٥٠] ذكر دعواه محمد كيف كان الوحي يأتيه.

- [٥١] ولقد كان يجلس في ملأ من الناس مع أصحابه، ويسأله السائل عن مسألة. فيقول: لا علم لي، 5
وإلى الآن يأتيني جبرائيل بجواب مسألتك. فيتفكر فيها ساعة. فإذا أتاه الجواب خر على وجهه وعوج يديه ورجليه. فإذا رآه كذلك قالوا: هذا جبرائيل يكلمه فيغطونه أصحابه بثيابهم. فلا يزال كذلك حتى يرفع رأسه ويقول: أين السائل؟ فيقول: هأنذا. فيقول: جاءني جبرائيل بجواب مسألتك وهو كذا وكذا.
[٥٢] حدثني بحق ذلك أحمد والحسين، قائلًا: حدثنا يحيى، حدثنا مالك، قال نافع، عن ابن عمر،

He put musk and a lot of camphor in their wings and their feathers. Then he would say to whoever was around him: “These are Gabriel and Michael under my garments, saying peace be upon you,” so they would bow to him. Then he would open his belt and the pigeons would fly away. Then some of that perfume would fall upon the people, so they would try to touch him so they would receive his blessing.¹¹⁰

[Chapter 6]

[50] On Muḥammad’s claim of how the revelation came to him.

[51] He used to sit in the midst of the people with his companions, and someone would ask him a question. Then he would say: “I don’t know, but now Gabriel will come to me with an answer to your question.” So he would contemplate it for an hour. Then when the answer came he would collapse to the ground and his hands and legs would seize. When they saw him like that, they said: “This is Gabriel talking to him,” so his companions would cover him with their clothing. So he would continue in that state until he would lift his head and he would say: “Where is the questioner?” Then he would reply: “Here I am.” So he would say: “Gabriel came to me with an answer to your question and it is such-and-such.”¹¹¹

[52] Aḥmad¹¹² and al-Ḥusayn told me the truthfulness of that, saying from Yaḥyā¹¹³ from Mālīk¹¹⁴ from Nāfi¹¹⁵ from Ibn ‘Umar¹¹⁶ who said: I heard ‘Ā’isha¹¹⁷

110 Ibn Rajā’ is arguing that the existence of these two pseudo-prophets suggests Muḥammad’s appearance was not unique but part of a prophetic spirit of the place and time, although he does not make this explicit.

111 This account is based upon a hadith about the process by which Muḥammad was said to receive his revelation. See al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, 6:377, 401–402 (Book 65, #4929, 4953), and 6:452–453 (Book 66, #5044). The eighth-century Byzantine historian Theophanes was one of the first historians to refer to Muḥammad’s revelations as epileptic fits. See Theophanes, *The Chronicle Of Theophanes Confessor: Byzantine And Near Eastern History, AD 284–813*, eds. Cyril Mango, Roger Scott, and Geoffrey Greatrex (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997), 464.

112 I have not identified Aḥmad. Later in the text Ibn Rajā’ transmits another hadith via Abū al-‘Abbās Aḥmad al-Naysabūrī. He also transmits another hadith later via Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad.

113 This reference is most likely the Mālīkī jurist Yaḥyā ibn Yaḥyā al-Laythī (d. 848), see *ET*², 4:87 and 6:744.

114 On Mālīk ibn Anas, see Sezgin, *GAS*, 457–464.

115 Nāfi’ ibn ‘Umar (d. 735); *ET*², 7:876.

116 ‘Abd Allāh ibn ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (d. 693); *ET*², 1:53.

117 ‘Ā’isha (d. 678); *ET*², 1:307.

قال سمعت عائشة تقول: سألت محمد فقلت له: كيف يأتيك الوحي؟ فقال: يأتيني كصلصلة الجرس، فإذا رأيته لم أتمالك أن أحرّ على وجهي كما ترون، فينقطهم عراقي في البارد وقد تصببت عرقاً.

[٥٣] ولو تفكروا أهل الكتاب بالعقل والتمييز منهم في هذا الكلام، لبان لهم عواره وفساده. وذلك أنه يزعم أنه طلع وصعد إلى سبع سموات، بين كل سماء إلى سماء مسيرة خمسمائة عام. وزعم أنه رأى من الملائكة من هو أعظم خلقاً من جبرائيل. ولو أتينا على آخر شرحه في ذلك لأطنا.

[٥٤] حتى أنه قال: رأيت ملاكاً من الملائكة وهو بقدر الدنيا كذا وكذا ألف مرة. وهو جاث على ركبتيه يبكي، وأنّ الدموع تجري من عينه وعقبه كالفرات والنيل. فقال لي: يا محمد استغفر الله لي. فقلت له: وأنت ذليل؟ فقال: وما يؤمّني، وقد خلق الله ربك جهنماً؟ مع كذب وتغيير كثير لا فائدة لي (في) إعادته. وإن كان كلّما مرّ بجند من الملائكة استغفر لهم وصلّى بهم ركعتين ودعا لهم. فكيف ينبغي لهذا أن يكون هذا في السماوات وشاهد هذا الجموع الهائلة من الملائكة، ويجعل الله له من الإستطاعة ما يكلمهم ويصلّي بهم؟ فلماذا صار في الدنيا حيث الناس وأصحابه ومن يشكّ فيه ومن يحتاج إلى إقامة الدلائل لهم وتصديق ما يحدثهم به، لا ينظر إلى ملاك واحد فينصرع كالجنون؟ هذا ما لا يظنّه عاقل ولا يتميّزه.

[٥٥] ولا خلاف أنّ موسى النبيّ كان يكلم الله ربّه شفاهاً. وقد جعل الله له من القوّة ما يطيق

ذلك. وهو زعم أنه أفضل من موسى ومن الخلق كلّهم. فمن كان بهذا المنزلة، لا يطيق أن ينظر إلى ملاك واحد إلّا وينصرع كالجنون؟

[والتمييز 3 تصببت] C تصببت || 27^v C [ترون 2 ماماديوس] C محمد || عيشة C عائشة || قالت C قال 1

ذليت C [ذليل 8 ماماديوس] C محمد 7 قالوا C [ولو || خلق C خلقاً 5 راه C [رأى 4 التميز C

كالجنون C [كالجنون 16 28^r C [يطيق 14 السموات C [السماوات 10

say: “I asked Muḥammad and I said to him: how does your revelation come?” So he said: “It comes to me like the sound of a bell. If I see it, I have no control collapsing to the ground just as you see, so sweat would drip in the cold and I would drip sweat.”¹¹⁸

[53] If those who have reason and discernment among the People of the Book thought about this conversation, then its flaws and corruption would be obvious to them. Namely, he alleges that he arose and went to the seven Heavens [the distance] between each Heaven being a five-hundred-year march. He alleged that, among the angels, he saw one who was greater than Gabriel. If I were to explain this to the end, I would take a long time.

[54] [Muḥammad] even said: “I saw one of the angels and he was the size of the world thousands of times over. He was sitting upon his knees crying and the tears were flowing from his eyes to his heel like the Euphrates and the Nile. Then he said to me: ‘Muḥammad, ask God to forgive me’. Then I said to him: ‘You are humiliated?’ He said: ‘What can protect me when God your Lord has created Gehenna?’”¹¹⁹ With lies and many alterations there is no point in me repeating it. If every time [Muḥammad] passed by angelic soldiers, he would ask God to forgive them, and he would pray with them two prostrations and pray for them, then how could he be in the Heavens and witnessing these magnificent groups of angels, and God would give him the ability to speak with them and pray with them? Why when he returned to this world – where the people and his companions and those who doubted him and those who required established proofs and belief which he would report to them – would he look to a single angel and then fall down like a crazed person? No reasonable person would believe or accept this.

[55] There’s no disagreement that the prophet Moses spoke orally to his Lord God. God endowed him with power to endure that. [Muḥammad] alleged that he is better than Moses and all creatures. Whoever is in this rank, can he not endure to look at one angel without falling down like a crazed person?

118 This comes from a hadith on revelation from al-Bukhārī: Al-Harith bin Hisham asked Allah’s Messenger “O Allah’s Messenger! How is the Divine Revelation revealed to you?” Allah’s Messenger replied, “Sometimes it is (revealed) like the ringing of a bell, this form of Revelation is the hardest of all and then this state passes off after I have grasped what is revealed. Sometimes the angel comes in the form of a man and talks to me and I grasp whatever he says.” ‘Aishah added: “Verily I saw the Prophet being inspired (divinely) and (noticed) the sweat dropping from his forehead on a very cold day as the Revelation was over.” See al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, 1:46 (Book 1, #2).

119 This is a summary from numerous hadiths on Muḥammad’s Night Journey, some of which can be found in al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, 4:272–275 (Book 59, #3207); 5:132–136 (Book 63, #3887); and 9:368–372 (Book 97, #7517).

[٥٦] وإثما انطوى إليه بحيرة الرَّاهب، وهو أول من انطوى إليه. وكان له علم في قراءة الكتب فأعلمه بما يكون من أمره. وقرأ عليه من الكتب السَّالفة، فطمع أنه يلي الأمر من بعده. وقيل فصاحبه إلى أن مات بحيرة الرَّاهب. ويقال أنه قتله وفتحاص اليهودي في ليلة واحدة. فانطوى إليه سلمان الفارسي وعبد الله ابن سلام اليهودي وأسلمها وطمعاً فيما طمع فيه بحيرة الرَّاهب من أن يكون يلي الأمر من بعده. فقرأ عليه الكتب المتقدِّمين وميزها ودبرها. وخلصها بكلام العرب المتقدِّمين من 5 العرب وفصاحة قريش وغيرهم من العرب. وجمع فيه قصصاً وطرائفاً طوائف من الأنبياء وغيرهم من المتقدِّمين.

[٥٧] فقال قريش: من أين علم محمد بقصص الأولين؟ فجاء إليه أبو جهل ابن هشام وشيبة ابن ربيعة، فقالا له: محمد، من أين لك هذا العلم؟ فقال: إن الله أوحى إليَّ به. فقالا له: أو ليس عبد الله ابن سلام اليهودي وسلمان أعلمك بهذا كله؟ فقال لهم - فيما بينهم وبينه: لا. وفيما هم جلوس إذ خر 10 على وجهه، وجاء إلى أصحابه فغطَّوه بثيابهم. ثم أفاق فقال: إن الله أوحى إليَّ - يردّ عليكم قولكم - أن سلمان وعبد الله ابن سلام يعلماني. فقالوا: وما قال لك؟ فقرأ عليهم في سورة النحل: وَلَقَدْ نَعَلْنَا أَنَّهُمْ يَقُولُونَ إِنَّمَا يُعَلِّمُهُ بَشَرٌ، لِسَانُ الَّذِي يُلْحِدُونَ إِلَيْهِ أَعْجِبِي وَهَذَا لِسَانُ عَرَبِيٍّ مُبِينٌ. فقال لهم: وكيف

ماماديوس C [محمد 8 لخطها C [ونخلصها || فقريا C [فقرأ 5 سلمان C [سلمان || فتحاس C [وفنحاص 3

تعلم C [نعلر 12 C 28٧ [أصحابه 11 اعلاماك C [أعلمك || سلمان C [وسلمان 10 ماماديوس C [محمد، 9

[56] However, the monk Baḥīra¹²⁰ became associated with him, and he was the first among those who partnered with him. He had knowledge about the reading of the Scriptures so he informed him about that which would be [relevant] for him. He read to him from the earlier Scriptures, then he hoped to take over as leader after him. It is said that he was close to him until the monk Baḥīra died. It is said that he killed him and Phineas¹²¹ the Jew on one night. Salmān the Persian¹²² and ‘Abd Allāh ibn Salām¹²³ the Jew partnered with him and they converted to Islam and they hoped for the same things as the monk Baḥīra, hoping to take over as leader after him. They read to him from the ancient Scriptures so he grasped them and mastered them. He summarized them using the language of the ancient Arabs and the eloquence of the Quraysh and other Arabs. He gathered in [the Qur’an] stories and legends of the sects of the prophets and others among the ancients.

[57] Then the Quraysh said: “From where did Muḥammad learn about the ancestors’ stories?” Then Abū Jahl ibn Hishām¹²⁴ and Shayba ibn Rabī’a¹²⁵ came to him. They said to him: “Muḥammad, from where did you get this knowledge?” He replied: “God revealed it to me.” So they said to him: “Did not ‘Abd Allāh ibn Salām the Jew and Salmān teach you about all of this?” He replied to them – between them and him – “No.” As they were sitting, he fell on the ground and his companions came to him. Then they covered him up in their clothes. Then he arose and said: “God gave a revelation to me – responding to your words – that Salmān and ‘Abd Allāh ibn Salām are teaching me.” They said: “What did he say to you?” Then he recited to them from sura “The Bee”: “We know for certain that they say: ‘It is only a man [that teaches him]’. The language to which they refer is foreign, while this language is clear Arabic.”¹²⁶

120 According to Arabic Christian traditions, the monk Baḥīra was a source for passages in the Qur’an. On these accounts in Syriac and Christian Arabic texts, see Roggema, *The Legend of Sergius Bahira*.

121 According to Ibn Ishāq’s biography of Muḥammad, Phineas (Finḥās) ibn Azūra was a Jewish rabbi who entered a disagreement with Abū Bakr, resulting in the revealing of Q 3:181 to Muḥammad. But this Phineas is an antagonist not a supporter of Muḥammad. I cannot find other traditions about Phineas as a source for material in Islamic literature.

122 Salmān al-Fārisī (d. ca. 657) was a Persian Christian who converted to Islam. According to Islamic tradition, he is mentioned as a teacher of Muḥammad.

123 ‘Abd Allāh ibn Salām (d. ca. 663) was a Jewish rabbi who converted to Islam. See *ET*², 1:52.

124 Abū Jahl ‘Amr ibn Hishām (d. 624); *ET*², 1:115.

125 Shayba ibn Rabī’a (d. 624). Both figures were described as Meccan Quraysh opponents of Muḥammad who died at the Battle of Badr.

126 Q 16:103.

ينبغي أن يكون سلمان وعبد الله ابن سلام يعلمان، وأحدهم فارسيّ والآخر عبرانيّ؟ فقالا له: فما ينبغي أن يكونا يخاطباك بلغتهما، إذا فسّر لك نخصته أنت بلسانك؟ فلم يردّ جواباً، ففضيا وتركاه.

الفصل السابع

[٥٨] وفي المعنى أربعة فصول ذكر القرآن.

- [٥٩] رووا في حديثهم عن صاحبهم أنه تنزل القرآن على سبعة أحرف فكلّ شاف كاف. واسم 5 هؤلاء السبعة نافع وأبو عمرو وحمة والكسائي وعاصم وابن كثير وابن عامر.
- [٦٠] فنقول لهم: أخبرونا عن قول صاحبكم: اقروا القرآن على سبعة أحرف. ما أراد به؟ هل أراد بذلك أن يقرؤوا القرآن بلغة هؤلاء السبعة؟ فإن قالوا نعم، قلنا لهم: فهؤلاء السبعة أدركوه وقرؤوا عليه؟ فإنهم يقولون لا ما أدركوه، ولكن قرؤوا على شيوخهم حتى انتهوا إلى محمد. فنقول لهم: اتفقوا

C [اقروا] 7 كبير C [كثير] 8 عمرو C [عمر] 6 كان C [كاف] 5 اتنزل C [تنزل] 5 لخصته C [نخصته] 2
 ماماديوس C [محمد] 9 اقرر

Then he said to them: “How can Salmān and ‘Abd Allāh ibn Salām offer instruction, when one of them is a Persian and the other one is a Hebrew?” They said to him: “Couldn’t they be talking to you in their language, if they interpret it for you, and then you summarize it in your language?” He did not give an answer, so they departed and left him.¹²⁷

Chapter 7

[58] Four sections on the meaning of the Qur’an.¹²⁸

[59] They narrated in their report about their companion [Muḥammad] that the Qur’an was revealed in seven letters¹²⁹ and each one is completely satisfactory.¹³⁰ He named those seven: Nāfi¹³¹ and Abū ‘Amar¹³² and Ḥamza¹³³ and al-Kisā’ī¹³⁴ and ‘Āṣim¹³⁵ and Ibn Kathīr¹³⁶ and Ibn ‘Āmir.¹³⁷

[60] So we say to them: Tell us about [Muḥammad’s] words, “Recite the Qur’an according to seven letters.” What does he mean by it? Does he mean by that to recite the Qur’an in the languages of those seven [people]? If they say yes, we reply to them: Then those seven [people], did they live with him and recite to him? They say no, they did not live at his time, but they recite according to their teachers successively reaching back to Muḥammad. Then we

127 This is a retelling of Islamic stories regarding the circumstances of the revelation of Q 16:103. See a list in Burman, *Religious Polemic*, 273, who notes that the two are not usually put together in the Islamic versions.

128 The Latin version has the title: “On the disciples of Muḥammad and the discordant establishment of the [text of the] Qur’an.” Although there are no direct parallels or evidence of use of the *Letter (Risāla)* of the Christian polemicist al-Kindī (early 9th c.), he also critiques the compilation of the Qur’an as well.

129 This phrase refers to the seven styles, or methods of recitation (‘letter’ indicating each particular method) in which the Qur’an was said to have been revealed.

130 The Islamic interpreter Ibn Mujāhid (d. 936) discussed the historical development of the Qur’anic text and used these names as authoritative sources for each of his seven readings of the Qur’an. See Claude Gilliot, “Creation of a Fixed Text,” in *The Cambridge Companion to the Qur’ān*, ed. Jane Dammen McAuliffe (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 41–57, esp. 50–51. On the Islamic justification for seven readings, see Samad, *Ibn Qutaybah’s Contribution to Qur’anic Exegesis*, 51–60.

131 Nāfi’ ibn ‘Abd al-Rahmān ibn Abī Na’īm al-Laythī (d. 785); *EI*², 7:878.

132 Abū ‘Amr Zabbān ibn al-‘Alā’ (d. 770); *EI*², 1:105.

133 Ḥamza ibn Ḥabīb (d. 772); *EI*², 3:155.

134 Abū al-Ḥasan ‘Alī ibn Ḥamza al-Kisā’ī (d. 805); *EI*², 5:174.

135 ‘Āṣim ibn Abī al-Najjūd (d. 745); *EI*², 1:706.

136 Abū Ma’bad ibn Kathīr (d. 738); *EI*², 3:817.

137 ‘Abd Allāh ibn ‘Āmir (d. 736); *EI*², 3:704.

شيوخهم الذين قرؤوا عليهم على هذه القراءة الذي في أيديكم اليوم؟ فإن قالوا نعم فقد كذبوا، والدليل على ذلك أنّ قراءة الصدر الأوّل مخالفة الصدر الثّاني.

[٦١] وذلك أنّه لم يحفظ القرآن لكامله في زمان محمد إلاّ عبد الله ابن مسعود وزيد ابن ثابت وعمر وعثمان ابن عفّان. واختلفوا في عليّ ابن أبي طالب، فقال أصحابه قد كان كلّ له في حياة صاحبهم. وقال عامر الشّعبيّ من سلهاهلية: إنّ عليّاً نزل حفرتة ولم يكمل له القرآن.

5

[٦٢] وكان لكلّ واحد من هؤلاء الذي أسميناهم مصحف جدّده، على (أن) لا يشبهه مصحف الآخر. فأما عبد الله ابن مسعود، فلم يكن في مصحفه سورة الحمد ولا سورة قل أعوذ برّب الناس ولا سورة قل أعوذ برّب الفلق. وكان يغلظ الكلام لمن يضيفهم إلى القرآن، ويحثو في وجوه الذين يقرؤونهم التراب. ويقول لهم: يا كذّابين على رسول الله. نخالف جميع أصحاب محمد في هذا. وكان يرى جهادهم وكانوا استحلّوا قتله. وإنّما منعهم من قتله أنّ صاحبهم قال: من أراد يسمع القرآن غضاً طرياً
كما أنزل، فليسمعه من فم ابن مسعود. فذلك الذي منعهم من قتله.

10

C [أسميناهم 6 وعثمان وعمر ابن عفّان C [عفّان 4 ماماديوس C [محمد 3 C 29^F] في 1
C [فذلك 11 ماماديوس C [محمد 9 يجتوا C [ويحثو 8 عوذ C [أعوذ 8 جده C [جدّده 8 | أسميناهم
فلذلك

say to them: Did their teachers, according to whom [the seven] recite, agree on this version that is in your possession today? If they say yes, then they have lied and the proof regarding that is that the first recitation is different than that of the second.

[61] No one memorized the Qur'an completely in Muḥammad's time except 'Abd Allāh ibn Mas'ūd¹³⁸ and Zayd ibn Thābit¹³⁹ and 'Umar¹⁴⁰ and 'Uthmān ibn 'Affān.¹⁴¹ They disagreed about 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib, for his companions said he [knew] it completely during [Muḥammad's] life. 'Āmir [ibn Sharāḥīl] al-Sha'bī¹⁴² said: "Alī went to his tomb and he did not [know] the Qur'an completely."¹⁴³

[62] Each one of them whom we have named edited a codex in a way [that] does not resemble any other book. As for 'Abd Allāh ibn Mas'ūd, his codex did not have sura "Praise,"¹⁴⁴ and the sura: "Say: I seek protection with the Lord of people,"¹⁴⁵ and the sura: "Say: I seek protection with the Lord of dawn."¹⁴⁶ Whoever would add them to the Qur'an, he would accuse them of error and he would throw dirt on the faces of those who would recite them. He would say to them: "You have made a liar of God's messenger." So he differed from all of Muḥammad's companions on this issue. He thought there should be jihad against them while they saw it fit to kill him. But what prevented them from killing him was that their companion [Muḥammad] said: "Whoever wants to hear the Qur'an in a pure way just as it was revealed, then he should hear it from Ibn Mas'ūd's mouth."¹⁴⁷ That is what prevented them from killing him.

138 'Abd Allāh ibn Mas'ūd (d. 653); *EI*², 3:873.

139 Zayd ibn Thābit (d. ca. 665) was a scribe and compiler for the Qur'an according to Islamic tradition. He was said to have edited the text after Muḥammad's death and played an editorial role in its canonization under the first three caliphs.

140 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (d. 644) was the second caliph after Muḥammad; *EI*², 10:818.

141 'Uthmān ibn 'Affān (d. 656) was the third caliph and reputed to have proclaimed an official version of the Qur'an and ordered others destroyed; *EI*², 10:946.

142 The Arabic text is probably a corruption of his full name 'Āmir ibn Sharāḥīl al-Sha'bī (d. 721 or later), an early narrator of hadith.

143 These figures were important in Islamic accounts concerning the editorial stages of the compilation of the text of the Qur'an.

144 Here he is referring to Q 1: al-Fātiḥā.

145 Q 114.

146 Q 113.

147 This hadith is found in the Arabic original with English translation in Muḥammad ibn Yazīd ibn Mājāh, *English Translation of Sunan Ibn Mājāh*, 5 vols., ed. Abū Ṭāhir Zubayr 'Alī Za'ī (Riyadh: Darussalam, 2007), 1:169 (Book 1, #138). There are several other traditions lauding the readings and codex of Ibn Mas'ūd. See for instance al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, 5:70–71 (Book 62, #3758, 3760); and 91 (Book 63, #3806). This hadith is also quoted in al-Kindī; see Tartar, "Dialogue islamo-chrétien sous le calife al-Ma'mūn," 111.

[٦٣] مع أشياء كثيرة كانت زائدة في مصحفه. وكان كل أصحابه ينكرونها ولا يرون القراءة بها. حتى أنهم يزعمون أن مصحفه كان يحمله جمل. ولم يوافقهم أيضاً في اللفظ، وكان مسعود يقرأ: وَاللَّهُ أَخْرَجَكُمْ مِنْ بَطُونِ إِمَائِكُمْ، وَالنَّاسُ كُلَّهُمْ يَقْرَءُونَ: وَاللَّهُ أَخْرَجَكُمْ مِنْ بَطُونِ أُمَّهَاتِكُمْ، وَقَرَأَ أَيْضاً: وَتَكُونُ الْجِبَالُ كَالصُّوفِ الْمَنْفُوشِ، وَالنَّاسُ كُلَّهُمْ يَقْرَءُوا: كَالْعِهْنِ الْمَنْفُوشِ - العهن هو الصوف. وقرأ ابن مسعود: وَأَعْتَدْتُ لُنَّ مِتْكَأً، مَخْفَفٌ وَالنَّاسُ كُلَّهُمْ يَقْرَءُونَ: مِتْكَأً، مَثْقَلٌ. وقرأ ابن مسعود: 5 إِنَّ عَلَيْنَا جَمْعَهُ وَقِرَانَهُ فَإِذَا قَرَأْتَهُ فَاتَّبِعْ قِرَاءَتَهُ ثُمَّ إِنَّ عَلَيْنَا بَيَانَهُ، وَالنَّاسُ كُلَّهُمْ يَقْرَءُونَ: إِنَّ عَلَيْنَا جَمْعَهُ وَبَيَانَهُ فَإِذَا قَرَأْنَاهُ فَاتَّبِعْ قِرَانَهُ، ثُمَّ إِنَّ عَلَيْنَا بَيَانَهُ. مع أشياء كثيرة تفرد بها ابن مسعود لم يتابعه عليها أحد.

[٦٤] مع ما في ذلك من أنه كان إذا صلى ... في الرُّكُوعِ والسُّجُودِ. لم يثبت ذلك عن ... عملت

10

أحد من أصحابه بعد ميز وحده.

[٦٥] وكان من أكذب الناس، وذلك عنه أنه رأى قوم الزُّطَّ فقال لهم: هؤلاء أشبه الخلق بمن رأيتهم ليلة الجنِّ مع النبيِّ. فقالوا له: وما شاهدت ذلك؟ قال: وما شاهد ذلك غيري. ثم روي عنه أيضاً

عدتت C [وَأَعْتَدْتُ 5 كالعَمِيرِ C [كَالْعِهْنِ 4 يقرون C [يَقْرَءُونَ 3 يقري C [يَقْرَأُ 2 C 29^v [في 1

[قال || خروم فرتنق الاصل C margin [ذلك 12 القرط C [الزُّطَّ 11 Lacuna in manuscript ... 9

شاهدت C [شاهد || 30^r

[63] There were many more things in his codex. All of his companions denied it and rejected its recitation. They even alleged that a camel used to carry his codex. Also, he did not agree with them about the exact words. For instance, [Ibn] Mas'ūd would recite, "God took you out from the wombs of your slave girls," while all of the people recite: "God took you out from the wombs of your mothers."¹⁴⁸ In addition, he recited: "The mountains were like puffed-up wool [*ṣūf*]," while all of the people recited: "like puffed-up dyed wool [*ihn*]" – dyed wool is wool.¹⁴⁹ And Ibn Mas'ūd recited: "She prepared for them citrus fruit," pronounced without doubling, while all of the people recited "banquet" with doubling.¹⁵⁰ And Ibn Mas'ūd recited: "Indeed it is up to us to put it together and to recite it [*qur'ānahu*]. So when you recite it, follow its reading [*qirā'atahu*]. Then, its exposition lies with us," while all of the people recited: "Indeed it is up to us to put it together and to explain it [*bayānahu*]. So when we recite it, follow its recitation [*qur'ānahu*]. Then, its exposition lies with us."¹⁵¹ In addition to these, Ibn Mas'ūd was unique in many features [in his codex] that no one follows him on them.

[64] In addition to what has been mentioned, that if he prayed ... in bowing and prostrations.¹⁵² That was not confirmed from ... [evidence showing that] any of his companions did [that], having a unique distinction.

[65] [Ibn Mas'ūd] was one of the worst liars among the people, as reported about him when he saw the people of Zuṭṭ¹⁵³ and told them: "Those ones have the most resemblance to those whom I saw with the prophet on the Night of the Jinn." They said to him: "Didn't you witness that?" He said: "Nobody witnessed

148 Q 39:6.

149 Q 70:9.

150 Q 12:31.

151 Q 75:17–19.

152 In this section the text has several lacunae. However, Ibn Rajā' seems to be arguing that Ibn Mas'ūd's method of praying was not the same as other early Muslims, showing there was no consensus or strong memory about the practices of Muḥammad even in matters that were performed daily such as prayer. Perhaps this is a reference to Ibn Mājah, *Sunan Ibn Mājah*, 2:60 (Book 5, #890).

153 The Zuṭṭ were a nomadic people of northwestern Indian descent who were settled in the Middle East by the Arabs. In this section, Ibn Rajā' is arguing that Ibn Mas'ūd is an unreliable and contradictory transmitter of traditions about Muḥammad or verses from the Qur'an. He cites two traditions related to the Night of the Jinn, one of which indicates that he followed Muḥammad there and witnessed some miraculous events, and another account in which he admits he was not there. Ibn Rajā' s larger point is to illustrate the differences among Muslims in reciting the Qur'an and recording its content in order to demonstrate its human origins.

أنه كان ذات يوم جالساً مع طوائف كثيرة وتذاكروا ليلة الجن. فقال: والله ما شاهدتها منّا أحد مع النبي. فقالوا له: ولا أنت؟ قال: ولا أنا. فأكذب نفسه وهو لا يعلم. مما انضاف إلى ذلك من أنه حرّف القرآن وبدّله وزاد فيه وكذب على نبيهم وشهد ... الصحابة كلهم.

فصل

- [٦٦] وأما زيد ابن ثابت فإنه عمد إلى الكتاب الذي كان محمد يصليّ به في آخر صلاة الصبح فزاده 5 في القرآن. فأنكر الصحابة عليه ذلك وقالوا: تزيد في القرآن ما ليس فيه. فقال: من لم يقول هذا فقد كذب على محمد. ثم لم تزل العداوة بينه وبين ابن مسعود إلى أن ماتا. لأن ابن مسعود كان لا يقول بقراءة سورة الحمد ولا سورة قل أعوذ بربّ الناس ولا سورة قل أعوذ بربّ الفلق في مصحفه. وكان زيد ابن ثابت يقرأ بهنّ ويزيد في مصحفه دعاء قانون صلاة الصبح. وابن مسعود لا يرى ذلك. وكان 10 في مصحف زيد: إِنَّ السَّاعَةَ آتِيَةٌ أَكَادُ أُخْفِيهَا مِنْ نَفْسِي فَكَيْفَ أَطَّلِعُ عَلَيْهَا. والناس كلهم ينكرون ذلك ويقرؤون: إِنَّ السَّاعَةَ آتِيَةٌ أَكَادُ أُخْفِيهَا، لا غير.

فصل آخر

[٦٧] وأما مصحف عثمان، فروي عنه أنه لما وضعه أطلع فيه فقال: أرى لناً وستقيمه العرب بألسنتها. فروي عن عائشة أنها قالت: في مصحف عثمان، بطل كثير.

[وستقيمه || C 30^v] أطلع || عثمان C 13 عين C غير 11 علياً C علياً 10 ماماديوس C محمد 5

بطا C بطل 14 تسقيمه C

that but me.”¹⁵⁴ It was also reported about him that one day he was sitting with many people and they mentioned the Night of the Jinn. So he said: “By God, no one among us witnessed it with the prophet.” They said to him: “Not even you?” He said: “Not even me.”¹⁵⁵ So he made himself a liar without knowing it. In addition to that, he corrupted the Qur’an and he changed it and added to it and he lied about their prophet and all of his companions ... testified [to that].

Section [1]

[66] As for Zayd ibn Thābit, he took the book with which Muḥammad would pray the end of the morning prayer, and added it to the Qur’an. The companions rejected that and said: “You have added to the Qur’an what should not be in it.” But he responded: “Whoever does not say this has lied about Muḥammad.” Then the hostility between him and Ibn Mas‘ūd continued until the two of them died, because Ibn Mas‘ūd did not accept in his codex the recitation of sura “Praise”¹⁵⁶ nor sura: “Say: I seek protection with the Lord of people,”¹⁵⁷ and the sura: “Say: I seek protection with the Lord of dawn.”¹⁵⁸ Zayd ibn Thābit had been reciting them and added the morning prayer canon to his codex. Ibn Mas‘ūd did not think that was proper. And Zayd’s codex contained: “Indeed the hour is coming. I almost have hidden it from myself. So how can I make you know it?” But all of the people deny that and recited: “Indeed the hour is coming. I almost have hidden it” without anything else.¹⁵⁹

Another Section [2]

[67] As for ‘Uthmān’s codex, it was reported that when he put it together, he examined it. Then he said: “I saw grammatical mistakes but the Arabs will correct it by practice.” So it was reported from ‘Ā’isha that she said: “‘Uthmān’s codex [contains] many false things.”¹⁶⁰

154 Ibn Rajā’ took these contradictory accounts from Ibrāhīm al-Nazzām as seen in Ibn Qutayba, *Ta’wīl mukhtalaf al-ḥadīth*, 27; Ibn Qutayba, *Traité des divergences*, #37e. For allusions to his presence there, see Abū Dāwūd, *Sunan Abu Dawud*, 1:47, 71 (Book 1, #39, 84).

155 In this version, Ibn Mas‘ūd states he was not present at the Night of the Jinn; see Abū Dāwūd, *Sunan Abu Dawud*, 1:71 (Book 1, #85); and Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, 1:562 (Book 4, #1007).

156 Q 1.

157 Q 114.

158 Q 113.

159 Q 20:15.

160 This passage is in reference to the creation of the alleged ‘Uthmānic codex, and the comments Ibn Rajā’ cites are from the fabrication of hostile legends between the Ahl al-Bayt and the Umayyads.

[٦٨] ولما أكل لعثمان مصحفه قال لعبد الله ابن مسعود: إحرق مصحفك واقرأ في مصحفني، فقال له: ما كنت بالذي يَحِلُّ الإيمان ويتبع الكفر. فأعلمه أن مصحفه كفر، فأمر بالوثوب عليه وضربه ضرباً عنيفاً وكسر له ضلعان. ولم يزل كل واحد منهما يطلق في صاحبه القبيح إلى (أن) ماتا.

فصل آخر

[٦٩] وروي عن أبي بكر أنه كان يقرأ: وَجَاءَتْ سَكْرَةُ الْحَقِّ بِالْمَوْتِ، والناس كلهم يقرؤون: وَجَاءَتْ سَكْرَاتُ الْمَوْتِ بِالْحَقِّ. وروي عن عمر ابن الخطاب أنه كان يقرأ إذا نودي للصلاة يوم الجمعة: فَأَنْصَبُوا إِلَى ذِكْرِ اللَّهِ، والناس كلهم يقرؤون: فَاسْعُوا إِلَى ذِكْرِ اللَّهِ. مع اختلاف كثير ولو بيننا على آخره لطال به الشرح.

[٧٠] فهؤلاء الصدر الأول وصحابة محمد الذين قرؤوا عليه وكل لهم القرآن في حياته. لم يتفقوا في سورة ولا في تلاوة. ومصحف أحدهم حمله جمل والآخر دونه، وبعضهم يكفر بعضاً إلى أن ماتوا بأجمعهم. ولم تزال الناس في اختلاف بعده في القرآن إلى زمان مروان ابن الحكم. فأخرج لهم هذا المصحف الذي هو في أيديهم اليوم. وحمل الناس عليه وأحرق ما سواه من المصاحف. ونحن نبين ذلك في موضعه إن شاء الله تعالى.

فصل آخر

[٧١] فلما اجتمع الناس على هذا المصحف حصل لأهل المدينة إمام وهو نافع ابن أبي نعيم. فصنّف للإعراب هذا المصحف لا غير. وحصل لأهل مكة إمام يقال له ابن كثير، خالف نافع في إعراب

ابينا C [بيننا || فاصغوا C [فأسعوا 7 يقرون C [يقرؤون 5 ظلفان C [ضلعان 3 العثمان C [لعثمان 1

كبير C [كثير 16 انشاء C [شاء 13 C 31^r [من 12 الحكيم C [الحكم 11 ماماديوس C [محمد 9

[68] When ‘Uthmān’s codex was completed, he said to ‘Abd Allāh ibn Mas‘ūd: “Burn your codex and recite from my codex.” So he replied to him: “I am not one who would leave the faith and follow unbelief.” So [Ibn Mas‘ūd] informed him that his codex [contained] unbelief; consequently, [‘Uthmān] commanded [someone] to jump on [Ibn Mas‘ūd] and he struck him viciously and fractured two ribs. Each one of them continued to disparage the other until the two of them died.

Another Section [3]

[69] It was reported that Abū Bakr used to recite: “The agony of death brings the truth,” while all of the people recite: “The agonies of death bring the truth.”¹⁶¹ And it was reported about ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb, that when one was called to prayer on Friday, he used to recite: “Listen to the reminder of God,” while all of the people recited: “Seek the reminder of God.”¹⁶² With so many differences, if I were to explain them, then it would take a long time.

[70] So those are the first generation and Muḥammad’s own companions, who recited the Qur’an after him and to whom he completed it for them in his lifetime. They did not agree on a [single] sura or a recitation. One of their codices was carried by a camel, while the other [codex] without [a camel] and some of them would call others unbelievers until all of them died. The people continued to disagree afterwards about the Qur’an until the time of Marwān ibn al-Ḥakam.¹⁶³ Then he produced for them this book which is in their possession today. He forced it upon the people and burned the other books. We will explain that in [another] place, God willing.

Another Section [4]

[71] When the people agreed about this book, the people of Medina happened to have an imam and he was Nāfi‘ ibn Abī Nu‘aym.¹⁶⁴ For the parsing,¹⁶⁵ he designated this codex and nothing else. The people of Mecca happened to have an imam called Ibn Kathir who differed from Nāfi‘ in the parsing

161 Q 50:19.

162 Q 62:9.

163 On Marwān ibn al-Ḥakam (d. 685), the fourth Umayyad caliph, who led another editorial stage in the formation of the text of the Qur’an see *EI*², 6:621–623.

164 On Nāfi‘ ibn ‘Abd al-Raḥmān ibn Abī Nu‘aym (Nā‘īm) al-Laythī (d. 785), see Sezgin, *GAS*, 9–10; *EI*², 7:878.

165 In this section, Ibn Rajā’ is using *irāb* to refer to the case endings and noun declensions in the Arabic and how they are vocalized and inflected in the recitation of the Qur’an.

القرآن. ثم حصل لأهل البصرة إمام آخر يقال له أبو عمرو ابن العلاء. اختلفوا في اسمه فقال قوم اسمه وكنيته واحدة، وقال قوم غيرهم بل اسمه العرياني. خالف من قبله في إعراب القرآن.

[٧٢] وعبد الله ابن عامر وعاصم وابن حمزة والكسائيّ فغير متفقين أيضاً في إعراب القرآن.

فهذا يرفع ما ينصبه هذا، وهذا يحفظ ما يرفعه هذا. ولم يتفقوا في شيء منه. وأي شيء بعد هذا

الاختلاف يريدون، وأي باطل بعد الخطأ واللحن يتبعون؟ ثم إن هؤلاء السبعة حمل كل واحد منهم

القرآن على لغة بلده. وما وافق أولئك العرب الذين هم قاطنون وحملوه على لغة من مضى من فصحاء

الجاهلية وشعرائهم المتقدمين. وانطوى إلى كل إمام من هؤلاء السبعة خلق كثير قرؤوا عليهم بجميع

هذا اللغات. فلم يزالوا لذلك إلى أن جاء بعدهم قوم آخرون، فنظروا إلى المشهور من لغات العرب

الذين لم يشكوا فيها. هؤلاء السبعة الذين أسميناهم أثبتوها للناس وما لا يعرف فهذا إن (ما) كان صواباً

في اللغة شيدوه. وقالوا لا يجوز القراءة ولا السور ولا الصلاة بها. كل ذلك اختيار من أنفسهم.

[٧٣] تقول لهم: أخبرونا الآن عن هؤلاء السبعة الذين قد استقدم إليهم هذا القراءة. هل قال لكم

صاحبكم أنكم مستخلفون من بعدي في القرآن؟ وأنه سيحيي في الزمان الفلاني سبعة نفر أسماؤهم:

نافع وأبو عمرو وحمزة والكسائيّ وعاصم وابن كثير وابن عامر، فاقروا القرآن كما يقرؤونكم؟ فإنهم

يقولوا: لا.

[٧٤] تقول لهم: ما وجدنا حقيقة قوله لكم إن القرآن أنزل على سبعة أحرف. ما أراد به؟ فإن منهم

طائفة تقول إن ما معنى قوله سبعة أحرف يعني: وعد ووعد وجنة ونار وترهيب وترغيب وأحكام.

[مستخلفون 12 C 31^٧] أسميناهم 9 العريانيّ C [العريانيّ || اسر C] اسمه 2 عمرو أبو العلاء C [العلاء 1

تقول C [نقول 15 كبير C] كثير || الكسائيّ C [والكسائيّ 13 مستخلفوت C

of the Qur'an. Then the people of Baṣra happened to have another imam called Abū 'Āmr ibn al-'Ālā'.¹⁶⁶ They disagree about his name. Some people say his name and his nickname are the same and other people say his name is al-'Aryānī. He disagreed with whoever came before him about the parsing of the Qur'an.

[72] 'Abd Allāh ibn 'Āmir¹⁶⁷ and 'Āṣim¹⁶⁸ and Ibn Ḥamza and al-Kisā'ī¹⁶⁹ could not agree as well about the parsing of the Qur'an. One would put in the nominative case that which another would put in the accusative, while another would keep it nominative. They did not agree about any of it. What do they want after this disagreement, and what falsehood, after the errors and the grammatical mistakes, have they followed? Indeed, of those seven, each one of them conveyed the Qur'an according to his own language along with what agreed with the local sedentary Arabs. They knew it according to the language of the one who preceded [him] by articulate Arabs of the pre-Islamic period and their ancient poets. Every one of these seven had many followers to whom they recited in all of these languages. They continued that until other people came after them, and they looked at the well-known Arabic languages which they did not doubt. Those seven abovementioned established them for the people and those who did not know, if it was [not] structurally correct in the language, they would settle it. They would say no recitation or chapter or prayer is acceptable [apart from] it. They selected all of those [matters] on their own.

[73] You should say to them: Tell us now about those seven whom you have followed as an example concerning this recitation. Did your companion [Muḥammad] say to you in the Qur'an: "You are appointed as successors after me"?¹⁷⁰ And that the seven will come at such-and-such time, naming them: Nāfi' and Abū 'Amar and Ḥamza and al-Kisā'ī and 'Āṣim and Ibn Kathir and Ibn 'Āmir, and you should recite the Qur'an just as they recite it to you? They will say "No."

[74] We say to them: We have not found the reason he told you that the Qur'an was revealed in seven letters of reciting. What did he mean by this? Indeed, one group among them says: The meaning of his statement "the seven letters of reciting" means a promise and threat and Paradise and Hell and fear and covetousness and judgment.

166 Abū 'Āmr ibn al-'Ālā' (d. 771) was a Basran Qur'an reciter and known as a transmitter of one the seven different versions of the vocalized text.

167 Abū 'Umar 'Abd Allāh ibn 'Āmir (d. 736), *ET*², 3:704.

168 'Āṣim ibn Abī al-Najjūd (d. 745) transmitted of one of the seven readings of the Qur'an; *ET*², 1:706.

169 On al-Kisā'ī, see *ET*², 5:174.

170 This quotation is not in the Qur'an because the answer to this rhetorical question is no.

[٧٥] فنقول لهم: هذا غير جائز الكلام. لأنه لو كان ذلك، كذلك كان يقول: أنزل القرآن على سبعة وجوه أو سبعة ضروب أو سبعة خصال أو ما أشبه ذلك. وإنما قال: سبعة أحرف فتبتان ما بين هذا وهذا. فإن أقرؤا بهذا ولم يرجعوا، فإنه لا أئمة لهم. فلا يي معنى تسندوا القرآن إلى هؤلاء السبعة إذا كانوا لم يقرؤوا على صاحبهم ولا كانوا في أيامه ولا وافقوا صحابته؟ ولا قال لكم قبل الموت أنه سيكون بعدي سبعة رجال فاقروا القرآن بلغتهم. وإنما ميزوه بعقولهم وحملوه على لغة العرب وما وافق بعض النحويين. بل من كان من تحمیل النحو قد أخرج فيه خطأ كثيراً لا يوافق بالنحو. وقد ذكرنا ذلك في كِتَابِ نَوَادِرِ الْمُفَسِّرِينَ، مما علمناه.

[٧٦] فما الفائدة في اتباع هؤلاء الكفار إذ خالفوا صاحبهم وأصحابه؟ ولم جعلتموهم أئمة تقتدون بهم؟ ولو عمدتم إلى كل من قرأ عليهم فأسندوا القراءة إليهم، فصححتم بعضاً وأخطيتم بعضاً. فإنه لا يوجد عندهم في ذلك حجة صحيحة ولا يرجعون إلا إلى هؤلاء السبعة. فنقول لهم بحق نلزمكم أن تعرفونا القراءة الذي كان نبيك يقرأ بها. فينبغي لكم أن تعرفوا ذلك ولا تضيعوه. فإنهم لا يرجعون إلا إلى هؤلاء السبعة لا غير. فنقول لهم الآن قد بطل قول نبيكم في القرآن في سورة الحجر: إِنَّا نَحْنُ نَزَّلْنَا الذِّكْرَ وَإِنَّا لَهُ لَحَافِظُونَ. فأخبرونا كيف حفظه وهؤلاء قد غيروه وبدلوه؟

[الفصل الثامن]

[٧٧] ذكر ما أسقطوه من القرآن. 15

[٧٨] رروا في أحاديثهم الصحيحة عندهم أنه قد سقط أشياء كثيرة، أنا ذاكرها إن شاء الله. من ذلك في سورة براءة سقط أولها ولم يعرفوها. وكتبوها في المصحف بغير: بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ.

كثيراً [C] كثيراً 6 32^f [C] قال 4 معناه [C] معنى 3 وإنما أشبه ذلك [C] adds: ذلك 2 جازياً [C] جازئ 1
[C] شاء 16 بحافظون [C] لِحَافِظُونَ 13 نبينهم [C] نبينك 11 فصحيحهم [C] فصحيحتم 9 نورد [C] نَوَادِرِ 7
انشأ

[75] So we respond to them: This is nonsense. Because if it were that, likewise it would be said: the Qur'an was revealed by seven ways or seven versions or seven characteristics or something like that. Rather he said: "Seven letters of reciting" so this distinguishes between this and that. If they agree with this and they do not respond, then they have been rebuked. Why would you corroborate the Qur'an with those seven, since they did not recite from their companion [Muhammad] as they were not from his time or even [the time of] his companions? He did not say to you before death that: "After me, there will indeed be seven men who will recite the Qur'an in their own language." Rather, they used their own reasoning and they knew it according to the Arabic language and that upon which some grammarians agreed. But whoever uses the grammar would discover many errors in it that disagreed with the grammar. I have already mentioned that in the *Book of Amusing Anecdotes of the Commentators* from what I knew of it.¹⁷¹

[76] What is the point of following those unbelievers since they differ from their companion [Muhammad] and his companions? Why did you set them up as leaders to follow them? If you support everyone who recited to them, and you support their recitation as authoritative, then you should have claimed some correct and others wrong. A sound argument is not found among them about that and they only refer to those seven. So we say to them in truth, we need you to show us the way of reciting in which your prophet used to recite it. It should make sense for you to know that and not lose it. For they only refer to those seven, no one else. Now we say to them, your prophet's statement in the Qur'an in surat "al-Hijr" has been invalidated: "It is we who revealed the reminder and we will indeed be its guardian."¹⁷² So tell us, how did he guard it when those [ones] have changed and altered it?

[Chapter 8]

[77] On what they have lost from the Qur'an.

[78] They transmitted in their authentic hadith reports that many things were lost that we shall mention, God willing. For instance, in sura "Repentance"¹⁷³ its beginning was lost, and they did not know it. They wrote it in the

171 See Swanson, "Būluṣ ibn Rajā," 545.

172 Q 15:9.

173 Q 9:1.

وهي السّورة التاسعة من القرآن سوا سورة الحمد. وسائر القرآن في أول كلّ سورة منه مكتوب في المصحف: بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ، إلا سورة براءة وحدها.

[٧٩] وقال حدثني محمد بن أحمد، قال حدثني أبو أبي قديد - أبو القاسم عليّ ابن الحسن ابن خلف ابن قديد، قال حدثنا عبد الرحمن ابن عبد الله ابن عبد الحكم قال حدثنا أبي، قال حدثنا مالك ابن أنس، يرفع الحديث إلى عمر ابن الخطاب، أن خطب بالناس في آخر خلافته. فقال: أيها الناس، أوصيكم برجم الزاني والزانية، فالله الله لا تقطعوا ذلك. ولا يقولن أحدكم ما نجد في القرآن الرّجم ولا نجد الجلد. فالذي نفسي بيده لقد كانت في القرآن وقرأناها على محمد وهي: الشيخ والشيخة فارجموهم البتّة كما قضيا من الشّهوة بكلام الله. والله عزيز رحيم. ولكنها سقطت من القرآن.

[٨٠] ورووا أيضاً في حديثهم الصحيح عندهم أنّ سورة الطلاق كانت تعادل سورة البقرة، مائتي

10 آية وخمسة وثمانون آية وزاد فيه. وهي اليوم إثني عشر آية وسقط بقيتها. وأيضاً أنّ سورة البقرة كان عددها ألف آية وهي اليوم مائتي خمسة وثمانون آية وسقط بقيتها. ولقد أقام عمر ابن الخطاب إثني عشر

1 [أول] C 32^v 3 [القاسم] C 4 [الحكم] C 6 [الحاكم] C 4 [الحسين] C 3 [القاسم] C 32^v 1

بعد C adds [كانت] 9 قضينا C [قضيا] 8 ماماديوس C [محمد] 7 تغطوا C

codex without: “In the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate.” It is the ninth sura in the Qur’an after sura “Praise.”¹⁷⁴ The rest of the Qur’an, in the beginning of every sura, it is written in the book: “In the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate,” except sura “Repentance” alone.

[79] He said that Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad [ibn al-Faraj Abū Bakr al-Qammāh]¹⁷⁵ reported from Abū Abī Qudayd – Abū al-Qāsim ‘Alī ibn al-Ḥasan ibn Khalaf ibn Qudayd,¹⁷⁶ from ‘Abd al-Raḥmān ibn ‘Abd Allāh ibn ‘Abd al-Ḥakam¹⁷⁷ from his father, from Mālik ibn Anas,¹⁷⁸ tracing the hadith to ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb, that he preached to the people at the end of his caliphate. He said: “People, I command you to stone the male and female who commit adultery. For God’s sake, do not forbid that. No one should say we cannot find the stoning verse in the Qur’an and we cannot find the whipping [verse]. I swear by the one who possesses my soul that it was in the Qur’an and we recite it on the authority of Muḥammad and it was: ‘The man and woman, as they consummate their lust, stone them absolutely according to God’s word. For God is Almighty and Compassionate’. But they were lost from the Qur’an.”¹⁷⁹

[80] They also narrated in their authentic hadith that sura “Divorce”¹⁸⁰ was equal in length to sura “The Cow,”¹⁸¹ two hundred and eighty-five verses and more. Today it is twelve verses, and its remainder is lost. In addition, sura “The Cow”¹⁸² was numbered to a thousand verses and today it is two hundred and

174 This is al-Fātiḥa Q 1. Ibn Rajā’ often denotes sūras by their opening word or phrase.

175 We know that Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad ibn al-Faraj Abū Bakr al-Qammāh (fl. 980) and Ibn Qudayd (d. 924) were connected as successive transmitters of Ibn ‘Abd al-Ḥakam’s *Futūḥ Miṣr*; see Ibn ‘Abd al-Ḥakam, *The History of the Conquest of Egypt, North Africa and Spain: Known as the Futūḥ Miṣr of Ibn ‘Abd al-Ḥakam*, transl. Charles Torrey (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1922), 10. This passage demonstrates that Ibn Rajā’ studied with Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad ibn al-Faraj Abū Bakr al-Qammāh.

176 ‘Alī ibn al-Ḥasan ibn Khalaf ibn Qudayd (d. 924) was a teacher for the Egyptian historian al-Kindī.

177 ‘Abd al-Raḥmān ibn ‘Abd Allāh ibn ‘Abd al-Ḥakam (d. 871) was a Maliki Egyptian jurist and author of the work *Futūḥ Miṣr*. See Sezgin, *GAS*, 355–356; *ET*², 3:674.

178 On Mālik ibn Anas, see Sezgin, *GAS*, 457–464.

179 A close version of this hadith is found in Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, 4:462–463 (Book 29, #4418). This report is also found in Mālik ibn Anas, *Al-Muwatta’at: The Recension of Yahyā b. Yahyā al-Laythī (d. 234/848): A Translation of the Royal Moroccan Edition*, ed. Mohammad Fadel and Connell Monette (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2019), 712 (Arabic Book 41 Ḥudūd, hadith 1512). This verse is also mentioned by al-Kindī; see Tartar, “Dialogue islamo-chrétien sous le calife al-Ma’mūn,” 115–116.

180 Q 65.

181 Q 2.

182 Q 2.

سنة قبل أن يحكمها. فلما حفظها نحر جزوراً وتصدق به. ولقد رووا عن الحجاج بن يوسف أنه نطق من القرآن خمسةً وثمانون آيةً، وزاد فيه مثل ذلك على ذلك المعين. وهو الذي عشر القرآن وخمسه.

[الفصل التاسع]

[٨١] ذكر اجتماعهم على مصحف مروان ابن الحكم.

- [٨٢] ورووا من طرق كثيرة لا فائدة في تكريرها. منها حديثه محمد ابن أحمد ابن محمد، قال: حدثنا 5 عبد الله ابن محمد ابن عبد العزيز قال: حدثنا أحمد ابن حنبل ، قال: حدثنا سفيان الثوري عن نافع ابن عمر أن محمد توفي ولم يكن للناس مصحف يقرؤوا فيه. وإنما كل واحد منهم يقرأ القرآن من حفظه. فلما تولى أبو بكر، قال لعمر: إني رأيت من الرأي أن أجمع الناس على مصحف واحد. فقال له:

سفيان ابن C [الثوري || جبيل C -حنبل 6 ابن ابو C [ابن 4 C 33^r عشر 2 نجز جزواً C [جزوراً 1
تولى ولي C [تولى 8 مامادبوس C [محمد 7 النوري

eighty-five verses and its remainder is lost.¹⁸³ Indeed, ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb spent twelve years before he mastered it. So when he memorized it, he sacrificed a female camel and he gave it charity. Indeed, they narrate about al-Ḥajjāj ibn Yūsuf¹⁸⁴ that he added diacritical pointing to eighty-five verses from the Qur’an and he added to it similar things of different meaning.¹⁸⁵ He was also the one who [divided] the Qur’an into tenths and fifths.

[Chapter 9]

[81] On their agreement regarding Marwān ibn al-Ḥakam’s codex.

[82] They narrated [this hadith] in many ways, so there is no point in repeating [all of] them. Among them is the hadith of Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad,¹⁸⁶ from ‘Abd Allāh ibn Muḥammad ibn ‘Abd al-‘Azīz,¹⁸⁷ from Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal,¹⁸⁸ [from Sufyān ibn ‘Uyayna]¹⁸⁹ from Sufyān al-Thawrī,¹⁹⁰ from Nāfi‘ ibn ‘Umar,¹⁹¹ that Muḥammad passed away and there was no codex for the people to read. However, every one of them recited the Qur’an from his memory. So when Abū Bakr came to power, he said to ‘Umar: “I think it is proper that I get the people to agree upon a single codex.” So he replied to him: “Will

183 In today’s numbering, Q 2 contains 286 verses.

184 Al-Ḥajjāj ibn Yūsuf al-Thaqafī (d. 714); *EI*², 3:39.

185 The Latin translation conflicts with the Arabic here, stating that al-Ḥajjāj ibn Yūsuf “removed/detraxit” 85 verses from the Qur’an. According to an Islamic hadith report from Ibn Abī Dāwūd (d. 929) in his *Kitāb al-Maṣāḥif*, he made 11 orthographical changes to the consonantal text. See Omar Hamdan, “The Second *Maṣāḥif* Project.” The changes are also mentioned in more detail by al-Kindī; see Tartar, “Dialogue islamo-chrétien sous le calife al-Ma’mūn,” 117.

186 I have not identified Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad. Possibilities include the Egyptian Shāfi‘ī *qāḍī* Abū Bakr Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad al-Kinānī (878–955), known as Ibn al-Ḥaddād (Sezgin, *GAS*, 497); and the hadith collector Abū al-Ḥusayn Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad (917–1012), known as Ibn Jumay‘ al-Ghassānī, who traveled around Iraq, Syria, Persia, and Egypt (Sezgin, *GAS*, 220).

187 ‘Abd Allāh ibn Muḥammad ibn ‘Abd al-‘Azīz al-Baghawī (d. 929) is connected with Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal as one of his transmitters. See Sezgin, *GAS*, 175.

188 Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal (d. 855) is well-known for his hadith collection known as the *Musnad*. See Sezgin, *GAS*, 502–509; *EI*², 1:272.

189 The transmission line below and dates to suggest that this name was left out accidentally by the scribal transmitter. Sufyān ibn ‘Uyayna (d. 811/814) was a Meccan transmitter of hadith found in all six canonical collections. See Sezgin, *GAS*, 96; *EI*², 9:772.

190 Sufyān al-Thawrī (d. 778); Sezgin, *GAS*, 518–519; *EI*², 9:770.

191 On Nāfi‘ ibn ‘Umar, see *EI*², 7:876.

نفع لم يفعل محمد؟ فقال: لا بدّ من ذلك. قال عمر: فعلت بعد ذلك أنه الحقّ فقلت له: إفعل ما بدا لك. فأمر منادياً ينادي في الناس: من كان عنده من هذا القرآن فليأتينا به. فكان يجيء أحدهم بالقرآن مكتوباً في خرقة، وآخر يأتي به مكتوباً في شقفة، وآخر يأتي به مكتوباً في كوب النخل - قيل هو الليف - وآخر يجيء به مكتوباً في جلد. وكلّهم جاء أخذوه منه ولقّوه إلى أن كمل مصحفاً سوية. ولم يرضى بذلك علي ابن أبي طالب ولا عبد الله ابن مسعود. فكتب كلّ واحد منهما مصحف علي 5 حدة. ولم يظهره مخافة أبي بكر. وكتب أبو بكر بذلك المصحف إلى سائر الناس والأمصار. وكان يقرأ حياة أبي بكر كلها وحياة عمر.

[٨٣] فلما قتل عمر دفع ذلك المصحف إلى حفصة، وهو يشحظ في دمه. وكانت حفصة زوجة محمد، فقال لها: احتفظي بهذا المصحف ولا تخرجه لأحد. فقد بلغني أنّ علي ابن أبي طالب وابن مسعود وضعا مصحفين وأنا خائف منهما أن يظهرهما بعدي ويبتلا هذا. فيكون هذا في يدك، وإذا 10 اختلفوا الناس في القرآن، فاقري في هذا المصحف. فلما مات عمر وولي عثمان أخرج مصحف آخر مخالفاً لمصحف أبي بكر. ولم يكن لعثمان هيبة عمر فأظهر علي ابن أبي طالب مصحف لبيته وشيعته. [٨٤] وأظهر عبد الله ابن مسعود مصحف، وأظهر زيد ابن ثابت أيضاً مصحفه. وكان الناس يقرؤون في هذه المصاحف كلّها. واختلفوا في القرآن حتى إنّ الرجل يلقي الرجل فيقول له: إني كافر بما معك من القرآن. فلم تزال هذا المصاحف كلّها ظاهرة، مختلفة إلى خلافة مروان ابن الحكم. توجه 15 إلى حفصة ابنة عمر - زوجة محمد - وقال لها: إنّ الناس قد اختلفوا في القرآن كما قد علمتي، فادفعي إليّ المصحف الذي دفعه إليكي أمير المؤمنين عمر، لأحمل الناس عليه وأعطّل ما سواه. فقالت: عهد الله إلى أبي أن لا أدفعه لأحد. فلم يزال بها إلى أن دفعته إليه، بعد أن عاهدها أن يرده إليها. فقربه

C [المصحف 6 عمر C علي 5 جاني C جاء 4 مناد C [منادياً 2 ماماديوس C محمد 1
C [طالب 12 ماماديوس C محمد 9 يبشحط منشحط C adds [شحظ || حفيصة C حفصة 8 33^v
C [وأعطّل 17 ماماديوس C محمد 16 يلقي C [يلقي || هذا C هذه 14 شيعه C [وشيعته || ابيطالب
فقال C [فقال || 34^f

we do what Muḥammad never did himself?" He said: "There is no way out of this." 'Umar said: "I knew after that, that it was the truth, so I said to him, 'Do what is required of you.'" So he commanded an announcer to tell the people: "Whoever has any of this Qur'an, bring it to us." So one of them would bring the Qur'an written on a rag, and another would bring it written on pottery, and another would bring it written on a palm cup – meaning a leaf – and another would bring it written on leather. And whoever came [with any piece whatsoever], they took it from him, and made it up together into an acceptable codex. 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib and 'Abd Allāh ibn Mas'ūd did not accept that. So each one of them wrote his own codex. They did not make them public for fear of Abū Bakr. And Abū Bakr wrote [supporting] that codex to the rest of the people and the regions. It was recited during Abū Bakr's lifetime and the lifetime of 'Umar.¹⁹²

[83] When 'Umar was killed, he handed over that codex to Ḥafṣa, while he was crying out in his own blood.¹⁹³ Ḥafṣa was Muḥammad's wife, so he said to her: "Keep this codex and do not show it to anyone. Someone told me that 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib and Ibn Mas'ūd composed two codices and I am afraid that they will reveal these [codices] after [my death] and make this one invalid. So this one will remain in your possession, and if the people disagree about the Qur'an, then recite from this codex." When 'Umar died and 'Uthmān came to power, he issued a different codex than Abū Bakr's codex. 'Uthmān did not have the same prestige as 'Umar, so 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib disclosed the codex to his children and his faction.

[84] 'Abd Allāh ibn Mas'ūd disclosed a codex, and Zayd ibn Thābit also disclosed his codex. The people used to read in all of these codices. They disagreed about the Qur'an, to the extent that one man would encounter another man and he would say to him: "I do not believe your part of the Qur'an." So all of these codices remained publicly different until Marwān ibn al-Ḥakam's caliphate. He went to Ḥafṣa, the daughter of 'Umar – Muḥammad's wife – and he said to her: "The people have disagreed about the Qur'an just as you know, so hand over the codex to me which 'Umar the Commander of the Believers handed over to you, so I can induce the people toward it and I will ban everything else."¹⁹⁴ She replied: "My father promised God that I should not hand it over to anyone." So he did not stop until she handed it over to him, after he promised her that he

192 This hadith is close to that narrated in al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, 6:424–425 (Book 66, #4986).

193 Presumably, this refers to the moments after he was stabbed and just before his death by assassination.

194 Ḥafṣa died in 665, while Marwān ibn al-Ḥakam was caliph 684–685, so the historical dates of this encounter are problematic in the sources.

بالتأثر ومصحف عثمان ومصحف علي ومصحف ابن مسعود ومصحف زيد ابن ثابت. فأحرق الجميع وأخرج الناس هذا المصحف الذي هو في أيديهم إلى اليوم. فمن كان هذا صنيعهم بقرآتهم وقد حصلوا عند سائر الأمم المخالفين لهم لهواً، ولعباً، لا يشغلهم ذلك حتى يدعون على التوراة والإنجيل أنهما مغيران في موضع، ويصححونها ويستشهدوا بها في موضع آخر. ولكنهم لا يفقهون ولا يعلمون.

فصل آخر [العاشر]

5

[١٨٥] ثم أعجب من هذا قوله لهم في القرآن في سورة آل عمران عن القرآن: وَمَا يَعْلَمُ تَأْوِيلَهُ إِلَّا اللَّهُ. ثم قال بعد ذلك: وَالرَّاسِخُونَ فِي الْعِلْمِ يَقُولُونَ آمَنَّا بِهِ كُلٌّ مِنْ عِنْدِ رَبِّنَا. فأعلمهم أن هذا القرآن ليس له تأويل أصلاً. وأمروا العلماء والراسخين في العلم أن لا يسألوا عن تفسيره. وإن يقولوا: آمَنَّا بِهِ كُلٌّ مِنْ عِنْدِ رَبِّنَا، وهذا دليل على أن محمد لا يعلم له تأويل. كان يقول: وَمَا يَعْلَمُ تَأْوِيلَهُ إِلَّا اللَّهُ، هو ومحمد. فإن كان الله الذي أرسله، على زعمكم، إلى الناس بهذا القرآن، فقد كان ينبغي أن يعلم تفسيره ويفسره 10 لهم إذا كان فيه من الصعوبة والعجائب ما لا يقدر أحداً على تفسيره، ولا تبلغ عقولهم أن يفسروه. والله رؤوف بعباده غير معنّف عليهم، ولا يكلفهم غير طاقتهم لأنه قال: وَمَا يَعْلَمُ تَأْوِيلَهُ إِلَّا اللَّهُ.

[و 12 || ماماديوس C] ومحمد || ماماديوس C [محمد 9 || الله adds C] عِنْدِ || كَلَهُ C [كُلُّ || امنا C] آمَنَّا 7

would return it to her. Then he threw it into the fire along with the codices of ‘Uthmān, ‘Alī, Ibn Mas‘ūd, and Zayd ibn Thābit. He destroyed all of them by fire and produced this codex for the people, which is in their possession until today.¹⁹⁵ Thus, those who did this with their Qur’an – who are viewed among the rest of their opposing groups as a joke and whimsical – are not concerned with [such a corruption], but rather claim that the Torah and the Gospel have been changed in a particular passage, while they say it is true – and testify through it – in another passage! But they do not comprehend or understand.

Chapter [10]

[85] What is more strange than this passage is what he says to them in the Qur’an in sura “The Family of ‘Imrān” about the Qur’an: “No one knows its interpretation except God.”¹⁹⁶ Then he said after that: “And those who are firm in knowledge say: ‘We believe in it; all of it is from Our Lord.’”¹⁹⁷ So he taught them that this Qur’an had no original interpretation for it. The scholars and those who are firm in knowledge were commanded not to ask about its interpretation. And if they say: “We believe in it; all is from our Lord,” then this proves that Muḥammad did not know its interpretation. He would say: “No one knows its interpretation except God,” Him and Muḥammad. If God was the one who sent him, as you allege, to the people with this Qur’an, then it would make sense that he would have known its interpretation and he should have explained it to them, when it had difficulties and strange matters in it which no one else was able to interpret, and which their minds could not comprehend to interpret it. God is gracious to his worshippers without censure for them and he would not

195 According to the Islamic sources regarding this story, they explain that Abū Bakr and ‘Umar originally asked Zayd ibn Thābit, a former scribe of Muḥammad, to collate together the verses from believers in the community. After their deaths, this collection passed into the possession of Ḥafṣa bint ‘Umar, daughter of ‘Umar and wife of the deceased Prophet. Later, ‘Uthmān consulted this collection as the basis for his codex, which was again edited by Zayd ibn Thābit. Then he had all variant versions of the Qur’an ordered to be burned. Some scholars are dubious of the double collection legend, regarding the ‘Uthmānic codex or later as perhaps the earliest attempt at a collection and canonization of a text. The Ḥafṣa codex story is somewhat different in al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, 6:425–426 (Book 66, #4987). See also Harald Motzki, “Muṣḥaf,” in *EQ*, 5 vols., ed. Jane Dammen McAuliffe (Leiden: Brill, 2001–2006), 3:463–466; and Marco Schöller, “Post-Enlightenment Academic Study of the Qur’an,” in *EQ*, 4:187–208.

196 Q 3:7.

197 Q 3:7.

فقد أعلمهم حينئذ أن عقولهم تعجز عن تفسيره. فكان لما وجه إليهم بما لا يعرفونه، واجب أن يعلمهم تفسيره على شأن الرسول. وإلا فما الفائدة في ذلك؟ وكيف ينبغي أن يكون الله - عز وجل - يوجه إلى الناس رسولا برسالة فلا يعرف لها تفسير؟

[٨٦] وليس هذا معنى أن يتصرف إليه إلا معنى واحداً وهو أن الله عالم من هذا الرسول أنه وكيل لا يفهم الرسالة وتفسيرها، في واحد. فوجه برسالة لا غير، وتركهم يتشطحون في التفسير ويختلفون فيه، كما ذكرنا فيما تقدم من كلامنا. فإن كان ذلك كذلك فلا فائدة في اتباع كتاب لا يعرف له تفسير، ولا اتباع رسولا لا يعلم تفسير ما جاء به.

[الفصل الحادي عشر]

[٨٧] ذكر ما في القرآن ما لا فائدة فيه.

10 [٨٨] قوله في سورة براءة: أَلَمْ يَعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ يَعْلَمُ سِرَّهُمْ وَنَجْوَاهُمْ. وهل النجوى والسر إلا واحد؟ فكيف ينبغي لأحد يقول: سرّك وسرّك؟

[٨٩] وقال في سورة عمّ يتساءلون - النبأ - وَجَعَلْنَا نَوْمَكُمْ سُباتاً. وهل السبات إلا النوم؟ فكيف ينبغي أن يقول: إنّي جعلت نومك نوماً؟

والسرّ || سرهم ونجواهم C [وَنَجْوَاهُمْ] || تعلمون C [يَعْلَمُوا] || C omits [أ] 10 يتشطحون C [يَتَشَطِّحُونَ] 5

يتسألون C [يَتَسَاءَلُونَ] || البنّا C adds [عمّ] 12 لأحد C [لأحد] 11 واجاب C [واحد] || السرّ C

expect of them something beyond their capability, because he said: “No one knows its interpretation except God.” Therefore, he had taught them that their minds would be incapable of interpreting it. When he addressed them with what they did not know, it required that he teach them about its interpretation according to the messenger. If not, then what is the point of that? Why would God direct a messenger to the people with a message whose interpretation could not be known?

[86] There is no meaning to conclude except one, that is, God knows who that messenger was; he is a custodian who does not understand the message nor its interpretation whatsoever. So he sent a message and nothing else, and he left them to stray in interpretation and they disagreed about it, just as we have mentioned in what preceded from our argument. If that is the case, then there is no point in following a book whose explanation is unknown nor in following a messenger who does not know the interpretation of that which he brought.¹⁹⁸

[Chapter 11]

[87] On that which is irrelevant in the Qur’an.

[88] [Examine] his passage in sura “Repentance”: “Did they not know that God knows their secret and their private conversations?”¹⁹⁹ What is a private conversation and a secret except one and the same [thing]? So why should someone say: “your secret and your secret”?

[89] He said in sura “What are they asking one another?” – The News – “We made your sleep [for] rest.”²⁰⁰ What is rest if not sleep? So why should someone say: “I made your sleep [a] sleep?”²⁰¹

198 On the matter of those firm in knowledge, see Samad, *Ibn Qutaybah’s Contribution to Qur’anic Exegesis*, 97–106.

199 Q 9:78.

200 Q 78:9.

201 Several of these same examples, including Q 78:9, 51:33, and 76:15–16, appear in the section on repetitions in the Qur’an by Ibn Qutayba, *Ta’wil Mushkil al-Qur’an*, 23. See Samad, *Ibn Qutaybah’s Contribution to Qur’anic Exegesis*, 92–94.

[٩٠] وقال في سورة الرَّحْمَانِ: فِيهِمَا فَآكِهَةٌ وَنَخْلٌ وَرُمَّانٌ. وهل النَّخْلُ والرَّمَانُ إِلَّا من الفاكهة؟ أَرَأَيْتُمْ يَا عَمِيانَ القلوب، لو أَنَّ رجلاً حلف بطلاق زوجته البتة أن لا يأكل فاكهة. فأكل رَمَانًا، فإِنَّهم كانوا يرون عليه الطَّلَاقَ لِأَنَّ الرَّمَانَ لا نشكُّ فيه من الفاكهة. فما الفائدة في ذلك؟ [٩١] وقال في سورة هود: وَأَمْطَرْنَا عَلَيْهَا حِجَارَةً مِنْ سِجِّيلٍ مَنْضُودٍ. فكيف ينبغي أن يكون الطَّيْنُ المنضود حجارة؟

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[٩٢] وقال في سورة هل أتى على الإنسان: قَوَارِيرًا، قَوَارِيرَ مَنْ فِضَّةٍ (كيف يكون زجاج من فضة؟) ... وهو وهذا عنبر متعارف عند النَّاسِ كُلِّهِمْ.

[٩٣] وقال في سورة الحجِّ وتسمى سورة الزلزلة: يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ ضُرِبَ مَثَلٌ فَاستَمِعُوا لَهُ إِنَّ الَّذِينَ تَدْعُونَ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ لَنْ يَخْلُقُوا ذُبَابًا وَلَوْ اجتمعوا لَهُ وَإِنْ يَسْلُبُهُمُ الذُّبَابُ شَيْئًا لا يَسْتَنْقِذُوهُ مِنْهُ ضَعُفَ الطَّالِبِ وَالْمَطْلُوبِ، مَا قَدَرُوا اللَّهَ قَدْرَهُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ قَوِيٌّ عَزِيزٌ، ولم يأتي به. ولا أتى بعده من الكلام ما يستدلُّ به على ذلك. فكان مثله كمثل رجل نادى في النَّاسِ منادياً: أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ اسمعوا، فلما اجتمعوا لذلك مضى وتركهم.

10

C [رَمَانًا]، || C 35^r [فَأَكَلَ] || رجل C [رجلاً] 2 كثيره C [فَاكِهَةٌ] || فيها C [فِيهِمَا] || الرحمن C [الرَّحْمَانُ] 1 هل C [الإنسان] 6 منضود C [مَنْضُودٍ] || طين C [سِجِّيلٍ] || عليهم C [عَلَيْهَا] 4 أَلَسْتُمْ كُنْتُمْ تَطْلُقُونَ عَلَيْهِ ولم يأتي به ولا أتى بعده من الكلام وما يستدلُّ به في ذلك C [لَهُ] || يا أيها C [أَيُّهَا] 8 قوم يراتني على الانسان ولا C [يَسْتَنْقِذُوهُ] || يسليهم C [يَسْلُبُهُمْ] || لم C [وَلَوْ] || دياناً C [ذُبَابًا] || لم C [لَنْ] || يدعون C [تَدْعُونَ] 9 المثل منادى C [منادياً] || ناداً C [نادى] 11 استفادوا

[90] He said in sura “The Compassionate”: “In them are fruits and date palms and pomegranates.”²⁰² What are date palms and pomegranates if not fruits? Do you see, blind-hearted ones, suppose a man took an oath to divorce his wife if he would eat fruit. Then he ate pomegranates, so they would think it proper to divorce, because the pomegranate, about which we do not doubt, is a type of fruit. So what is the point of that [repetition]?²⁰³

[91] He also said in sura “Hūd”: “We rained stones of baked clay upon it.”²⁰⁴ How could baked clay be stone?

[92] And he said in sura “Has there come upon Man”: “crystal, crystal of silver.”²⁰⁵ [How can transparent crystal be made of opaque silver?] ...²⁰⁶ And it and this ambergris are well-known among all of the people.

[93] He said in sura “The Pilgrimage” and it is called sura “Earthquake”: “People, an example is presented, so listen to it. Those you invoke besides God will not even create a fly, even if they gathered together for it. If the fly should steal anything from them, they could not recover it from it. The pursuer and pursued are weak. They have not considered God with true consideration. God is Powerful and Almighty,”²⁰⁷ and he did not provide [the example]. After that he did not produce any argument which could support that. He was like a man who calls upon people: “People, listen,” and then when they gather in response, he left them.

202 Q 55:68.

203 This is a pleonasm, or redundancy of words. See this same argument addressed by Ibn Qutayba, *Taʿwīl Mushkil al-Qurʾān*, 186. He defends it by saying that while the date palm and pomegranate are fruits, he separated them from other fruits in the sentence in order to make their status more noble. See Samad, *Ibn Qutaybah’s Contribution to Qurʾānic Exegesis*, 171.

204 Ibn Rajāʾ cites Q 11:82 here (“we rained stones of laminar shale on it”), but he actually quotes the passage from Q 51:33. Ibn Qutayba also cites Q 51:33 in this same section in his work.

205 Q 76:15–16.

206 The manuscript is missing the second half of the argument, which the copyist notes by making a mark. This passage includes an incomplete citation of the sura used to stress misunderstandings in the Qurʾān (“They will be served around vessels of silver and goblets of crystal – crystal of silver – from which they will dispense precise measure”). Ibn Qutayba also addresses this verse as a misunderstanding, quoting the same abbreviated words from the verse. Both figures point out that the cups are described as both crystal, but then made of silver. Since crystal is transparent and silver is opaque, there is an apparent contradiction in the verse. See Ibn Qutayba, *Taʿwīl Mushkil al-Qurʾān*, 23; Samad, *Ibn Qutaybah’s Contribution to Qurʾānic Exegesis*, 93.

207 Q 22:73–74.

[٩٤] وقال في سورة الأنعام: ثَمَانِيَةَ أَزْوَاجٍ مِنَ الضَّأْنِ اثْنَيْنِ وَمِنَ الْمَعْزِ اثْنَيْنِ ... وَمِنَ الْإِبِلِ اثْنَيْنِ وَمِنَ الْبَقَرِ اثْنَيْنِ. تكون جملة ذلك أربعة أزواج. وقال في أول الكلام ثمانية أزواج، يكونوا ستة عشر فرداً. فقال ثمانية أزواج فأتى بأربعة، ولم يأتي ببقية ذلك. فإن ادَّعوا أَنَّ الثمانية أفراداً فهذا لم يسمعه أحداً من جميع الناس.

[٩٥] غير أننا نقول لهم: أرايتم لو قال رجل لزوجته: أنت طالق زوجين، كنتم تجعلون ذلك تطليقتين 5 أم تبيينوها منه حتى تنكح زوجاً غيره؟ فإذا كان جاوز ثلاثة طلاقات، فإنهم يقولون نبيها منه. فنقول لهم أنهم يبينونها منه. والقرآن يذكر أن ثمانية أزواج ثمانية أفراد. فينبغي أن تخطوا قرآنكم، وتجعلوا قول هذا الرجل لامرأته: أنت طالق زوجين تطليقتين. فإنه لا يوجد عندهم في ذلك حجة، إلا أنهم يقولون: كذا وجدنا، وهذا محال بين. كقوله أيضاً في سورة الذاريات: وَمِنْ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ خَلَقْنَا زَوْجَيْنِ، وهذا غلط لا حقاً به بيان.

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فصل آخر [الثاني عشر]

[٩٦] في شأن مارية القبطية.

[٩٧] قال في سورة التحريم: يَا أَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ لِمَ تُحَرِّمُ مَا أَحَلَّ اللَّهُ لَكَ تَبْتَغِي مَرْضَاتَ أَزْوَاجِكَ؟ وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ، قَدْ فَرَضَ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ تَحِلَّةَ أَيْمَانِكُمْ. وتفسير هذا الآية أنه كان يهوى مارية القبطية التي أهداها له المقوقس ملك القبط. فغارت عليه زوجته عائشة إبنة أبي بكر، وحفصة ابنة عمر. فدخلتا 15 عليه ذات يوم فوجدتا ينكحها. فقالت له: ما هذا؟ فاستحا منها. وقال: والله لا أطأها أبداً. فاسكنا

ثلاثة C [ثلاثة] 6 تطليقتين C [تطليقتين] 5 أفراد C [أفراداً] || 35^v C [ببقية] 3 الابل C [الإبل] 1

حلله C [أحلَّ] || يحرم C [يُحَرِّمُ] 13 تطليقتين C [تطليقتين] 8

[94] He said in sura “The Cattle”: “Eight mates – two [pairs] of sheep, two of goats ... and two of camels and two of cattle.”²⁰⁸ The sum of that would be four pairs. He said eight pairs in the first remark, so there would be sixteen separate ones. He said eight pairs and set forth four, and he did not set forth the rest of them. If they claim that the eight were separate, then not one of all the people heard it [this way].

[95] Still we say to them: Do you see if a man says to his wife: “You are divorced a pair of times,” would you consider that two divorces, or would you have separated her from him, until she marries another husband? If he went over three divorces, then they would say we should separate her from him. So we say to them to separate her from him. The Qur’an mentions that eight mates are eight separate ones. So you should follow your Qur’an and consider that man’s word to his wife: “You are divorced a pair of times” as two divorces. Among them, they do not have any argument regarding that, except saying: “That is the way we found it,” and this is a clear impossibility. It is similar to his statement in sura “The Scatterers”: “And in all things we have created pairs,”²⁰⁹ and this is a mistake clearly with no truth to it.

Chapter [12]

[96] On the subject of Mary the Copt.²¹⁰

[97] He said in sura “The Forbidding”: “Prophet, why do you prohibit what God has made lawful for you, seeking your wives’ approval? God is forgiving and merciful. God has ordained for you the dissolution of your oath.”²¹¹ This verse’s interpretation is that he used to love Mary the Copt who was given to him by al-Muḡawqas, the king of the Copts.²¹² So his wife ‘Ā’isha the daughter of Abū Bakr, and Ḥafṣa the daughter of ‘Umar, became jealous of her. One day they entered and they found him having sex with her. They said to him: “What is this?” So he became ashamed on account of them. He said: “By God, I will

208 Q 6:143–144.

209 Q 51:49.

210 The gist of the following sections seems to argue to Muḡammad’s relationships with women are not worthy of being included in liturgical worship recitations. But Ibn Rajā’ also highlights Muḡammad’s Egyptian Christian concubine/wife to demonstrate Muḡammad’s desire for women and to suggest he had a habit of breaking his promises.

211 Q 66:1–2.

212 This is Cyrus al-Muḡawqas (“of the Caucasus region”), the Melkite Patriarch of Alexandria in Egypt in the early seventh century. See Swanson, *The Coptic Papacy in Islamic Egypt*, 3, 66, 99.

إلى يمينه. فلما مضى له برهة من الزمان، لم يصبر عنها. فقال: أنزل الله علي في شأن مارية القبطية: يَا أَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ لِمَ تُحَرِّمُ مَا أَحَلَّ اللَّهُ لَكَ تَبَتَّغِي مَرْضَاتَ أَزْوَاجِكَ - يعني عائشة وحفصة - قَدْ فَرَضَ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ تَحْلَةَ أَيْمَانِكُمْ. فكفر عن يمينه، وطأها. فما الفائدة في هذا أن يخبر به الناس؟ وما الفائدة أن يكون ذلك، قرآنًا يدان الله به ويقرأ في الصلوات؟

- 5 [٩٨] فَإِنْ قَالَ قَاتِلُهُمْ: إِنَّمَا أَرَادَ بِذَلِكَ لِيَعْلَمَ النَّاسُ أَنَّ اللَّهَ قَدْ جَعَلَ لَهُمْ فَسْحَةً فِي إِيْمَانِهِمْ، وَإِذَا حَلَفُوا أَنْ يَكْفُرُوا عَنْ إِيْمَانِهِمْ. قلنا له: كذبت وأخطأت. لأنه قد أعلمهم كيفية الكفارة في سورة المائدة حيث يقول: لَا يُؤَاخِذُكُمُ اللَّهُ بِاللَّغْوِ فِي أَيْْمَانِكُمْ وَلَكِنْ يُؤَاخِذُكُمْ بِمَا عَقَدْتُمُ الْإِيْمَانَ فَكَفَّارَتُهُ إِطْعَامُ عَشْرَةِ مَسَاكِينَ مِنْ أَوْسَطِ مَا تُطْعَمُونَ أَهْلِيكُمْ أَوْ كِسْوَتُهُمْ أَوْ تَخْرِيرُ رَقَبَةٍ فَمَنْ لَمْ يَجِدْ فَصِيَامُ ثَلَاثَةِ أَيَّامٍ ذَلِكَ كَفَّارَةُ أَيْْمَانِكُمْ إِذَا حَلَفْتُمْ. فقد أعلمهم كيفية كفارة اليمين. إلا في قصة مارية القبطية لوسعكم تحتجوا بذلك.

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[٩٩] ولما اشتاق إلى مارية القبطية لم يصبر عنها. قال لأزواجه: إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَقُولُ لِي فِي شَأْنِ مَارِيَةِ الْقَبْطِيَّةِ: لِمَ حَرَّمْتَهَا عَلَيْكَ فِي مَرْضَاتِ أَزْوَاجِكَ؟ وقد قال لي: قَدْ فَرَضَ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ تَحْلَةَ أَيْْمَانِكُمْ - يعني في سورة المائدة - فكفر عن يمينه، ووطئ مارية القبطية. فقالت له عائشة: يَا مُحَمَّدُ، إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُسَارِعُ

C [عَقَدْتُمْ] بِاللَّغْوِ 7 يقرئ C [ويقرأ] 4 حفيصه C [وحفصة] 2 C 36^r [يَا] 1
 C [عائشة] 36^v; C 13 عتق C [رَقَبَةٍ] || إطعام 8 للايمان C [الْإِيْمَانَ] || عمدتم
 ماماديوس C

never touch her again.” Then the two of them accepted his promise. After some time had elapsed, he could not stay away from her. Then he said: “God revealed to me a revelation about Mary the Copt: ‘Prophet, why do you prohibit what God has made lawful for you, seeking your wives’ approval?’ – meaning ‘Ā’isha and Ḥafṣa – ‘God has ordained for you the dissolution of your oath.’”²¹³ So he dissolved his own oath and he had sex with her. What is the point of telling people about it? What benefit would that be for a [verse in the] Qur’an to worship God with it and recite in prayers?

[98] Suppose one of them says: “Rather, he wanted by that for the people to know that God had given them some freedom in their faith, and if they swear that, then they would be dissolved from their oath.” We reply to him: You lied and were mistaken, because he taught them the manner of dissolution in sura “The Table” when he says: “God will not impose blame upon you for what is meaningless in your oaths, but he will impose blame upon you for what you intended by oaths. So its dissolution is the feeding of ten poor people among the average of that which you feed your people or clothing them or the freeing of a slave. But whoever cannot do it, then fast for three days, that is the dissolution of your oaths that you have sworn.”²¹⁴ So he informed them about the manner of dissolving the oath. Excluding the story of Mary the Copt, it is sufficient for you to use that argument.²¹⁵

[99] Still, when he desired Mary the Copt, he did not abstain from her. He said to his wives: “God says to me regarding Mary the Copt: ‘Why forbid her to yourself seeking your wives’ approval?’ He said to me: ‘God has ordained for you the dissolution of your oath,’” – meaning in sura “The Table”²¹⁶ – so he dissolved his oath and he had sex with Mary the Copt. ‘Ā’isha said to him: “Muḥammad,

213 The story of Muḥammad’s intimacy with Mary the Copt and its resulting tension with ‘Ā’isha and Ḥafṣa are mentioned in a hadith as the occasion for the revelation of Q 66:1–5 – including most of the same details included by Ibn Rajā’ also found in al-Ṭabarī, *Tafsīr al-Ṭabarī*, 23:83–103. See also al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, 3:374–378 (Book 46, #2468), esp. 377, where the editor notes from commentators that: “The Prophet was alone with Maria on the day that was devoted to ‘Aishah. When Hafsa learned that, the Prophet told her to keep that as a secret and promised that he would not come near Maria. But Hafsa disclosed the secret to ‘Aishah who got angry and then provoked the Prophet who took an oath that he would desert [Maria] for one month.”

214 Q 5:89.

215 Here Ibn Rajā’ is arguing that Muḥammad suggested that God would allow him to break his oath along with other Muslims provided they adhered to the prescribed penance in Q 5:89.

216 Q 5.

في رضاك، - يعني في هواك - أرادت أن الله في سنامه يحضك على النكاح ويأمرك به. ويحل لك ما تحرّمه على نفسك، يطلب بذلك مرضاتك والتقرّب إليك. ثم قرأ على عائشة وحفصة إثر ذلك هذا الآية وهي في سورة التحريم ثم أيضاً: إِنَّ تَتُوبَا إِلَى اللَّهِ فَقَدْ صَغَتْ قُلُوبُكُمَا. أراد بذلك أن يتوبا إلى الله في أن لا يعارضوه في شيء من أمر النكاح. ثم قال بعد ذلك: عَسَى رَبُّهُ إِنْ طَلَّقَكُنَّ أَنْ يُبَدِّلَهُ أَزْوَاجًا خَيْرًا مِنْكُنَّ مُسْلِمَاتٍ مُؤْمِنَاتٍ قَانِتَاتٍ تَائِبَاتٍ عَابِدَاتٍ سَائِحَاتٍ ثَيِّبَاتٍ وَأَبْكَارًا. فلما سمعت عائشة و 5 حفصة إن توبا إلى الله، وقوله عَسَى رَبُّهُ إِنْ طَلَّقَكُنَّ، قالوا له: يا محمد - رسول الله - نحن نتوب. ولم يعارضاه في شيء من النكاح بعد.

[١٠٠] ولقد بلغني في الحديث الذي لا يشكون في صحته، أن عائشة دخلت إليه بعد ذلك في بعض الأيام، فوجدته مختلياً بامرأة لا ثالث معهما. فلما همّت عائشة بالدخول، أو ما إليها أن ترجع. فرجعت ولم يمكنها الدخول. فلم تتبين المرأة إلى أن خرجت. فدخلت عائشة فقالت له: من هذا المرأة؟ 10 فقال لها: وما تعرفيها يا عائشة؟ قالت: لا. قال لها: هذا العافية جاءت إليّ تسألني أن أسأل الله لها العافية. فلم تحببه عائشة على ذلك خوفاً منه. فكيف ينبغي هذا في القياس والمعقول، أن تكون العافية امرأة، وأنها تسأل ربها العافية؟ فمن يقبل عقله هذا الحديث أو يدين الله بحقيقته؟ ولكن قلوبكم عميت.

C [طَلَّقَكُنَّ] || ربكم C [رَبُّهُ] || عسا C [عَسَى] 4 صاعب C [صَغَتْ] 3 حفيصه C [وحفصة 2
C [وَأَبْكَارًا] || بنات C [ثَيِّبَاتٍ] || قانتات C [قَانِتَاتٍ] || خير C [خَيْرًا] 5 يبدل له C [يُبَدِّلُهُ] || طلقن
فلان C [محمد] || ربكم C adds [رَبُّهُ] || عسا C [عَسَى] حفيصه C [حفصة 6 عيشه C [عائشة] || ابكار
أليس هذا C [العافية] 13 C 37^r [لها] 11 ثبت C [تَتُبَيَّن] 10 مختلي C [مختلياً] 9 شكون C [يشكون] 8
الله C [لله] || عقله

God is quick in satisfying you,”²¹⁷ – meaning in your desire – she meant that: “God, in his Heaven, incites you to intercourse and He commands you to it. He permits for you what you forbid yourself, namely, asking for your satisfaction and to be close to you.” Then he recited to ‘Ā’isha and Ḥafṣa after that this verse and it was in sura “The Forbidding”: “If you two [wives] repent to God, then your hearts have listened.”²¹⁸ By that he wanted them to repent to God so that they would not object to anything regarding the intercourse command. Then after that he said: “Perhaps his Lord, if he divorced you, would substitute for him wives better than you – submitting, believing, devoutly obedient, repentant, worshipping, and traveling – married ones and virgins.”²¹⁹ When ‘Ā’isha and Ḥafṣa heard that “You should repent to God,” and his words “Perhaps his Lord, if he divorced you,” the two of them said to him: “Muḥammad – God’s messenger – we are repentant.” They did not object to anything regarding the intercourse afterward.

[100] Someone told me about the hadith, of which they do not doubt its soundness, that ‘Ā’isha entered after that one day and she found him alone with a woman with no third person with them. When ‘Ā’isha was about to enter, he made a sign to her to go back. So she went back and was not able to enter. She could not ascertain the woman’s [identity] until she left. Then ‘Ā’isha entered and said to him: “Who was that woman?” He said to her: “You do not know her, ‘Ā’isha?” She said: “No.” He said to her: “This is al-‘Āfiya²²⁰ who came to ask me to ask God for her health.” Then ‘Ā’isha did not answer him about that for fear of him.²²¹ How is this proper according to logic and reason, that al-‘Āfiya would be a woman, and she would [go to him to] ask her Lord for health? Whose mind could accept this hadith or profess its truth to God? But your hearts have become blind.

217 This is a hadith found attributed to ‘Ā’isha in al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, 6:268 (Book 65, #4788).

218 Q 66:4.

219 Q 66:5.

220 The Arabic term for wishing the well-being or health of a person is *‘āfiya*, suggesting the story is nonsensical and fabricated.

221 I cannot identify the origin of this hadith, but it fits the theme of the prior oral traditions. The purpose of the account is for Ibn Rajā’ to imply that Muḥammad was willing to have sex with many women including those who were not his wives or concubines.

فصل آخر وهو الثالث عشر

[١٠١] قال في سورة الأحزاب: يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَدْخُلُوا بُيُوتَ النَّبِيِّ إِلَّا أَنْ يُؤْذَنَ لَكُمْ إِلَى طَعَامٍ غَيْرِ نَاطِرِينَ إِنَّهُ وَلَكِنْ إِذَا دُعِيتُمْ فَادْخُلُوا فَإِذَا طَعِمْتُمْ فَانْتَشِرُوا وَلَا مُسْتَأْنِسِينَ لِحَدِيثٍ إِنَّ ذَلِكُمْ كَانَ يُؤْذِي النَّبِيَّ فَيَسْتَحْيِي مِنْكُمْ وَاللَّهُ لَا يَسْتَحْيِي مِنَ الْحَقِّ. تفسير هذا الآية أنّ أبا هريرة كان أكلواً وكان فيه شره في الطعام يسمونه المتطفل. وكان يترصد منزل محمد، فإذا رأى طعاماً قد أصلح في منزله قد حضر وقت الفراغ منه وطرقه. فأقام على ذلك مدةً من دهره، فضجر محمد منه واشتد ذلك عليه. فقال: أنزل الله عليّ قرآناً في أبي هريرة يقول: يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَدْخُلُوا بُيُوتَ النَّبِيِّ إِلَّا أَنْ يُؤْذَنَ لَكُمْ إِلَى طَعَامٍ غَيْرِ نَاطِرِينَ إِنَّهُ وَلَكِنْ إِذَا دُعِيتُمْ فَادْخُلُوا فَإِذَا طَعِمْتُمْ فَانْتَشِرُوا وَلَا مُسْتَأْنِسِينَ لِحَدِيثٍ إِنَّ ذَلِكُمْ أَنْ يُؤْذِيَ النَّبِيَّ فَيَسْتَحْيِي مِنْكُمْ وَاللَّهُ لَا يَسْتَحْيِي مِنَ الْحَقِّ. فقال أصحابه لأبي هريرة: والله إن قربت منزل النبي بعد أن نزل فيك الوحي، لقتلك حينئذ أنتهى.

[١٠٢] فما الفائدة في إعادة هذا الفضيحة؟ أن يكون مثل هذا الذي تيدعي الدعاوي العظيمة بين هذا المساويء العظيمة. بطرقه الناس إلى منزله لأكل طعام فيمنعهم من ذلك. وإنما الفضل للطارق لا المطروق. وما عسى أن يأكل هذا البائس الفقير، وإلا سائر العرب أو المعجم. ما الفائدة أن تجعل هذا الكلام قرآناً يقرأ به في الصلوات وغير ذلك؟ ولو تفكروا في هذا الفصل كان فيه مقنع.

محمد || يترصد C [يترصد || المطفل C] المتطفل 5 ذلك C [ذَلِكُمْ || ادخلوا C] فَادْخُلُوا || إياه C [إِنَاهُ 3
C] [إِنَاهُ 8 ابا C] [أبي 7 ماماديوس C] [محمد || حرر C] [حضر 6 را C] [رأى || ماماديوس C
C] [تيدعي 11 C] [37٢ C] [حينئذاً || قرطب C] [قربت 10 فإن ذلك C] [ذَلِكُمْ 9 بحديث C] [لِحَدِيثٍ || إياه
قرآن C] [قرآناً 14 تدعي

Chapter 13

[101] He said in sura “The Confederates”: “Believers, do not enter the Prophet’s houses except when you are permitted for a meal, without awaiting its readiness. But when you are invited, then enter; and when you have eaten, disperse and do not remain for conversation. Indeed, that would trouble the Prophet, for he would be shy [to dismiss] you. But God is not shy of the truth.”²²² This verse’s interpretation is that Abū Hurayra loved eating and he ate food voraciously so they used to call him “The Freeloader.” He would lie in wait at Muḥammad’s house, and when he saw food had been prepared in his house, he would go at the time when it was finished and he would knock on [the door]. So he continued doing that for quite some time, until Muḥammad became irritated with him and that became unbearable for him. So he said: “God revealed to me a recitation about Abū Hurayra saying: ‘Believers, do not enter the Prophet’s houses except when you are permitted for a meal, without awaiting its readiness. But when you are invited, then enter; and when you have eaten, disperse and do not remain for conversation. Indeed, that would trouble the Prophet, for he would be shy [to dismiss] you. But God is not shy of the truth.’” So his companions said to Abū Hurayra: “By God if you go near the Prophet’s house after that revelation was revealed about you, then your death would be a foregone conclusion.”²²³

[102] What is the point in repeating this scandal? This would be like someone who made enormous claims while having these enormous terrible characteristics. The people would come to his house in order to eat food but he would prevent them from that. Indeed, the benefit belongs to the knocker, not the one who receives the knock. What could this miserable poor person possibly eat, even if it was all of the Arabs or non-Arabs [at the door]? What is the point of making this remark [a verse in the] Qur’an to be recited in prayers and other such things? If they think carefully about this example, it is convincing.

²²² Q 33:53.

²²³ The occasion for the revelation of this verse is usually attributed to a wedding reception when Muḥammad married Zaynab bint Jahsh and a number of unnamed wedding guests stayed for conversation. I cannot identify the account with Abū Hurayra, although it may very well be a Shi’a account that is using the story to be critical of Sunni hadith attributed to him.

فصل آخر

[١٠٣] في تزويجه.

[١٠٤] ولما كثرت التزويج اخطوا الناس في ذلك وتكلموا. قال: قد نزل عليّ قرآنًا فهلّوا استمعوا له.

فلما اجتمعوا قرأ عليهم آية في سورة الأحزاب وهي: يَا أَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ إِنَّا أَحْلَلْنَا لَكَ أَزْوَاجَكَ اللَّاتِي آتَيْتَ

5 أُجُورَهُنَّ وَمَا مَلَكَتْ يَمِينُكَ مِمَّا أَفَاءَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْكَ وَبَنَاتِ عَمِّكَ وَبَنَاتِ عَمَّاتِكَ وَبَنَاتِ خَالَكَ وَبَنَاتِ

خَالَاتِكَ اللَّاتِي هَاجَرْنَ مَعَكَ وَامْرَأَةً مُؤْمِنَةً إِنْ وَهَبَتْ نَفْسَهَا لِلنَّبِيِّ. فلما سمعوا الناس قوله: إِنَّ اللَّهَ قَدْ

أطلق لي أن أنكح أزواجي وكلّ أمة ملكتها يميني - ولو كان ألف أمة - وبنات عمي وبنات خالي

وبنات عمّاتي، وبنات خالاتي، وكلّ امرأة وهبت نفسها لي أنكحها بغير مهر، ثمّ قال على أثر ذلك -

يعني في السورة - تُرْجِي مَنْ نَشَاءُ مِنْهُنَّ يَعْنِي تَوَخَّرَ إِلَيْكَ مِنْ نَشَاءٍ. أي كبرت منهنّ ولم تحبها وأردت

10 أن تنفيها، إنفيها وتمسكها فأمسكها. فاعتزل سودةً وغيرها من نساته لأنهنّ كبرن وعجزن. فلما أكثر

الناس الكلام في ذلك وخشي أن يفسد عليه ناموسه، قال أوحى إليه الله - يعني في السورة أيضاً - لَا

يَحِلُّ لَكَ النِّسَاءُ مِنْ بَعْدِ وَلَا أَنْ تَبَدَّلَ بِهِنَّ مِنْ أَزْوَاجٍ وَلَوْ أَعْجَبَكَ حُسْنُهُنَّ.

[١٠٥] فكفّ عن النكاح إلى أن أهدى إليه المقوقس مارية وأختها. فقال الناس: أترى يجمع بين

الأختين وهو يحرم ذلك على الناس؟ فأخذ مارية لنفسه ودفع أختها لدحية الكلبي. فقالوا له الناس:

C [هَاجَرْنَ] 6 كما أنا C [أَفَاءَ] || أزوجهن C [أُجُورَهُنَّ] 5 اللوتي C [اللَّاتِي] || حللنا C [أَحْلَلْنَا] 4

C [تُرْجِي] 9 وقد قال لي أيضاً C adds [ذلك] || بنات C [وبنات] 8 الامرأة C [وَامْرَأَةً] || هاجرتاً

C adds [أَيْضاً] || إلي C adds [إليه] 11 فاعتزلن C [فاعتزل] 10 C 38r [يعني] || منهن C [مِنْهُنَّ] || تراجي

ازواجك C [أَزْوَاجٍ] 12 يعني

Another Section [1]

[103] On his marriages.

[104] When the marrying multiplied, the people turned their attention to that and they spoke up. He said: “A recitation was revealed to me so come here and listen to it.” When they gathered he recited to them a verse in sura “The Confederates” and it was: “Prophet, we have made lawful for you your wives to whom you have given their due compensation and those whom you possess [slaves] from what God has given you and your paternal uncles’ daughters and your paternal aunts’ daughters and your maternal uncles’ daughters and your maternal aunts’ daughters and those who emigrated with you, and a believing woman if she offers herself to the Prophet.”²²⁴ When the people heard his statement, “God has given me freedom to have intercourse with my wives and every slave that I have owned in my possession – even if it were a thousand slaves – and my paternal uncles’ daughters and my maternal uncles’ daughters and my paternal aunts’ daughters and my maternal aunts’ daughters and every woman who offers herself to me, I will marry her without a dowry,” then he said after that – in the sura – “You may set aside whomever you want among them,”²²⁵ meaning you may put away whomever you want. This means if one of them became older and you no longer loved her and you wanted to reject her, then reject her, and [want to] keep her, then keep her. So he separated from Sawda [bint Zam‘a] and others among his women, because they had grown old and feeble.²²⁶ When the people’s debate about that increased and he feared that his doctrine would be distorted on account of it, he said God revealed to him – meaning in the same sura – “Not lawful for you are women afterward, nor can you exchange them for [other] wives, even if their beauty pleases you.”²²⁷

[105] So he refrained from marriage until al-Muḡawqas gave him Mary and her sister. The people said: “Would he marry both sisters simultaneously, when he forbids that to the people?” So he took Mary for himself and he handed over

224 Q 33:50.

225 Q 33:51.

226 On Sawda (who is called huge, tall, fat, slow, and old in hadith reports) giving up her sexual relations with Muḡammad, in fear of divorce based upon this verse, see al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḡīḡ al-Bukhārī*, 3:441–442 (Book 51, #2593); 7:98 (Book 67, #5212); and al-Ṭabarī, *Tafsīr al-Ṭabarī*, 19:138–146.

227 Q 33:52.

وأزواجه؟ أليس قد قال الله لك: لَا تَحِلُّ لَكَ النِّسَاءُ مِنْ بَعْدِ وَلَا أَنْ تَبْدَلَ بِهِنَّ أَزْوَاجَهُنَّ فَمَا كَيْفَ يَقُولُ لَكَ هَذَا، وَتَتَكَبَّرُ مَارِيَةَ الْقَبْطِيَّةَ؟ قَالَ: إِنَّ اللَّهَ قَالَ لِي: لَا يَحِلُّ لَكَ النِّسَاءُ مِنْ بَعْدِ وَلَا أَنْ تَبْدَلَ بِهِنَّ مِنْ بَعْدِ، وَلَوْ عَجَبَكَ حُسْنُهُنَّ. فَلَمَّا جَاءَتْني مَارِيَةَ قَالَ لِي: يَا مُحَمَّدُ اسْتَأْنَسِ بِهَا إِلَّا مَا مَلَكَتْ يَمِينِكَ. فَأَمَرَ الْكَاتِبَ أَنْ يَلْحَقَهَا فِي عَقْبِ: وَلَوْ عَجَبَكَ حُسْنُهُنَّ. فَمَا الْفَائِدَةُ فِي إِعَادَةِ هَذَا وَأَنْ تَجْعَلَ ذَلِكَ قِرَاءَةً يَقْرَأُ بِهِ فِي الصَّلَاةِ، وَيَدَانَ اللَّهُ بِهِ؟

5

فصل آخر وهو الرابع عشر

[١٠٦] قوله في سورة الأحزاب: فَلَمَّا قَضَى زَيْدٌ مِنْهَا وَطَرًا زَوَّجْنَا كَهَا. وتفسير هذا الآية أن كان في حجره يتيم قد رباه اسمه زيد ابن حارثة. لم يكن له أب يعرف، و كان يدعي أنه زيد ابن محمد. وكانت له امرأة تسمى زينب بنت جحش. وكانت من أجمل النساء في زمانها. وكان زيد يخاف عليها منه. فلما بلغ محمد حسنها وجمالها، جاء إلى منزل زيد وصاح فيه، فخرجت إليه امرأة زيد وكانت حينئذ قائمةً 10 من على التنور - وهو الفرن - تخبز وقد احمر وجهها ووجنتها. فلما نظر إليها بهت ينظر لحسنها، ولحسن صورتها. فقالت له: يا محمد رسول الله لك حاجة؟ فقال: أريد زيد. فقالت له: مضى لبعض شأنه. ثم

زوجناك بها C [زَوَّجْنَا كَهَا 7 C 38٧] تجعل || وما الفائدة في إعادته C repeats [هذا 4 فلان C [محمد 3

فلان C [محمد 12 لمادايوس C [محمد 10 مامادايوس C [محمد || ما C [و || جاريه C [حارثة 8

her sister to Dihya al-Kalbī.²²⁸ The people said to him: “[What about] his wives? Did not God say to you: ‘Not lawful for you are women afterward, nor can you exchange them for [other] wives’?”²²⁹ So how can He tell you this, and you marry Mary the Copt?” He replied: “God said to me: ‘Not lawful for you are women afterward, nor can you exchange them afterward, even if their beauty pleases you.’ When Mary came to me, [God] said to me: ‘Muḥammad, be intimate with her insofar as that which your right hand possesses.’”²³⁰ So he commanded the writer to add it at the end: “even if her beauty pleases you.” What is the point in repeating this and making that [a verse of the] Qur’an to recite in prayers and to worship God with it?

Chapter 14

[106] His words in sura “The Confederates” are: “When Zayd no longer had need of her, we had you married to her.”²³¹ This verse’s interpretation is that it was regarding an orphan in his care – whom he raised – whose name was Zayd ibn Ḥāritha.²³² He did not have a known father, and he was called Zayd the son of Muḥammad. He had a wife who was called Zaynab bint Jaḥsh.²³³ She was one of the most beautiful women of her time. Zayd began to fear for her from him. When Muḥammad heard about her loveliness and beauty, he came to Zayd’s house and he called out to him. So Zayd’s wife came out to him as at that time she had just left the oven – this is a furnace – baking bread and her face and her cheeks were red. When he looked at her, he was speechless looking at her beauty and the loveliness of her appearance. So she said to him: “Muḥammad, God’s messenger, do you need something?” He replied: “I want

228 Dihya al-Kalbī was said to have been the envoy who carried Muḥammad’s letter of invitation to Islam to the Byzantine emperor Heraclius. The story of Muḥammad and Mary the Copt is mentioned in Ibn Ishāq’s biography and al-Ṭabarī’s history. See Guillaume, *The Life of Muhammad*, 653; Abū Ja’far al-Ṭabarī, *The History of al-Ṭabarī: The Last Years of the Prophet*, transl. Ismail Poonawala (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1990), 9:131, 141.

229 Q 33:52.

230 “Your right hand possesses” is a euphemism for a slave.

231 Q 33:37.

232 Zayd ibn Ḥāritha was the adopted son of Muḥammad; see “Zayd b. Ḥāritha,” *EI*² 11:475.

233 Zaynab bint Jaḥsh was Zayd’s wife and a cousin of Muḥammad; see “Zaynab bint Jaḥsh,” *EI*² 11:484–485. The following story is alluded to in al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, 6:267 (Book 65, #4787).

أدام النظر إليها ومضى. فلما جاء زيد قالت له زوجته: قد جاء فلان في طلبك. قال: ونظر إليكي؟ قالت له: طويلاً. (قال:) فما قال لك؟ قالت له: سألتني عنك، فعرّفته أنك مضيت لبعض شأنك. فقال: إنّا لله وإنّا إليه راجعون. والله لا اجتمعت بك بعد هذا اليوم أبداً.

[١٠٧] ثم جاء زيد إليه فجلس بين يديه. فقال له: إن عازم على فراق زوجتي. فقال له: ولم ذلك؟

- قال له: إنهما من الحسن والجمال كما رأيت، وأخشى أن تكون قد هويتها. فقال له: أمسك عليك زوجتك 5 واتق الله. فقال زيد في نفسه: ما له بها حاجة، ولو كان له فيها حاجة لأمرني بطلاقها. ففرح زيد عن ذلك. فبينما هما جلوس إذ تعوّجتا يد محمد ورجلاه كالعادة ونخر على وجهه. فقال أصحابه: استروه، قد جاءه جبرائيل بالوحي. حيناً ثم رفع رأسه فقال: أوحى إليّ الله يوبّخني في امرأة زيد. قالوا له: وما ذلك؟ فقرأ عليهم هذا الآية في سورة الأحزاب: **وَإِذْ تَقُولُ لِلَّذِي أَنْعَمَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَأَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيْهِ أَمْسِكْ عَلَيْكَ زَوْجَكَ وَاتَّقِ اللَّهَ وَتُخْفِي فِي نَفْسِكَ مَا اللَّهُ مُبْدِيهِ وَتَخْشَى النَّاسَ وَاللَّهُ أَحَقُّ أَنْ تَخْشَاهُ فَلَمَّا قَضَى 10 زَيْدٌ مِنْهَا وَطَرًا زَوَّجْنَا كَهَا.** فقال له أصحابه: وكيف ذلك؟ قال: إنني نظرت إلى امرأة زيد فهويتها، فلما أتاني زيد وأعرضها عليّ احتشمت منه ومنكم. فقلت له بلساني أمسك زوجتك واتق الله، وكان في قلبي منها ما كان. فعلم الله ذلك فأوحى إليّ يوبّخني ويقول لي: **وَتُخْفِي فِي نَفْسِكَ مَا اللَّهُ مُبْدِيهِ وَتَخْشَى**

[زَوَّجْنَا كَهَا] 11 ويقول الذي C [لِلَّذِي] 9 ماماديوس C [مُحَمَّد] 7 اخشان C [وأخشى] 5 C 39^r [إليه] 4

C 39^v [في] 13 أزوجناك بها C

Zayd." She said to him: "He went to finish something." Then he gazed at her and left. When Zayd returned, his wife said to him: "Someone came asking about you." He replied: "Did he look at you?" She said to him: "For a long time." [He said:] "What did he say to you?" She replied to him: "He asked me about you, then I told him that you had left to finish something." So he said: "We are from God and to God we will return. By God, after this day I will never be together with you."

[107] Then Zayd came to [Muḥammad] and sat down before him. He said to him: "I am determined to separate from my wife." So he replied to him: "Why is that?" He said to him: "She is lovely and beautiful just as you saw and I fear that you have desired her." He replied to him: "Keep your wife with you and fear God." So Zayd said to himself: "He is not interested in her and if he had interest, then he would command me to divorce her." So Zayd rejoiced at that. While they were sitting, Muḥammad's hands and legs started to shake like usual and he fell to the ground.²³⁴ Then his companion said: "Cover him, Gabriel has come to him with a revelation." After a while, he raised his head and said: "God sent a revelation to me scolding me about Zayd's wife." They said to him: "What is that?" Then he recited to them this verse in sura "The Confederates": "And, when you said to the one on whom God bestowed favor and you bestowed favor, 'Keep your wife with you and fear God, while you concealed within yourself that which God makes clear. And you feared the people, while God has more right that you fear him'. So when Zayd had no longer any need for her, we married you to her."²³⁵ So his companion said to him: "How is that?" He said: "I looked at Zayd's wife and I strongly desired her, so when Zayd came to me and offered her to me, I was ashamed to face him and you. So I said to him with my tongue 'Keep your wife with you and fear God' while in my heart there was something for her. So God knew that and he sent a revelation to me scolding me and saying to me: 'And you concealed within yourself that which God makes clear. And

234 Muḥammad's reactions to revelations are found in the hadith collections, as well as in the recounting of this episode as a fainting in al-Ṭabarī, *The History of al-Ṭabarī: The Victory of Islam*, 8:3. Some Christian polemicists interpreted his reception of revelation as an epileptic seizure.

235 Q 33:37.

النَّاسَ وَاللَّهُ أَحَقُّ أَنْ تَحْشَاهُ فَلَمَّا قَضَى مِنْهَا زَيْدٌ وَطَرًا زَوَّجَنَا كَهَا. فقال له زيد: وقد تزوجتها بعد؟ قال له: ويحك يا زيد، الله زوجني بها من السماء وولي أمرها، وكان جبرائيل وميكائيل الشاهدين.

[١٠٨] ثم قام محمد مسرعاً فدخل إلى امرأة زيد فلما استترت منه، فقال لها: لا تستتري يا زينب، فإن الله زوجنيك من السماء وولي أمرك، وكان الشاهدين عليك جبرائيل وميكائيل. وكانت امرأة زيد تفتخر على نساء محمد وتقول لهن: أتئن زوجكن أبهاتكن، وأنا زوجني الله من السماء. فالفائدة في إعادة ذلك؟ ولو أطلق (لهم) ما أطلق نفسه وأمرهم أن ينكحوا كما نكح، وقال لهم: من هوى منكم امرأة في عقد نكاح غيره، فقد حل له أخذها منه، لكان تتبع قائلاً ذلك في آية ليعلمهم آية ويقاسون به. ولكن حظر عليهم أن يعملوا كما عمل ومنعهم من ذلك. ولم يطلق لهم نكاح الحرائر غير أربع، وقال قوم تسع، سوى ما ملكت أيديهم من العبيد.

10 [١٠٩] فما الفائدة في أن تجعل ذلك قرآناً يقرأ به في الصلوات؟ وغير ذلك، فلا هو تعلم (أو) أمرهم به وعلمهم إياه. ولا فيه موعظة ولا مثال. ولا ترغيب في الجنة، ولا تحذير من النار. وإنما كان أنزل الله التوراة على موسى، والإنجيل على الست الحواريين، وأنزل الزبور. وذكر في ذلك أخبار القرون الماضية وأمثالاً ضربها لهم ليتبعونها العباد وترغيباً في طاعته لينالوا ما عنده، وترهيباً من عقابه ليزجروا عن معاصيه.

15 [١١٠] غير أنه ادعى على الله أنه أمره أن ينكح هذا ويطلق هذا ويأمره أن يأخذ امرأة هذا، ويقول للآخر لا تدخل بيت النبي ولا تأكل خبزه. فما الفائدة في إعادة ذلك حتى جعله لهم قرآناً

C [قائلاً] 7 انت C [أتئن] || ماماديوس C [محمد] 5 ماماديوس C [محمد] 3 زوجناك بها C [زَوَّجَنَا كَهَا] 1

ضرباً C [ضربها] 13 C 40^r [و] 11 ان يقول انما قال adds

you feared the people, while God has more right that you fear him.” So Zayd said to him: “Will you marry her afterward?” He said to him: “Woe to you, Zayd, God married me to her from Heaven and he was her guardian, and Gabriel and Michael were the witnesses.”²³⁶

[108] Then Muḥammad arose quickly and he came to Zayd’s wife. So when she covered herself from him, he said to her: “Do not cover up Zaynab, God has married you to me from Heaven and he was your guardian and Gabriel and Michael were the witnesses.” Zayd’s wife used to glory over Muḥammad’s women and she would say to them: “Your fathers gave you in marriage and God married me from Heaven.” What is the point in repeating that? If he made it free [to them] what he made free to himself, and he commanded them to marry just as he married, and he said to them: “Whoever among you loved a woman who was married to someone else, it is lawful for him to take her from him,” then he would have followed that saying with a verse in order to teach them a sign and provide himself as an example. But he prohibited them to do just as he did and prevented them from that. He did allow them to marry free women up to four, while some people say nine, as well as what they owned among the slaves.

[109] What is the point of making that a [verse from the] Qur’an to recite it in prayers? Beyond that, he did not instruct [or] command them to do it nor teach them it. There is no lesson or model in it. There is no invitation to Paradise and no warning of Hell. Rather God revealed the Torah to Moses and the Gospel through the six disciples and He revealed the Psalms. He mentioned reports of the past centuries and analogous examples for them in [those Scriptures], in order for the worshippers to follow it, and an invitation to worship Him in order to receive what He has, and a warning from His punishment to stay away from disobedience toward Him.

[110] Beyond that [Muḥammad] claimed about God that He commanded him to marry this one and divorce another. He commands him to take this woman and says to another to not enter the prophet’s house and to not eat

236 The marriage from heaven is found in the hadith in al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, 9:311–312 (Book 97, #7420). The details of the matter that Ibn Rajā’ narrates here are in the traditional Islamic accounts, such as in the commentary on Q 33:37 by al-Ṭabarī, *Tafsīr al-Ṭabarī*, 19:114–119. There are several examples of Christian retellings of Muḥammad’s relationship with Zayd and Zaynab as well. See for instance Sahas, *John of Damascus on Islam*, 138–139; Eulogius Cordubensis, *Memoriale Sanctorum*, in *Corpus Scriptorum Mvzarabicorum*, ed. Juan Gil, 2 vols. (Madrid: Instituto Antonio de Nebrija, 1973), 2:397–401 and Kenneth Baxter Wolf, ed., *The Eulogius Corpus* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2019), 204, 337; and Paul Alvarus, *Indiculus Luminosus*, in *Corpus Scriptorum Mvzarabicorum*, ed. Juan Gil, 2 vols. (Madrid: Instituto Antonio de Nebrija, 1973), 1:296–298.

يَقْرَؤُونَ بِهِ فِي الصَّلَوَاتِ، وَيَعْبُدُونَ اللَّهَ بِهِ؟ فَمَا يَسْتَحِي مِنْ فِيهِ عَقْلٌ وَلَهُ مَعْرِفَةٌ أَنْ يَقِفَ بَيْنَ اللَّهِ لِلصَّلَاةِ فِيوَا جِهَهُ أَنْ يَقُولَ: اللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ، يَا رَبُّ أَمْرَتُ مُحَمَّدٌ أَنْ يَطْلُقَ فَلَانَةَ وَيُنْكِحَ فَلَانَةَ. وَقَالَ مُحَمَّدٌ لَزَوْجَتِيهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَقُولُ لِكُلِّ إِنْ لَمْ تَخْلِيَا مُحَمَّدٌ يَنْكِحُ مَارِيَةَ الْقَبْطِيَّةَ طَلْقًا وَدَخَلْتُمَا النَّارَ. يَا رَبُّ أَمْرَتُ مُحَمَّدٌ أَنْ يَنْكِحَ أَزْوَاجَهُ كُلَّهُنَّ وَبَنَاتِ عَمِّهِ وَبَنَاتِ عَمَّاتِهِ وَبَنَاتِ خَالِهِ وَبَنَاتِ خَالَاتِهِ. وَيَنْكِحُ - يَا رَبُّ - مُحَمَّدٌ كُلَّ امْرَأَةٍ جَاءَتْ إِلَيْهِ تَسْأَلُهُ (أَنْ) يَنْكِحَهَا. وَيَا رَبُّ إِنَّكَ أَمْرَتُ مُحَمَّدٌ لَا يَنْكِحُ بَعْدَ امْرَأَةٍ، فَلَمَّا أَهْدَى إِلَيْهِ 5 المَقْوُوسَ مَارِيَةَ قَلْتِ يَا رَبُّ لَا شَيْئًا عَلَيْكَ فِيمَا مَلَكَتِ يَمِينِكَ. وَيَا رَبُّ أَمْرَتُ أَبِي هَرِيرَةَ أَلَّا يَدْخُلَ بَيْتَهُ وَلَا يَأْكُلُ خَبْزَهُ. فَمَا هُوَ حَقٌّ وَجَهْلٌ، وَغَفْلَةٌ وَعَبْرَةٌ؟ فَانظُرُوا يَا هَؤُلَاءِ الْمَجَانِينَ لِهَلَاكَةِ أَنْفُسِكُمْ. وَتَفَكَّرُوا، فَسَتَعْلَمُوا الْعَاقِبَةَ.

الفصل الخامس عشر

10

[111] ذَكَرَ مَا فِي الْقُرْآنِ مِنَ التَّكْرِيرِ.

[112] غَيْرَ أَنِّي أَسْأَلُكُمْ، مَا الْفَائِدَةُ فِي هَذَا التَّكْرِيرِ الَّذِي فِي هَذَا الْقُرْآنِ؟ مِثْلُ قَوْلِهِ فِي سُورَةِ الْكَافِرِينَ: قُلْ يَا أَيُّهَا الْكَافِرُونَ لَا أَعْبُدُ مَا تَعْبُدُونَ وَلَا أَنْتُمْ عَابِدُونَ مَا أَعْبُدُ وَلَا أَنَا عَابِدٌ مَا عَبَدْتُمْ وَلَا أَنْتُمْ عَابِدُونَ مَا أَعْبُدُ لَكُمْ دِينُكُمْ وَلِي دِينٌ. فَلَوْ أَرَادَ أَنْ يَخْتَصِرَ ذَلِكَ فِي كَلِمَتَيْنِ، وَلَقَدْ كَانَ أَحْسَنَ مِنْ هَذَا التَّكْرِيرِ. فَمَا الْفَائِدَةُ فِي ذَلِكَ؟

15

[113] ثُمَّ ذَكَرَ قِصَّةَ نُوحٍ وَالطُّوفَانَ فِي الْقُرْآنِ فِي مَوَاضِعَ كَثِيرَةٍ. فَأَوَّلُ مَا ذَكَرَ ذَلِكَ فِي سُورَةِ الْأَعْرَافِ. وَذَكَرَ ذَلِكَ أَيْضًا فِي سُورَةِ يُونُسَ. وَكَرَّرَ ذَلِكَ أَيْضًا فِي سُورَةِ هُودَ. وَكَرَّرَ ذَلِكَ فِي سُورَةِ

C [مُحَمَّدٌ] 3 زَوْجَتِهِ || مَامَادِيُوسَ || مُحَمَّدٌ || فَلَانَ مَامَادِيُوسَ C [مُحَمَّدٌ] || فِيوَا جِهَهُ C [فِيوَا جِهَهُ] 2
 [أَنِّي] 11 C 40^v [و] 6 مَامَادِيُوسَ C [مُحَمَّدٌ] 5 مَامَادِيُوسَ C [مُحَمَّدٌ] 4 مَامَادِيُوسَ C [مُحَمَّدٌ] || مَامَادِيُوسَ
 لَوْ دِينَ C [دِينٍ] 13 أَعْبَدُوا C [أَعْبُدُ] || الْكَافِرِينَ C [الْكَافِرُونَ] 12 أُنَّ C

his bread. So what is the point of repeating this and making it [a verse of the] Qur'an for them to recite in prayers and worship God with it? Are they not ashamed about it, those who are reasonable and have knowledge, that he would stand before God for prayer and he would face Him to say: "God is greater! Lord, you commanded Muḥammad to divorce so-and-so and to marry so-and-so." And "Muḥammad said to his wives [Ā'isha and Ḥafṣa] that 'God says to you two that if you did not allow Muḥammad to marry Mary the Copt he would divorce the two of you and you would enter Hell.'" "Lord, you commanded Muḥammad to marry all of his wives and his paternal uncles' daughters and his paternal aunts' daughters and his maternal uncles' daughters, and his maternal aunts' daughters." And "Lord – marry Muḥammad to every woman who came to him asking him to marry her." And "Lord, you commanded Muḥammad not to marry a woman afterward, so when al-Muqawqas gave him Mary as a gift, you said, Lord, this is no problem for you, for whoever you have as a slave in your possession. Lord, you commanded Abū Hurayra to not enter his house nor eat his bread." So what [part of the Qur'an] is truth and ignorance, and [what part contains] negligence and contemplation? You crazy people, examine for yourselves this perilous situation. Think and you will recognize the outcome.

Chapter 15

[111] On what is repeated in the Qur'an.

[112] Rather, I would ask you, what is the point of this repetition which is in this Qur'an? For example, his statement in sura "The Unbelievers": "Say: you unbelievers, I do not worship what you worship and you do not worship what I worship. I am not a worshipper of what you worship and you are not worshippers of what I worship. You have your religion and I have [my] religion."²³⁷ If he wanted to shorten that into two words then that would have been better than this repetition. So what is the point of that?²³⁸

[113] Then he mentioned the story of Noah and the Flood in the Qur'an in many places. First he mentioned that in sura "The Heights."²³⁹ And he mentioned that also in sura "Jonah."²⁴⁰ And he repeated that as well in sura

237 Q 109:1–6.

238 The same argument critiquing qur'anic repetition in this passage was defended by Ibn Qutayba, *Ta'wīl Mushkil al-Qur'ān*, 25, 185; Samad, *Ibn Qutaybah's Contribution to Qur'anic Exegesis*, 168–169.

239 Q 7:59.

240 Q 10:71.

قد أفلح المؤمنون. وكرر ذلك أيضاً في سورة الشعراء. وكرر ذلك أيضاً في سورة نوح نفسه. وكلّ سورة من هؤلاء التي ذكرناها ويذكر القصّة بأسرها شقاً واحداً. سوى ما في القرآن من ذلك منثور. كلّ ذلك إذا جمع لا يخرج من حال القصص، فما الفائدة في تكرير ذلك؟

[١١٤] ثم ذكر موسى وقصته مع فرعون وبني إسرائيل في سورة البقرة، وسورة المائدة، وسورة

الأعراف، وسورة يونس، وسورة هود، وسورة بني إسرائيل، وسورة مريم، وسورة طه، وسورة الشعراء، وسورة القصص. سوى ما في القرآن من ذلك منثور، لو شرحناه على حقه لأطنا. ولو نزع موسى من القرآن لم يبق منه ربه.

[١١٥] وذكر قصّة آدم وخروجه من الجنّة وذكر إبليس في سورة البقرة، وسورة الأعراف، وسورة

الحجر، وسورة طه، وسورة بني إسرائيل، وسورة صاد. وقال في سورة الرحمن: فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ؟

The sura list appears in between surat al-Rahmān and its quotation. The Arabic text of the suras has been re-ordered to make sense of this argument and the following quotation.

“Hūd.”²⁴¹ And he repeated that in sura “Certainly the Believers have succeeded.”²⁴² And he repeated that as well in sura “The Poets.”²⁴³ And he repeated that as well in sura “Noah” itself.²⁴⁴ And every sura among those which we have mentioned, he would mention the entire story in its whole, in addition to that which is scattered around in the Qur’an. If all of that were collected, it would not depart from the status of stories [to the status level of Scripture], so what is the point of repeating that?

[114] Then he mentioned Moses and his story with Pharaoh and the people of Israel in sura “The Cow”²⁴⁵ and sura “The Table”²⁴⁶ and sura “The Heights,”²⁴⁷ and sura “Jonah”²⁴⁸ and sura “Hūd”²⁴⁹ and sura “The People of Israel”²⁵⁰ and sura “Mary”²⁵¹ and sura “Ṭā’ Ḥā’”²⁵² and sura “The Poets”²⁵³ and sura “The Stories.”²⁵⁴ In addition to that which is scattered in the Qur’an, if I were to explain its whole content, then it would take a long time. If Moses was taken out of the Qur’an, not even a fourth of it would remain.

[115] On the story of Adam and his departure from Paradise, [Muḥammad] mentioned Iblīs in sura “The Cow”²⁵⁵ and sura “The Heights”²⁵⁶ and surat “al-Ḥijr”²⁵⁷ and sura “Ṭā’ Ḥā’”²⁵⁸ and sura “The People of Israel,”²⁵⁹ and sura “Ṣād.”²⁶⁰ He said in sura “The Merciful”: “So which of your Lord’s favors would

241 Q 11:25–48.

242 Q 23:23–29.

243 Q 26:105–120.

244 Q 71:1–28.

245 Q 2:51–61, 67–71, 92–94.

246 Q 5:20–26.

247 Q 7:103–162.

248 Q 10:75–92.

249 Q 11:96–97.

250 Q 17:2, 101–104.

251 Q 19:51–53.

252 Q 20:9–98.

253 Q 26:10–66.

254 Q 28:3–46.

255 Q 2:34–37.

256 Q 7:11–25.

257 Q 15:26–40.

258 Q 20:115–124.

259 Q 17:61–65.

260 Q 38:71–85.

كَّرَّرَ ذَلِكَ فِي إِحْدِ وَثَلَاثِينَ مَوْضِعًا. مَا فِي تَكَرُّرِ ذَلِكَ مِنَ الْفَائِدَةِ وَمَا أَرَادَ بِهِ؟ غَيْرَ أَنِّي لَا أَسْمَعُ فِي كِتَابِي:
فَبِأَيِّ آيَةٍ رَبِّكَ تُكذِّبَانِ؟ عِنْدَكُمْ شَيْءٌ صَحِيحٌ، فَمَا الْفَائِدَةُ فِي تَكَرُّرِ ذَلِكَ؟

[116] وَذَكَرَ أَيْضًا قِصَصَ أَنْبِيَاءَ مَعْرُوفِينَ وَغَيْرِ مَعْرُوفِينَ. مِثْلُ: صَالِحٌ وَهُودٌ وَشُعَيْبٌ وَلُوطٌ وَأَيُّوبُ
وَذَا الْكُفْلِ وَيُونُسَ. كُلُّ هَؤُلَاءِ فِيهِمْ مَنْ هُوَ فِي التَّوْرَةِ مَشْهُورٌ، وَفِيهِمْ مَنْ جَاءَ بِهِ مِنْ عِنْدِهِ. كَرَّرَ

قِصَصَهُمْ فِي مَوَاضِعَ لَوْ أَتَيْنَا عَلَى آخِرِ ذَلِكَ لَطَالَ الشَّرْحُ. فَمَا الْفَائِدَةُ فِي تَكَرُّرِ ذَلِكَ؟ لَا تَرْغِيبٌ فِي الْجَنَّةِ،
وَلَا تَحذِيرٌ مِنَ النَّارِ. وَكُلُّ هَذَا جَاءَ بِهِ، فَإِنَّمَا جَمَعَهُ مِنَ الْإِنْجِيلِ وَالتَّوْرَةِ وَالتَّزْوِيرِ، وَالكُتُبِ السَّالِفَةِ مِنْ

كُتُبِ الْحِكْمَاءِ وَذَوِي الْعُقُولِ وَالْأَبْلَابِ. وَقَدْ أَقْرَأَ مُحَمَّدٌ عَلَى نَفْسِهِ بِذَلِكَ فِي مَوْضِعَيْنِ مِنَ الْقُرْآنِ. الْمَوْضِعُ
الْأَوَّلُ فِي آخِرِ سُورَةِ الشُّعْرَاءِ حَيْثُ يَقُولُ: وَإِنَّهُ لَتَنْزِيلُ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ نَزَلَ بِهِ الرُّوحُ الْأَمِينُ عَلَى قَلْبِكَ

لِتَكُونَ مِنَ الْمُنذِرِينَ بِلِسَانٍ عَرَبِيٍّ مُبِينٍ وَإِنَّهُ لَفِي زُبُرِ الْأَوَّلِينَ. فَقَدْ صَدَقَ فِي هَذَا الْآيَةِ كَلِمَاتُهَا إِلَّا فِي قَوْلِهِ:
نَزَلَ بِهِ الرُّوحُ الْأَمِينُ عَلَى قَلْبِكَ. غَيْرَ أَنَّهُ تَنْزِيلُ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ عَلَى مَا كَانَ قَبْلَهُ، ثُمَّ أَخَذَهُ مِنْ زُبُرِ الْأَوَّلِينَ.

[117] وَالْمَوْضِعُ الثَّانِي قَوْلُهُ فِي آخِرِ سُورَةِ سَبْحِ اسْمِ رَبِّكَ الْأَعْلَى، حَيْثُ يَقُولُ: إِنَّ هَذَا لَفِي
الصُّحُفِ الْأُولَى صُحُفِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَمُوسَى. فَمَا الْفَائِدَةُ أَنْ يَجِيءَ إِلَى مَا فِي زُبُرِ الْأَوَّلِينَ وَصَحُفِ مِنْ

C [جاء] 6 من نفسه C adds [عنده] 4 الاربي بكما C [رَبِّكَ] 2 يكرير C [تكرير] || احد C [إحد] 1

الفلي C [لَفِي] 11 دير C [زير] || الرب C [رَبِّ] 10 دير C [زُبُر] 9 ماماديوس C [مُحَمَّد] 7 C41v [و] || اجا

دير C [زير] || الاول C [الأولى] 12

you deny?”²⁶¹ He repeated that in thirty-one places. Why is the repetition of that beneficial and what did he intend by it? I do not, however, hear my Scripture [endlessly repeat:] “So which of your Lord’s favors will the two of you deny?” [Even if] you believe it to be true, what is the point of repeating it?²⁶²

[116] In addition, he mentioned the stories of well-known and unknown prophets. For example: Ṣāliḥ and Hūd and Shu‘ayb²⁶³ and Lot and Job and Ezekiel²⁶⁴ and Jonah.²⁶⁵ Out of all of these, some of them are famous in the Torah and some of them came from himself. He repeated their stories in places. If I were to go to the end of that, then it would take a long time. So what is the point of repeating that? There is no invitation to Paradise and no warning of Hell. He brought all of this, collecting it from the Gospel and the Torah and the Psalms and the earlier books from the Scriptures of the wise and those possessing reason and understanding. Muḥammad used to admit that against himself in two places from the Qur’an. The first place is in the end of sura “The Poets” where he says: “Indeed it is the revelation of the Lord of the worlds. The trustworthy Spirit brought it down upon your heart that you may be among the warners in clear Arabic language. Indeed, it is in the ancients’ Scriptures.”²⁶⁶ He spoke the truth in all of this verse except in his statement, “The trustworthy Spirit brought it down upon your heart.” But it is the revelation of the Lord of the worlds who came before him, then he took it from the ancients’ Scriptures.

[117] And the second place is his statement at the end of sura “Praise the name of your Lord Most High” where he says: “This is indeed in the earlier Scrip-

261 Q 55:28.

262 The argument is convoluted, but Ibn Rajā’ claims that the phrases in Q 55:28 are repeated elsewhere and that this repetition seems superfluous for a scripture. The argument also questions why the verse uses the dual form in a repetitive fashion. Commentators have speculated whether these two applies to all humans or to two specific people. Ibn Rajā’ seems to be asking why something should be considered true when it is clearly in an ambiguous dual form.

263 The three figures of Ṣāliḥ, Hūd, and Shu‘ayb are otherwise unknown (perhaps biblical) prophets mentioned in the Qur’an, especially in tandem in Q 7:65–94; 11:50–67, 84–95, 15:78–82, 26:123–158, 178–191, 29:36–38, 51:41–43, 54:18–31. See the commentary in Gabriel Said Reynolds, *The Qur’an and the Bible: Text and Commentary* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2018), 263–269, 412–413.

264 Dhū al-Kifl is most commonly identified with Ezekiel, although scholars have also suggested Obadiah, Joshua, Tobit, or Isaiah. See Q 21:85, 38:48 and Reynolds, *The Qur’an and the Bible*, 517.

265 The stories of these figures are typically connected with other prophets, mostly biblical, in the Qur’an, usually to reinforce the threat of divine punishment.

266 Q 26:192–196.

تقدّمه من المتنبّين، فينسب ذلك إلى نفسه؟ وإنما كان ينبغي لو جاء بشيء من عنده لم يأتي به أحداً من هؤلاء كلّهم، لتمييز كلامه من كلامهم ويكون له موضع. ولو كانت الكتب المتقدّمة كلّها شرعاً واحداً، لكان ينبغي له أن يقول: جئت بكلامي نظير كتبهم، وكان له في ذلك مقال. ولكنّ الإنجيل ليس كالتوراة، والزبور ليس كالتوراة والإنجيل. وليس شيء من هؤلاء الكتب شبه الآخر. والقرآن الذي جاء به فهو كلّ مجموع من التوراة والزبور والإنجيل وغير ذلك من الكتب السالفة. فما الفائدة 5 في ذلك؟ فإن قال قائل: إنّما أراد أن يعلم الناس وقوماً من قريش وسائر العرب أخبار القرون الماضية إذ لم يجيء إليهم قبله من يعلمهم ذلك. فأعلمهم هو أخبار من تقدّمهم ليعظوا بذلك ويزدوجوا. [118] فإنما نجيب هذا القائل عن قوله بأن نقول له: قد كان قصة واحدة جامعة لذلك كلّ أقع، إذا كان من شأن العرب. فما الفائدة أنّه جعل القرآن كلّه مكرراً من أوّله إلى آخره والمعنى واحد؟ فلو أتى بقصة واحدة جامعة لهذا كلّه وأتبعها بعد ذلك بالأمثال والمواعظ مما ليس في الكتب الذي 10 قبله، لم ينبغي لمخالفكم أن يقول لم ذكر سير الأمم الماضية. إذ كانت العرب لم تعرف ذلك قبله فتكون قصة جامعة لسائر القصص الأوّلين وضرب الأمثال والمواعظ، على غير ما في الكتب المقدّسة ليميز كلامه من كلام من كان قبله. ولا يقدر مخالفه أن يقول له: سرقت كلام من كان قبلك ونسبته إلى نفسك.

[119] وإنّ من أحد العجائب قوله في سورة بني إسرائيل: قُلْ لئنِ اجْتَمَعَتِ الْإِنْسُ وَالْجِنُّ عَلَىٰ أَنْ يَأْتُوا بِمِثْلِ هَذَا الْقُرْآنِ لَا يَأْتُونَ بِمِثْلِهِ وَلَوْ كَانَ بَعْضُهُمْ لِبَعْضٍ ظَهِيراً - يعني معيناً.

C [لئن] 16 C 42^v [إلى] 13 نما C [إنّما] 6 C 42^r [من] || هو C adds [به] 5 نفسه C adds [عنده] 1

الجان C [وَالْجِنُّ] || لان

tures, the Scriptures of Abraham and Moses.”²⁶⁷ So what is the point in going to what is in the ancients’ Scriptures and the Scriptures of those who came before him among those who prophesied, and then ascribing that to himself? Rather it would have been better if he came up with something by himself which none of those ones had brought, in order to distinguish his words from their words and he would have a place [among the prophets]. If all of the ancient books were one law, then it would be proper for him to say: “I brought my book the same as their books,” so he would be right in this regard. But the Gospel is not the same as the Torah and the Psalms are not like the Torah or the Gospel. None of these books are like another. The Qur’an is that which he brought, so all of it is collected from the Torah and the Psalms and the Gospel and other such ancient Scriptures.²⁶⁸ So what is the point of that? Suppose someone says: “Rather, he wanted to teach the people and a group of the Quraysh, and the rest of the Arabs, reports of past centuries, since no one came to them who taught them that before him.” So he taught them the reports of those who came before them, so they would take that as a lesson and they would be rebuked.

[118] We respond to this speaker’s statement by telling him: One narrative collecting all of that would be more convincing, if it were for the sake of the Arabs. But what is the point of making all of the Qur’an repetitive from its beginning to its end, with one and the same meaning? If he brought one collective story for all of this, and he followed that with examples and lessons from what is not in the Scriptures which preceded him, your opponents would not be able to say why he mentioned the ancient communities’ stories. Since the Arabs did not know that before him, then it would be a comprehensive story for all the ancient stories, and he would offer examples and lessons which are not in the Holy Scriptures in order to distinguish his words from the words of those who preceded him. His opponent would not be able to say to him: “You plagiarized those who preceded you and you ascribed it to yourself.”

Chapter 16

[119] One of the marvels is his statement in sura “The People of Israel”: “Say: If mankind and the jinn gathered in order to produce something like this Qur’an,

267 Q 87:18–19.

268 Ibn Rajā’ will often speak of the Torah, Psalms, and Gospel together reflecting his familiarity with the Qur’an assigning David’s Psalms to the status of scripture as well, such as in Q 4:163, Q 17:55 and Q 21:105.

[١٢٠] نقول لهم ما أراد بهذا القول؟ أراد به لم يأت أحداً من قبله من الأنبياء المحقّقين ذوي الألباب والدلائل ما أتى به من أخبار القرون الماضية، وأنّه أوّل ما ابتدئ ذلك. فحينئذ لا يقدر أحداً يأتي مثل ذلك. فقد كذبوا لأنّ التّوراة قد فسّرت ذلك ونلخصته وبينته بيانا شافياً.

[١٢١] فإن قالوا: ما أراد ذلك، وإمّا أراد أنّ الإنس والجن لا يأتون مثل هذا القرآن في فصاحته

وإعرابه.

5

[١٢٢] قلنا لهم: إن كان نبيكم أوّل من نطق بلغة العربيّة قبل كلّ أحداً، وأنه الذي جاء بها وعلمها للناس وفهموها منه، فلعمري قد جاء شيءٌ ينبغي أن يستحسن إذا كان لم يأت أحداً من قبله.

[١٢٣] فإنهم لا يقولون ذلك، ولا يقولون إلاّ أنّ اللّغة العربيّة قبله فنقول لهم: قد كان ينبغي لما جاء بهذا الكلام لهؤلاء العرب الذين نطقوا بلغة العرب من قبله، أن يجيء به على غير حروف ألف با تا ثا ويكون ذلك غريباً. فيكون هذا عجز الجن والإنس بأن يأتوا بمثل ذلك.

10

[١٢٤] فإن قالوا: وكيف ينبغي ذلك، قلنا لهم: إنّ الله لا يتعاضمه شيء. فكيف ينبغي أن يقول أن الجن والإنس لا يستطيع أن يأتي بمثل ذلك. فلو أنّ صاحبكم جاء إلى اللّغة العرب وهي واحدة لا يعرفون غيرها فأتى بلغة مخالفة لتلك اللّغة بما يوافق الجنس، لكان لكم في ذلك مقال زائفاً مقال ضعيف، ليس بهم فيه حجة ولا مذهب، لأنّه ليس في ذلك شيء ما يصحّ نبوءة ولا غيرها. ولكنّه جاءكم بلغتكم، وأخذ كلام من كان قبله نسبه لنفسه. فبطل الآن قوله: لئن اجتمعت الإنس والجن على أن يأتوا بمثل.

15

[١٢٥] غير أنّا لسنا نكر ملاحه بعض الكلام، لا الكلّ. مثل قوله في سورة يوسف: فلما استأسيأ سوا منه خلصوا نجياً. وقوله في سورة هود: وقيل يا أرض ابلعي ماءك ويا سماء اقلعي وغيض الماء وقضي الأمر واستوت على الجودي وقيل بعدا للقوم الظالمين. ومثل هذا فهو لعمري مختصر مليح.

بأن يأتوا بمثل [margin C] و[الإنس 12 يتعاضمه C] يتعاضمه 11 C 43^f [غريباً 10 يجيبه C] به 9

ذلك فإن قالوا وكيف ينبغي ذلك، قلنا لهم إنّ الله لا يتعاضمه شيء. فكيف ينبغي أن يقول أن الجن والإنس

العمري C [لعمري || لقوم C] للقوم 19 ما كي C [ماءك || انجياً C] نجياً 18 يونس C [يوسف 17

they could not produce something like it, even if they assisted each other,”²⁶⁹ – meaning “helpers.”

[120] We say to them: “What did he intend by this statement?” [They reply:] “He meant by it that no one before him among the true prophets, possessing understanding and proofs, brought what he brought of stories of the past centuries, and that he was the first to introduce that. Therefore, no one was able to bring something like that.” But they have lied because the Torah has commented on that and summarized it and made it completely clear.

[121] Suppose they say: “No, he did not mean that, but rather he intended that humans and jinn would not bring something like this Qur’an in its eloquence and its vocalization.”

[122] We reply to them: “If your prophet was the first to speak the Arabic language before anyone, and that he was the one who brought it and taught it to the people and they understood it from him, then upon my life, he brought something that should be considered better since no one brought anything [as remarkable] before him.”

[123] But if they don’t say that, and only say that the Arabic language preceded him, then we say to them: “It would make sense, when he brought these words to those Arabs who spoke the Arabic language before him, to bring them with letters other than A, B, C, D,²⁷⁰ and that would be different. Then jinn and humans would be incapable of bringing something like that.”

[124] Suppose they say: “Why is that?” We reply to them: “Nothing is too great for God. So why would he say: ‘The jinn and humans cannot bring something like that’. If your companion came to the Arabs with a language, and it was the only one which they knew, then he came with a language different than that language that agrees with the kind, so you would have a spurious and weak doctrine about that in which there is no argument or creed, because nothing in that proves prophethood or anything else. But he came to you with your own language and he took the words of those who came before him [and] ascribed it to himself. Now his statement is invalidated: ‘If mankind and the jinn gathered in order to produce something like this’”

[125] But we do not deny the eloquence of some of the words, not all of it. For instance, his statement in sura “Joseph”: “So when they despaired of [Benjamin], [his brothers] secluded themselves in private consultation.”²⁷¹ And his statement in sura “Hūd”: “And it was said, ‘Earth, swallow your water, and

269 Q 17:88. This verse was commonly cited by Muslims to argue for the divine origins of the Qur’anic Arabic words and that they were not of human origin, or akin to poetry.

270 Literally the first four letters of the Arabic alphabet – alif, bā’, tā’, thā’.

271 Q 12:80.

[١٢٦] وحتّى أنّه يقول إنّ الجنّ والإنس لو اجتمعوا ما أتوا بمثله، فهو محال. وما الدليل على أنّكم استحسنتم هذا الألفاظ فتباهيتم بها وأمستكم عن سورة تَبَّتْ يَدَا أَبِي لَهَبٍ وَتَبَّ، مَا أَغْنَىٰ عَنْهُ مَالُهُ وَمَا كَسَبَ. وعن سورة قُلْ يَا أَيُّهَا الْكَافِرُونَ. وعن سورة: وَالْعَادِيَاتِ ضَبْحًا. وعن قوله وَجَعَلْنَا نَوْمَكُمْ سُباتًا، والسَّبات فهو نوم. وعن قوله: فَأَكِهَةٌ وَنَحْلٌ وَرُمَانٌ، وكلّ ذلك فأكهة. وعن أشياء قد ذكرناها قبل هذا الفصل وبعده فيما تقدّم من كلامنا.

5

[١٢٧] وبعده هذا فلم أمستكم عن ذكر هذا الكلام البارد الوحشيّ؟ ما كان فيكم من له عقل ولبّ يميّز ذلك، حتّى كأنكم ما قرأتم؟ فلو قستموه بكلام أشعار الفصحاء المتقدّمين الذين قد أعجزوا أهل العصر والذي قبله وبعده، إلى هذا الحين، أن يأتوا بمثل ذلك - مثل كلام الشعراء السبعة المتقدّمين ومن كان في زمانهم. مما لو قستموه إلى كلام محمّد لقد كان يكون بينهم فضل كبير. فتنعم الآن منه بالدلائل الواضحة وعلامات الأنبياء بهذا القرآن الذي استحسنتموه. وقد حصل في عقولكم أنّه لا يأتي غيره بمثل ما أتى به. ولم تطالبوه حينئذاً بآية ولا دلالة. رأيتم يا عميان القلوب؟ لو ظهر بعده رجل فيه من الفصاحة وحسن اللغة مما لم يكن في محمّد، وقستم ذلك إلى ما جاء به محمّد، فوجدتم الذي جاءكم به هذا الرجل أحسن من الذي جاء به محمّد. وقال لكم: إني نبيّ، فقلتم له: ما دلائلك؟

10

محمّد 9 فأكهة 4 صحفا 5 ضَبْحًا 6 43 C [وَالْعَادِيَاتِ 3 اتماه 7 C [أَغْنَىٰ 8 اتبت 9 C [تَبَّتْ 2

ماماديوس 13 فوجدكم 10 C [فوجدتم 11 ماماديوس 12 C [محمّد 12 ماماديوس 13

Heaven, withhold [your rain]'. And the water subsided, and the matter was accomplished, and [Noah's ship] came to rest on the Jūdiyy. And it was said, 'Away with the wrongdoing people.'²⁷² This example, by my life, is a good summary.

[126] He even states that "the jinn and the humans, if they would assemble, they would not produce something like it," which is impossible. What is the proof that [made] you commend these words that you boasted about them, yet refrained from [mentioning] sura "May Abū Lahab's hands be ruined, ruined is he. His wealth will not avail him or that which he gained,"²⁷³ and from sura "Say: You unbelievers,"²⁷⁴ and from sura "By the panting chargers,"²⁷⁵ and from his statement "We made your sleep [as a means for] rest,"²⁷⁶ and rest is sleep, and from his saying "fruits and palm dates and pomegranates"²⁷⁷ while all of these are fruits, and about the things which we have mentioned before this chapter and after it, in what we argued above.²⁷⁸

[127] On top of that, why did you refrain from mentioning this cold brutal argument? Don't you have a mind and sense to distinguish that, as if you did not read? If you have compared it with the words of ancient, eloquent speakers' poems – who amazed people of the era and the one before and after it, until this time, to come up with something like that – such as the words of the former seven poets and whoever was in their era. If you compared it to Muḥammad's words, then there would be a large remainder between them. Now you were convinced of him by clear proofs and the prophets' signs in this Qur'an which you have applauded. It occurred in your minds that no one else could produce something like that which he brought. You did not require of him therefore any sign or proof. Do you see, blind-hearted ones? Suppose a man who has eloquence and good language, which Muḥammad did not have, appeared after him, and you compared that to what Muḥammad brought, so you found that which this man brought to you better than that which Muḥammad brought to you, and he said to you: "I am a prophet," and you said to him: "What is your proof?" So he said: "These words which no one has done before me." Then for

272 Q 11:44.

273 Q 111:1–2.

274 Q 109.

275 Q 100.

276 Q 78:9.

277 Q 55:68.

278 The Latin version also adds: "Likewise in the Chapter of Jonah regarding those living in hell: 'They will hide their penitence' (10:54); he meant to say 'they will make manifest.'" See Burman, *Religious Polemic*, 298–299.

فقال: هذا الكلام الذي ما سبقني إليه أحداً. وكان مستحقاً عندهم النبوة. ولكن صاحبكم قد علم ذلك وخشي منه. فقال لكم: أنا آخر الأنبياء ولا نبي بعدي. فمن ادعى النبوة بعدي، وهو كذاب فاقتلوه.

فصل آخر وهو السابع عشر

[١٢٨] ثم أعجب من هذا قوله (في) سورة سبأ: وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَاكَ إِلَّا كَافَّةً. وقوله أيضاً في آخر سورة الأنبياء: وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَاكَ إِلَّا رَحْمَةً لِّلْعَالَمِينَ. وهذا كلام مستحيل. لأنه لو كان الله - تبارك وتعالى - أرسله إلى 5 الناس كافة، كان يعلم جميع اللغات كلها فيكلم الرومي بلغته، والنوبي بلغته، والقبطي بلغته، والسرياني بلغته، فيكون آية. كما أن سيدنا يسوع المسيح ابن الله - الحي الأزلي له المجد - كان يتكلم بجميع اللغات كلها، وهي اثنين وسبعين لغة. ثم بعد مضيّه وجه بروح القدس الفارقليط فنطق على الست حواريه بسائر اللغات التي كان سيدنا يسوع المسيح يتكلم. فلو كان صاحبكم - نبيكم - يتكلم بسائر اللغات فيكلم 10 كل قوم بلغاتهم، لقد كان ذلك حسناً. فإن كان الله وجه صاحبكم - نبيكم - بالعربية إلى سائر الألسن المخالفة العربي، فقد ظلمهم، واحشاه من الظلم. لأنه وجه إليهم رسولا لا يفهم عنهم، ولا يفهمون عنه. ولو كان أرسله رحمة للعالمين - كما قال - لقد كان يكون دلائل حسية. وقد قال في القرآن ما يبطل هذا وهو قوله: وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا مِنْ رَسُولٍ إِلَّا بِلِسَانِ قَوْمِهِ. وأظن أن في هذا كفاية.

you, he would be deserving of prophethood. But your companion knew that and he feared it. So he said to you: “I am the last of the prophets and there is no prophet after me. So whoever claims prophethood after me, he is a liar so kill him.”²⁷⁹

Chapter 17

[128] Then more strange than this is his statement [in] sura “Sheba”: “We have not sent you except to all people.”²⁸⁰ In addition he says at the end of sura “The Prophets”: “We have not sent you except as a mercy to the worlds.”²⁸¹ This is impossible, because if God sent him to all people, he would have known all of the languages so he would speak to the Byzantine in his language and the Nubian in his language and the Copt in his language and the Syriac speaker in his language, and that would be a sign. For our Lord Jesus Christ the Son of God – the Eternal Living One, to him be praise – was speaking all of these languages, and there were seventy-two languages.²⁸² Then after his time, he sent the Holy Spirit, the Paraclete, so he would speak through the six disciples in all of the languages which Our Lord Jesus Christ spoke. If your companion – your prophet – were speaking all of the languages, and he would speak to every people in their own language, then that would be appropriate. If God sent your companion – your prophet – with Arabic to everyone who did not speak Arabic, then He would have wronged them, and injustice is far from Him. Because He would have sent a messenger to them who could not understand them and they could not understand him. If He sent him as a mercy to the worlds – just as [Muḥammad] said – then there would be tangible proofs. He has said in the Qur’an what invalidates this and it is his statement: “We have only sent a messenger in his people’s own language.”²⁸³ I think that is sufficient.

279 The first part of the quotation is commonly found in the hadith collections, although the origin of the second phrase to kill later alleged prophets is unknown. See al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, 4:414 (Book 60, #3455).

280 Q 34:28.

281 Q 21:107.

282 The number 72 is a reference to the apostles that Jesus sent out to every land to preach the good news, with 72 representing all nations’ languages.

283 Q 14:4.

[١٢٩] وقد ورد ذلك في سورة إبراهيم، قراءة هذا له دلائل وآيات. ويكلّم كل قوم منهم بلغتهم. ألا تسمع إلى قوله في سورة يونس وقد جاؤوا قوم من قريش، فقالوا له: يا محمد أنت تزعم أن الله تبارك وتعالى نطق بهذا القرآن. قال: نعم. فقالوا له: قد كان ينبغي أن ينزل عليك بسائر اللغات كلهم، فتكلّم الخلق كلهم بما يوافقهم ولغة كل قوم منهم. فاسأله أن ينزل عليك القرآن بلغة غير لغة العرب. فقال لهم هذا الآية الذي في سورة يونس وهي: **وَإِذَا تَمَّتْ عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتُنَا بَيِّنَاتٍ قَالَ الَّذِينَ لَا يَرْجُونَ لِقَاءَنَا 5** **إِنَّتِ بِقُرْآنٍ غَيْرِ هَذَا أَوْ بَدِّلَهُ قُلْ مَا يَكُونُ لِي أَنْ أُبَدِّلَهُ مِنْ تَلْقَائِنَا نَفْسِي إِنْ أَتَّبِعُ إِلَّا مَا يُوحَىٰ إِلَيَّ. فَقَالُوا:** ما سألناك أن تبدّله من تلقاء نفسك، وإنما سألناك أن تسأل الله أن ينزله عليك بلغة غير هذا اللغة، إن كنت تزعم (أنك) نبياً. فقال: **إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَقُولُ لَكُمْ: وَمَا آتَاكُمُ الرَّسُولُ فَخُذُوهُ وَمَا نَهَاكُمْ عَنْهُ فَانْتَهُوا.** وليس هذا جواب عما سأله عنه، إلا مغالطة وإحادة عن الحق. ولو أرسل الله رسولاً واحداً إلى سائر الناس بعلامات ودلالات، وجاء إلى قوم فلم يكلمهم بلغاتهم، لقد كان ذلك تشديداً من الله 10 على عباده وعنفاً وتضييقاً.

[١٣٠] وليس يعرف ذلك إلا السيد المسيح له المجد. فإن الله - عز وجل اسمه - وجه كلمته الأزلية، فتجسدت من مريم الطاهرة البتول. وأظهرها للناس رحمة لهم وخلاصاً وتفضلاً عليهم. فأظهر الآيات والعجائب، وأبرأ الأكمه والبرص، وأقام الموتى. وخاطبهم كل قوم بلغتهم. وأقام على الأرض 15 ثلاثة وثلاثون سنة حتى انتشر الدين ومات الكفر والطغيان. وظهر أمر الله على الكثرة من أعدائه،

C [قَالَ] آيَاتُنَا 5 فاسأله C [فاسأله] 4 ماماديوس C [محمد] جاووا C [جاؤوا] 2 بقرا C [قراءة] 1

دلالات C [ودلالات] 10 C 45^f [تزعم] 8 بل C [قُلْ] و C [أَوْ] ات C [إِنَّتِ] 6 فقال

[129] That this reading has proofs and signs was mentioned in sura “Abraham.”²⁸⁴ He would speak to every people among them in their own language. Don’t you hear his statement in sura “Jonah”²⁸⁵ where a group of the Quraysh came and they said to him: “Muḥammad, you claim that God spoke in this Qur’an.” He said: “Yes.” So they said to him: “It should have been mandatory for all of the languages to be revealed to you, so you could speak to all creatures by what is proper for them and the language of every people among them. So make the Qur’an be revealed to you in a language other than Arabic.” So he said to them this verse which is in sura “Jonah”: “When our verses are recited to them as clear signs, those who do not expect the meeting with us say, ‘Bring us a Qur’an other than this or change it’. Say: ‘It is not for me to change it on my own accord. I only follow what is revealed to me.’”²⁸⁶ So they said: “We do not ask you to change it on your own accord, rather we ask you to ask God to reveal it to you in a language other than this language, if you claim [to be] a prophet.” So he said: “God says to you: ‘Take whatever the messenger brought you, and cease whatever he forbids you from.’”²⁸⁷ This reply to what they were asking him about is only sophistry and evasion from the truth. If God sent one messenger to all of the people with signs and proofs, and he came to the people but he did not speak to them in their language, then that would be an [example of] inflexibility and violence and oppression from God upon His worshippers.²⁸⁸

[130] Only our Lord Christ knows that, to him be the glory.²⁸⁹ God sent his Eternal Word, and he became incarnate from the pure Virgin Mary. He revealed him to the people as a mercy for them and salvation and grace upon them. So he revealed signs and miracles and he healed the lepers and the blind and he caused the dead to rise. He preached to every group in their own language. He remained on earth for thirty-three years until the religion spread and unbelief and tyranny perished. God’s authority appeared despite most of his enemies,

284 Q 14.

285 Q 10.

286 Q 10:15.

287 Q 59:7.

288 The commentaries on Q 10:15 agree that the polytheists (presumably among the Quraysh) came to Muḥammad to request that he change certain parts of the Qur’an to permit certain things that were forbidden. However, the audience does not ask him to translate the scripture into other languages. See Burman, *Religious Polemic*, 303.

289 This paragraph represents a brief pause in his polemical argument in order to defend his Christian theological viewpoint, arguing that Jesus Christ did not show the same attributes of violence or familial issues during his ministry and had proofs for his divine origins.

وأمنت السبل. وتقطعت عرى المنافقين. وخلص كل من كان في الحجيم ومتبعيه إلى دهر الدهارين. وضمن لنا الجنة ويجعلنا وارثين ملكوته. وفارقنا على ذلك بغير سيف ولا عصا ولا إراقة دم.

[١٣١] وصاحبكم جاءكم بالسيف بغير دلالة ولا بينة. فلما طلبتموه بالدلائل، قال: ليس معي دلالة إلا هذا القرآن الذي (لا) أعلم له تأويل، ولا يعلم تأويله إلا الله. فكسر الأصنام وهذاكم عن عبادتها. وأعطاكم حجراً أسود وقال لكم: حجوا لهذا كل سنة وصلوا له. وأخرج لكم قرآن لا فائدة ولا عائدة. 5 يقول لكم فيه: يا أيها النبي انكح فلانة، و: يا أيها النبي طلق فلانة، و: يا أيها النبي خذ امرأة زيد منه، وتزوج أنت بها. يا أيها النبي قل لأبي هريرة لا يدخل بيتك، ولا يأكل خبزك.

[١٣٢] ونظر إلى الكتب السالفة وسرق ما فيها من الكلام، ونسبه إلى نفسه. وكرر كل كلمة في كذا وكذا موضع. وقال: إن لم تدينوا الله بهذا الذي جئتكم به، وإلا قتلتكم. فأطاعوه قوماً برضاهم، وقوماً على الكره منهم. واستوى له الأمر وبلغ في ذلك مراده. وجاء أوان فراقه لكم، قال لكم في سورة 10 الأحقاف: قُلْ مَا أَدْرِي مَا يَفْعَلُ بِي وَلَا بِكُمْ. ففضى وهو لا يدري أين يمضي، ولا على ما تقدم عليه. فلوافتكروا في هذا الكلمة لكان لهم فيها مقنع.

[١٣٣] ثم قال في سورة سبأ: قُلْ مَنْ يَرْزُقُكُمْ مِنَ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ، قُلْ اللَّهُ وَإِنَّا أَوْ إِيَّاكُمْ لَعَلَى هُدًى أَوْ فِي ضَلَالٍ مُّبِينٍ. فمن لم يعلم هل هو على هذا (هدى)، أو على ضلال مبين، ولا ما يفصل به، 15 فما الفائدة في اتباعه؟

[١٣٤] وهذا الكلام فليس هو محجوباً عنهم. ولا أنتم لا تقرؤونه. بل في قرآنكم مسطور وأنتم تقرؤونه آناء الليل وآناء النهار. وأولادكم يتعلمونه من المعلمين، ويقرؤون في الصلوات. ويقرؤونه قوام الليل، ويقرؤونه في دارهم. ويقرؤه الفقراء منهم، والسائلون في الطرقات يلتمسون به الفضل والصدقات. فليس أحداً منهم من جاهلهم ولا عالمهم، ولا صغيرهم ولا كبيرهم، إلا وكل هذا الذي ذكرناه 20 عندهم. وكل قلوبهم عميت فلا يبصرون ولا يعقلون.

C [تدينوا] 9 C 45^٢ [بالسيف] 3 راقعة C [إراقة] || على ذلك C margin [ذلك] 2 غزي C [عري] 1 C [ضلال] || على C [في] 14 ياكم C [إياكم] || و C 46^٢ [أو] 13 الأحقاف C [الأحقاف] 11 يدبوا السؤال C [والسائلون] || يقرؤه C [ويقرؤه] 18 ظلال C [ضلال] || ظلال

and the ways became safe. And the hypocrites' bonds were cut. He saved everyone who was in Hell and his followers unto the ages of ages. He ensured Paradise for us and made us inheritors of his kingdom. He left us with that, without a sword or a rod or shedding blood.

[131] Your companion [Muḥammad] came to you with the sword without proof or evidence. When you required proofs of him, he said: "I do not have any proof except for this Qur'an for which [no one] knows its interpretation, and only God knows its interpretations." So he destroyed the idols and he guided you from their worship. He gave you a Black Stone and he said to you: "Do the pilgrimage for this every year and pray to it." And he left you a Qur'an which has no benefit or profit. He says to you in it: "Prophet, marry so-and-so," and "Prophet, divorce so-and-so," and "Prophet, take Zayd's wife from him and you marry her." [And] "Prophet, say to Abū Hurayra not to enter your house nor eat your bread."

[132] [Muḥammad] looked at the previous Scriptures and stole the words that were in them, and he ascribed them to himself. He repeated every word in a number of places. He said: "If you don't profess God in the way I have brought to you, then I will kill you." So some people obeyed him willingly, and others among them were coerced. The matter was settled for him, and in that he achieved his goal. When the time came for his departure from you, he said to you in sura "The Sand Dunes": "Say: I do not know what will be done with me or with you."²⁹⁰ So he passed away and he did not know where he would go, nor what would happen to him. If they reflect on this argument, then it should be convincing for them.

[133] Then he said in sura "Sheba": "Say: Who provides for you from the Heavens and the earth? Say: God. Indeed, we or you are either well-guided or in clear error."²⁹¹ So he does not even know if he is [well-guided] or in clear error, nor can he decide about it, so what is the point of following him?

[134] These words are not concealed from them. Neither do you fail to recite it. Rather it is written in your Qur'an and you recite it throughout the night and day. Your children learn it from teachers, and they recite it in prayers. They recite it throughout the night and they recite it in their homes. The poor among them recite it and beggars use it to ask for favors and charity. Their ignorant and their intellectuals, their young and their old, all of them possess what we have mentioned. All their hearts went blind so they could not see or reason.

290 Q 46:9.

291 Q 34:24.

الفصل الثامن عشر

[١٣٥] ذكر تناقض القرآن، آيات تنقض بعضها بعضاً.

[١٣٦] قال لهم في مواضع كثيرة من القرآن: وَلَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ. فبدأ بخلق السماء

على الأرض. ولو لم يقول غير هذا في خلق السموات والأرض، لكان هذا الكلام وجوه ينصرف عليها

في معاني الكلام واللغات. إما أن يكون خلق الأرض قبل السماء، أو خلق السماء قبل الأرض، 5

أو خلقهما جميعاً في وقت واحد وكلام واحد. ولكنه قال غير هذا فتبين خطأه. فقال في سورة
التازعات: ^{٥٥}أَنْتُمْ أَشَدُّ خَلْقًا أَمْ السَّمَاءُ بِنَاهَا رَفَعَ سَمَكَهَا فَسَوَّاهَا وَأَغْطَشَ لَيْلَهَا وَأَخْرَجَ ضُحَاهَا وَالْأَرْضَ

بَعْدَ ذَلِكَ دَحَاهَا. فبين لهم أن الله خلق السماء ثم خلق الأرض من بعده. ثم قال بعد ذلك في سورة

حم السجدة ما ينقض ذلك. فقال: قُلْ أَتَنْكُرُونَ (لِتَكْفُرُونَ) بِالَّذِي خَلَقَ الْأَرْضَ فِي يَوْمَيْنِ وَتَجْعَلُونَ لَهُ

أَنْدَادًا؟ ذَلِكَ رَبُّ الْعَالَمِينَ. وجعل فيها رواسي من فوقها وبارك فيها وقدر فيها أقواتها في أربعة أيام 10

سواءً للساكنين ثم استوى إلى السماء وهي دخان. فقال لها وللأرض ائتما طوعاً أو كرهاً. قالنا ائتما

طائعين. فنقضت هذا الآية التي قبلها. ثم قال في سورة البقرة: هُوَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ لَكُمْ (مَا) فِي الْأَرْضِ

جَمِيعًا ثُمَّ اسْتَوَى إِلَى السَّمَاءِ فَسَوَّاهُنَّ سَبْعَ سَمَاوَاتٍ. فبدأ في هذا السورة أيضاً بخلق الأرض. وقال في

سورة قاف - ق - وَلَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا فِي سِتَّةِ أَيَّامٍ وَمَا مَسَّنَا مِنْ لُغُوبٍ. فما

أعجب هذا! وهو يقول في موضع آخر أن الله خلق السماء قبل الأرض، كلام ينقض بعضه بعضاً. 15

آيات تنقضهن آية.

C 46^v; C [التازعات] 7 التبين C [فتبين] || كلاماً C [وكلام] || وقتاً C [وقت] 6 بخلق C [بخلق] 3

Ed. [السجدة] || حاييم C [حم] 9 شملها C [سَمَكَهَا] و C adds [بِنَاهَا] امر C [أم] || اليم C [أَنْتُمْ] و C adds

فقضت C [فقطضت] 12 سبوا C [سواء] 11 يجلون C [وَتَجْعَلُونَ] || قول لنبيكم C [أَنْتُمْ] || سورة فصلت

السموات C [السَّمَاوَاتِ] 14 سبعة سموات C [سَمَاوَاتِ] 13

Chapter 18

[135] On the Qur'an's contradiction; some verses contradict each other.

[136] He said to them in many places in the Qur'an: "We have indeed created the Heavens and the earth." So he started with the creation of Heaven before the earth. If he didn't say anything more specific about the creation of the Heavens and the earth, then this sentence would have many ways to fully inflect it, regarding the words' and languages' meanings. Either he created the earth before Heaven or he created Heaven before the earth or he created the two of them at the same time and as one word. But he said something else so his mistake became clear. He said in sura "The Snatchers": "Are you a more difficult creation or is Heaven? He built it. He raised its roof and He fashioned it. He darkened its night and He brought forth its morning light. After that He spread the earth."²⁹² So he clarified for them that God created Heaven, then He created the earth after it. Then he said after that in sura "Ĥā' Mīm Prostration" what contradicts that. He said: "Say: Do you indeed [disbelieve] in the one who created the earth in two days and attribute equals to Him? That is the Lord of the worlds. He placed on it firm mountains above it, and He blessed it and decreed for it its sustenance in four days equally for those who ask. Then He went up to Heaven while it was smoke. He said to it and to the earth, 'Come willingly or by coercion'. They said, 'We have come willingly'."²⁹³ So this verse contradicts the one that came before [in my example]. Then he said in sura "The Cow": "He is the one who created for you all of [that which] is on the earth. Then He went up to Heaven, and made them into seven Heavens."²⁹⁴ He also started with the earth's creation in this sura. He said in sura "Qāf": "We did indeed create the Heavens and earth and what is between them in six days, while no tiredness touched Us."²⁹⁵ How strange is this! He is saying in another place that God created Heaven before the earth, with one remark contradicting the other. Verses are contradicted by [another] verse.

292 Q 79:27-30.

293 Q 41:9-11.

294 Q 2:29.

295 Q 50:38.

[١٣٧] وقال في سورة الأعراف: فَلَنَسْأَلَنَّ الَّذِينَ أُرْسِلَ إِلَيْهِمْ وَلَنَسْأَلَنَّ الْمُرْسَلِينَ. وقال في سورة الحجر: فَوَرَبِّكَ لَنَسْأَلَنَّهُمْ أَجْمَعِينَ عَن مَّا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ. فدلنا هاتان الآيتان أنه لا بد من السؤال كل الخلق من نبي وتقي وكافر. ثم نقض ذلك، فقال في سورة قد أفلح المؤمنون: فَإِذَا نَفَخَ فِي الصُّورِ فَلَا أَنسَابَ بَيْنَهُمْ يَوْمَئِذٍ وَلَا يَتَسَاءَلُونَ. وقال في سورة آل عمران: إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَشْتَرُونَ بِعَهْدِ اللَّهِ وَأِيمَانِهِمْ ثَمَنًا قَلِيلًا أُولَئِكَ لَا خَلَاقَ لَهُمْ فِي الْآخِرَةِ وَلَا يُكَلِّمُهُمُ اللَّهُ وَلَا يَنْظُرُ إِلَيْهِمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ وَلَا يُزَكِّيهِمْ. فأين 5 هذا القول من قوله: فَوَرَبِّكَ لَنَسْأَلَنَّهُمْ أَجْمَعِينَ عَن مَّا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ، يعني المؤمنين والكافرين. وهذا اختلاف وتناقض، آية ينقضها آية.

[١٣٨] وقال في سورة مريم: وَإِنْ مِنْكُمْ إِلَّا وَارِدُهَا كَانَ عَلَى رَبِّكَ حَتْمًا مَّقْضِيًّا - يعني جهنم - ثُمَّ نُجِّي الَّذِينَ اتَّقَوْا (وَنَذَرُ الظَّالِمِينَ فِيهَا جِثِيًّا). فدلنا هذا الآية أن جميع الخلق لا بد يردوا جهنم ويروها. وينجي المتقين ونذر الظالمين فيها حيناً. مما انضاف إلى ذلك من الحديث المشهور عندهم عن نبيهم أنه 10

فدلنا C [فدلنا] || لنسألهم C [لنَسْأَلَنَّهُمْ] || 47^r C [الحجر] 2 لنسألن C [وَلَنَسْأَلَنَّ] || فلنسلن C [فَلَنَسْأَلَنَّ] 1

C [جِثِيًّا] || يحيي C [نُجِّي] 9 يشيرون C [يَشْتَرُونَ] || أنسا ياتيهم بتوميذاً ولا تيا يكون C [يَتَسَاءَلُونَ] 4

which appears again (correctly) a few lines later. C adds [فدلنا] || ما كئين حيناً

نظر C [ونذر] 10

[137²⁹⁶] He said in sura “The Heights”: “We will surely question those to whom it was sent, and We will surely question the messengers.”²⁹⁷ He said in surat “al-Hijr”: “So by your Lord, We will surely question all of them about what they were doing.”²⁹⁸ So these two verses show that questions [regarding judgment] are inevitable for all creation, including a prophet, and those who fear [God], and unbelievers. Then he contradicted that, when he said in sura “Certainly the Believers have succeeded”: “When the horn is blown, there will be no relationship between them that day, nor will they ask about one another.”²⁹⁹ He said in sura “The Family of ‘Imrān”: “Those who exchange God’s covenant and their oaths for a small price will have no share in the hereafter, and God will not speak to them or look at them on the Day of Resurrection, nor will he purify them.”³⁰⁰ What does this statement have to do with his words: “So by your Lord, we will surely question all of them about what they were doing,” meaning the believers and the unbelievers. This is an inconsistency and a contradiction; a verse contradicted with another.³⁰¹

[138] He said in sura “Mary”: “Every one of you will come to it. It is your Lord’s inevitable decree” – meaning Gehenna – “then we will save those who feared God [and leave] the wrongdoers on their knees within it.”³⁰² This verse shows that for all creatures it is inevitable that they will bow before Gehenna and see it. He saves those who are God-fearing and he leaves the wrongdoers in it for a while. In addition to that, they have a well-known hadith

296 The main point of the argument here is to claim that in some verses the judged will be able to speak and in other passages that they will not be able to speak on Judgment Day. The Latin translation provides several examples prior to the beginning of this section, quoting Q 77:35–36; 39:31, 23:65, and 37:27. Then it joins the Arabic text at this point.

297 Q 7:6.

298 Q 15:92–93.

299 Q 23:101.

300 Q 3:77.

301 There is a large section in the Latin translation (9.4–9.8) that is not in the Arabic manuscript. For this material, see Burman, *Religious Polemic*, 308–315. To summarize: 9.4: a criticism of fasting during Ramaḍān (Q 5:97); 9.5: a criticism of comparing God to the firmament of the sea (Q 31:31); 9.6: a criticism of the concept that there are hours and day and night in heaven (Q 19:62; 11:107); 9.7: a criticism of the concept that spiritual angels were to worship the physical (and thus inferior) Adam (Q 7:11, 7:37–38); 9.8: a criticism of Muslims for mistakenly believing that Christians worship Mary as part of the Trinity (Q 5:16) and worship their priests and monks as gods (Q 9:31). Given the fact that these passages are found in the Latin translation and also addressed by Riccoldo da Monte di Croce (d. 1320) in his work *Contra legem Sarracenorum*, these sections were undoubtedly part of the original Arabic text.

302 Q 19:71–72.

قال: لا بدّ أنه يرد جميع الخلق جهنّم، من ملك مقرّب ونبيّ مرسل. ولو كان للمرء اليوم من العمل الصّالح عمل سبعين نبياً، لظنّ أنّه لا ينجو من نار جهنّم. ثمّ نقض ذلك فقال في آخر سورة الأنبياء: (إِنَّ الَّذِينَ سَبَقَتْ لَهُمْ مِنَّا الْحُسْنَىٰ أُولَٰئِكَ عَنْهَا مُبْعَدُونَ، لَا يَسْمَعُونَ حَسِيسَهَا. فَأَيْنَ هَذَا الْكَلَامُ مِنْ قَوْلِهِ: وَإِنَّ مِنْكُمْ لِلْآلِ وَارِدُهَا كَانَ عَلَىٰ رَبِّكَ حَتْمًا مَقْضِيًّا؟ وهو يزعم أنّ هذا كلام الله له، وأنّ الله قال له: وَإِنَّ مِنْكُمْ لِلْآلِ وَارِدُهَا - يعني هو وأصحابه وجميع الخلق. مما انضاف إلى ذلك من الحديث الذي ذكرناه. فشتان ما بين هذا الكلام وبين قوله: أُولَٰئِكَ عَنْهَا مُبْعَدُونَ، لَا يَسْمَعُونَ حَسِيسَهَا. وهذا التناقض واختلاف، آية ينقضها آية والإجماع والعيان.

[١٣٩] قال في سورة البقرة: وَإِذْ قُلْنَا لِلْمَلَائِكَةِ اسْجُدُوا لِآدَمَ فَسَجَدُوا إِلَّا إِبْلِيسَ أَبَا وَاسْتَكْبَرَ. وكرّر ذلك في مواضع كثيرة من القرآن. فدللّ ذلك أنّ إبليس كان من الملائكة. وذلك صحيح عند جميع النّاس لا شكّ فيه. ولا اختلاف أنّه ملاك. فنقض ذلك وخالف الإجماع والعيان. فقال في سورة الكهف: وَإِذْ قُلْنَا لِلْمَلَائِكَةِ اسْجُدُوا لِآدَمَ فَسَجَدُوا إِلَّا إِبْلِيسَ كَانَ مِنَ الْجِنِّ، فَفَسَقَ عَنْ أَمْرِ رَبِّهِ. وهذا محال بينّ عند كلّ أحد أن يكون إبليس من الجنّ. بل كان إبليس من الملائكة ومن أكبرهم وأعيانهم. فإن كان إبليس إنّما كان من الجنّ ولم يكن من الملائكة، فإنّ الله أمر الملائكة بالسّجود لآدم - على قولكم المحال - فحينئذ سجدوا الملائكة كلّهم ولم يسجد إبليس. فلا شيء عليه من امتناعه

مزعم C [يزعم 4 حسيساً C [حسيستها || الحسنات C [الحسنَى 3 نبينا C [نبياً 2 47v C [جهنّم 1

الكهن C [الكهف 11 48f C [فقال 10 ذلك C [وذلك 9

from their prophet that said: “It is inevitable that all creatures will bow to Gehenna, from an angel close [to God] to a prophet sent with a message. Even if someone on the Day [of Resurrection] has done the righteous works of seventy prophets, he should still think that he will not be saved from the fire of Gehenna.”³⁰³ Then he contradicted that when he said at the end of sura “The Prophets”: “[For] the ones who have received the best outcome from Us; those ones are far removed from [Gehenna]. They will not hear its sound.”³⁰⁴ What does this remark have to do with his statement, “Every one of you will come to [Gehenna]. It is your Lord’s inevitable decree”? He alleges that these are God’s words to him, and that God said to him: “Every one of you will come to it” – meaning him, and his companions, and all creatures. In addition to that is the hadith which we have already mentioned. What a great difference between these words and his statement: “Those ones are far removed from [Gehenna]. They will not hear its slightest sound.” This is a contradiction and an inconsistency; one verse contradicts another verse, and the consensus, and what is clear.

[139] He said in sura “The Cow”: “Remember when we said to the angels, ‘Bow before Adam’. So they bowed, except for Iblīs.³⁰⁵ He refused and became arrogant.”³⁰⁶ He repeated that in many places in the Qur’an. That demonstrates that Iblīs was one of the angels. That is accepted as true by all people without a doubt. There is no disagreement that he was an angel. But he contradicted that and he disagreed with the consensus and what is clear. For he said in sura “The Cave”: “[Remember] when we said to the angels, ‘Bow to Adam’. They bowed except for Iblīs. He was from the jinn and disobeyed his Lord’s command.”³⁰⁷ That Iblīs would be from the jinn is clearly impossible to everyone. Rather, Iblīs was among the angels and among their greatest noble ones. Suppose Iblīs was from the jinn, and he was not among the angels, and God commanded the angels to bow to Adam – according to your impossible claim – so therefore all

303 This hadith seems to echo the punishment threat in Q 9:80 that even if one asks for forgiveness seventy times it will not necessarily be given to them on the Day of Resurrection. While Ibn Rajā’ seems to quote from a Shī’ī source he was reading, I have not located its origin. A similar Shī’ī hadith notes that even if a man has accomplished the work of seventy prophets, then his work still may not be sufficient to survive judgment because of the severity of what happens on the Day of Resurrection.

304 Q 21:101–102.

305 Iblīs is a name given to the Devil, and is a transliteration from Ethiopic via the Greek *diabolos*.

306 Q 2:34.

307 Q 18:50.

من السّجود، إذ ليس هو ملاك. ولو سجد مع الملائكة كان مخطئاً فاعلاً غير ما أمره به. لأنّ الله أمر الملائكة بالسّجود فسجدوا وإبليس لم يؤمر بالسّجود، إذ ليس هو من الملائكة. وقد نسبتم الله تعالى إلى الظلم، لسخطه على إبليس، لأننا لا نرى في سخطه عليه ما يوجب ذلك، على قولكم. وهذا تناقض واختلاف آية تنقضها آية.

- 5 [١٤٠] قال في سورة النحل: إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُ بِالْعَدْلِ وَالْإِحْسَانِ وَإِيتَاءِ ذِي الْقُرْبَىٰ وَيَنْهَىٰ عَنِ الْفَحْشَاءِ وَالْمُنْكَرِ وَالْبَغْيِ. ثمّ نقض هذا الكلام في سورة بني إسرائيل: وَإِذَا أَرَدْنَا أَنْ نُهْلِكَ قَرْيَةً، أَمْرُنَا مُتْرَفِيهَا - يعني أعيانها وذوي النعمة - فَفَسَقُوا فِيهَا فَحَقَّ عَلَيْهَا الْقَوْلُ فَدَمَّرْنَا هَا تَدْمِيرًا، فنهوا. ويقول في موضع أنّ الله أمر بالعدل والإحسان. ويقول في موضع أنّ الله يأمر بالفسق. ولقد نكر هذا الآية كثير من كبراء أئمتهم في القرآن إنكاراً شديداً فقد اهدته الآية على غير هذا المعنى. وذلك أنّه قرأها: وَإِذَا أَرَدْنَا أَنْ نُهْلِكَ قَرْيَةً أَمْرُنَا مُتْرَفِيهَا، مستمدة من الإمارة. يعني: إذا أردنا هلاك قريته جئنا إلى 10 ملوكها الإمارة. فإذا صاروا الأمراء وجاروا في إمارتهم، حينئذ أهلكناهم ودمرنا عليهم. ولم يقرأ هذا القراءة إلا واحد لا غير ولم يتابعه على هذا الآية أحدا. قال في سورة الأعراف: وَإِذَا فَعَلُوا فَاحِشَةً قَالُوا وَجَدْنَا عَلَيْهَا آبَاءَنَا وَاللَّهُ أَمْرُنَا بِهَا قُلْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَأْمُرُ بِالْفَحْشَاءِ اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُونَ؟ آية ينقضها الحديث والأسماع والمعقول.

- 15 [١٤١] قال في سورة القمر: اقْتَرَبَتِ السَّاعَةُ وَانْشَقَّ الْقَمَرُ. أجمع المفسرين في هذا الآية أنّه كان ذات ليلة مع أصحابه جالسا فنظر إلى القمر وهو في حال انقسامه واستدارته. فقال له أصحابه: يا محمد أرنا آية نستعجب منها. فرفع رأسه إلى السماء وأومأ إلى القمر بإصبعه السبابة والوسطى، ثمّ قال له: انشق أيها القمر. فانشق بين اثنين، فوقع نصف على جبل أبي قبيس، والنصف الآخر على الجبل الأحمر. وهذا

[فَسَقُوا] || اتمياها C [أعيانها] || امر فيها C [مُتْرَفِيهَا] 7 قاريه C [قَرْيَةً] 6 مسخطة C [لسخطه] 3 C [مُتْرَفِيهَا] 10 فنهوا C [فنهوا] || فدبرناها تدييراً C 48v; C [تَدْمِيرًا] || القول عليها C [الْقَوْلُ] || فسقوا C ابونا عليها C [آبَاءَنَا] 13 حاشية قال C [قال] 12 الامرء C [الأمراء] 11 مسدة C [مستمدة] || ميرنيها C [السبابة] || اومي C [وأومأ] || نتعجب C [نستعجب] 17 ما ماديوس C [محمد] 16 لاسماع C [والأسماع] 14 C 49^r [والنصف] || فيسين C [قبيس] 18 المستابه

of the angels bowed and Iblis did not bow. There was no blame in his refusing to bow, since he was not an angel. If he bowed with the angels, he would have been a sinner doing something other than what he was commanded. Because, God commanded the angels to bow and they did so while Iblis was not commanded to bow, since he was not from the angels. You have ascribed injustice to God for his anger against Iblis, because we do not see what necessitates his anger as you say. This is a contradiction and an inconsistency; one verse contradicts another verse.

[140] He said in sura “The Bees”: “God commands justice and good conduct and giving to relatives and forbids immorality and bad conduct and oppression.”³⁰⁸ Then he contradicted this remark when he said in sura “The People of Israel”: “When We want to destroy a city, We command its prosperous”³⁰⁹ – meaning its nobles and those who possess wealth – “to act sinfully within it. So the verdict is confirmed upon it, and We destroy it completely,” so they came to an end. He says in one place that God commanded justice and charity. He says in [another] place that God made a command to act sinfully. Many of the Qur’an’s leading scholars vehemently denied this verse, because the verse guides him to a different meaning. Namely, [they] read it: “When We want to destroy his city, We *give authority* to its prosperous ones,” derived from the word for an emir. It means: “When We want to destroy his city, We bring authority to its kings. If they became emirs and were unjust in their emirate, then We would destroy them and We would make them perish.” Only one person made this reading, and no one else, and no one agreed with him about this verse. He said in sura “The Heights”: “When they commit a sinful act, they say: ‘We found our fathers doing it, and God commanded us to do it’. Say: ‘God does not command sinful acts. Do you say about God that which you do not know?’”³¹⁰ A verse is contradicted with the hadith and those who listen and reason.

[141] He said in sura “The Moon”: “The Hour has come near and the moon has split.”³¹¹ The commentators agreed about this verse that one night he was sitting with his companions, and he looked at the moon and its circular shape was divided. His companions said to him: “Muḥammad, show us a sign that we might be amazed by it.” So he looked up to the sky and he pointed at the moon with his index and middle finger. Then he said to it: “Split, moon.” Then it split in two, so one half fell upon Abū Qubays Mountain and another part [fell]

308 Q 16:90.

309 Q 17:16.

310 Q 7:28.

311 Q 54:1.

أَنَّ الْجَبَلَانَ بِمَكَّةَ، وَمَكَّةَ بَيْنَهُمَا فِي وَسْطِهَا. وَهِيَ سَمِيًّا أَحْشَا مَكَّةَ. فَلَهَا رَأْوَا الْقَمَرَ قَدْ وَقَعَ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ عَلَى الْجَبَلَيْنِ تَعَجَّبُوا مِنْ ذَلِكَ. وَذَكَرَ ذَلِكَ فِي الْقُرْآنِ، قَالَ: اقْتَرَبَتِ السَّاعَةُ وَانْشَقَّ الْقَمَرُ.

[١٤٢] وهذا من أعظم الكذب والبهت. لأن ذلك لو كان حقاً، لما خفي عن جميع الخلق، لا من النَّصَارَى ولا من اليهود ولا من سائر الملل. بل لو كان ذلك كذلك لذكرته الناس في كتبهم وكان ذلك متبيناً في السيرة. وكان أيضاً مشهوراً عند جميع من يتتبع علم النجوم والأفلاك، ولا سيما الهند والصَّابِئَةَ الَّذِينَ هُمْ أَرْبَابُ هَذَا الْعِلْمِ. فَمَا رَأَيْنَا أَحَدًا مِنْ جَمِيعِ هَؤُلَاءِ ذَكَرَهُ. وَلَا جَاءَ فِي الْخَبَرِ أَنَّهُ أَسْلَمَ عِنْدَ ذَلِكَ أَحَدًا مِنْ مَخَالِفِكُمْ. إِذْ كَانَ جَمَاعَةٌ مِنَ الْمَغْفَلِينَ وَالْجَاهِلِينَ إِنْ أَسْلَمُوا مِنْ غَيْرِ آيَةٍ أَظْهَرَهَا لَهُمْ فَقَدْ كَانَ يَجِبُ أَنْ يَسْلَمَ فِي تِلْكَ السَّاعَةِ أُمَّمٌ كَثِيرَةٌ. فَمَا رَأَيْنَا ذَلِكَ وَلَا ذَكَرَ ذَلِكَ شَاعِرٌ فِي مَدْحٍ وَلَا هِجَاءٍ. وَهَذَا كَذِبٌ وَمِحَالٌ وَمَنْكَرٌ مِنَ الْقَوْلِ.

[١٤٣] ودليل غير هذا يشهد أن ذلك كذب ومحال، وهو ما حدّثنيه الحسن بن رشيق العسكري، 10 قد حدّثنا أبو بشر الدّولابي. قال حدّثنا أبو عبد الرحمن الشَّيباني النَّسَائِي، قال حدّثنا قتيبة ابن سعيد (عن) مالك، عن هشام ابن عروة، عن أبيه أنه قال: سألت ابن عباس فقلت له أخبرني عن هذا

[النَّسَائِي || C 49^v] قَالَ 11 الصَّابِئَةَ [وَالصَّابِئَةَ 6 كَذَلِكَ] [كَذَلِكَ 4] [الآ 3] [لَا] [هَذَا] [أَنَّ 1

مَلِكٌ [C adds] [مَالِكٌ، 12] [قَبِيْبَةُ] [قَبِيْبَةُ || النَّسَوِي C

upon the Red Mountain.³¹² These are two mountains in Mecca and Mecca is between them in the middle. However, the two of them were named “the interior of Mecca.” When they saw the moon had fallen from the sky upon the two mountains, they were amazed at that.³¹³ He mentioned that in the Qur’an; he said: “The Hour has come near and the moon has split.”³¹⁴

[142] This is one of the greatest lies and untruths. If that were true, then it would not have been hidden from all creatures, not from the Christians and the Jews and the rest of the religious groups. Rather, if that were the case, then people would have mentioned it in their books and that which is clear in [Muḥammad’s] biography. In addition, that would have been famous for everyone who is devoted to knowledge of the stars and [their] orbits, and especially the Hindus and the Sabians who are the masters of this science. But we have not seen even one of those [groups] mention it. It was not communicated in the reports that any of your opponents converted to Islam when that happened. Since a number of gullible and ignorant people had converted to Islam without him showing them a sign, then it should seem to require that many people would have converted to Islam at that time. But we don’t see that, and no poet mentioned that in verses of praise or ridicule. This is a lie and impossible and the statement is refuted.

[143] Another proof testifying that it is a lie and impossible is what al-Ḥasan ibn Rashīq al-‘Askarī³¹⁵ reported to me [from] Abū Bishr al-Dūlābī³¹⁶ from Abū ‘Abd al-Raḥmān al-Shaybānī al-Nasā’ī³¹⁷ from Qutayba ibn Sa‘īd,³¹⁸ [from] Mālik,³¹⁹ from Hishām ibn ‘Urwa³²⁰ from his father³²¹ that he said: “I asked Ibn ‘Abbās³²² and I said to him: ‘Tell me about this moon and how big it is’. So he

312 Abū Qubays is a mountain in Mecca located nearby the Ka’ba and was also said to have been the location for the origin of the Black Stone. The Red Mountain is located on the opposite side, according to Ibn Rajā’, who had visited Mecca on pilgrimage.

313 On the moon splitting hadith, see Juynboll, *ECH*, 483–484. See also al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, 6:327–328 (Book 65, #4864–4868); and Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, 7:201–203 (Book 50, #7071–7079).

314 Q 54:1.

315 On al-Ḥasan ibn Rashīq al-‘Askarī, see Sezgin, *GAS*, 201–202.

316 On Abū Bishr Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad ibn Ḥammād al-Dūlābī, see Sezgin, *GAS*, 172; *ET*², 8:516.

317 On Abū ‘Abd al-Raḥmān al-Shaybānī al-Nasā’ī, see Sezgin, *GAS*, 167–169.

318 Qutayba ibn Sa‘īd al-Shāmī (d. 854) is mentioned as a hadith teacher for al-Nasā’ī; Sezgin, *GAS*, 167; *ET*², 7:691.

319 On Mālik ibn Anas, see Sezgin, *GAS*, 457–464.

320 Hishām ibn ‘Urwa ibn al-Zubayr (d. 763); Sezgin, *GAS*, 88–89.

321 ‘Urwa ibn al-Zubayr (d. 712) was Hishām’s father; Sezgin, *GAS*, 278–279.

322 ‘Abd Allāh ibn al-‘Abbās (d. 686); *ET*², 1:40.

القمر وما قدره. فقال: سمعت محمد يقول أن هذا القمر قدر الدنيا كلها ثمانية عشر مرة. فتدبر يا أخي - وفقك الله - هذا المحال الذي لا حقاً به. وهم يزعمون أن القمر طول الدنيا كلها ثمانية عشر مرة. ويزعمون أنه سقط بين اثنين، على جبل أبي قبيس والجبل الأحمر، وهما بمكة. كيف يجوز أن هذا الجبلين يسعان هذا القمر العظيم الذي في قدر الدنيا ثمانية عشر مرة؟ ولو تفكروا في هذا لكان لهم فيه مقنع. آية ينقضها الحديث والقياس.

5

[١٤٤] قال في سورة البقرة: كَيْفَ تَكْفُرُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَكُنْتُمْ أَمْوَاتًا فَأَحْيَاكُمْ ثُمَّ يُمِيتُكُمْ ثُمَّ يُحْيِيكُمْ. وقال هذا الكلام أن الله خلق جميع الناس من بني آدم وأنه يميتهم ويحييهم، وهذا أحسن من القول لا شك فيه. فجاء حديث نقض هذا الآية. وهو ما رواه سفيان الثوري عن هشام ابن عروة، عن أبيه عن عائشة أنها قالت: سمعت محمد يقول: ما من أحداً من بني آدم يموت إلا ويأتيه ملكان يفرغون من دفنه وينصرف الناس عنه. اسم أحدهما منكر والآخر نكير. فيأخذوا بلحية الميت وإن كانت امرأة أخذ بناصيتها. ويجلسانه جالساً في الكفن. ويرد الله روحه إليه فيعيش كما كان. ويقولان له: من ربك ومن نبيك وما دينك؟ فإذا قال: الله ربي ومحمد نبيي والإسلام ديني، فتحا عند رأسه طاقة تنفذ إلى الجنة. ويقولان له: اشم ريح الجنة الحياة ونسماها وتمتع بأكلها وشرابها ولذاتها إلى يوم القيامة.

10

سفيان C [سفيان 8 يحييكم C [يُحْيِيكُمْ || تفكرون C [تَكْفُرُونَ 6 ابن C [أبي 3 ماماديوس C [محمد 1

ألذتها C [ولذاتها || روح C [روح 13 فلان C [ومحمد 12 50^r C [و 10 ماماديوس C [محمد 9

said: ‘I heard Muḥammad say that this moon was eighteen times as big as the entire world.’³²³ Think about it, my brother – may God help you – this impossibility has no truth to it. They allege that the moon was eighteen times as long as the whole world. They allege that it fell between two [mountains] – upon Abū Qubays Mountain and the Red Mountain, and they are in Mecca. How can these two mountains encompass this great moon which is eighteen times as big as the whole world? If they reflect on this, then [this argument] would be convincing for them. One verse [of the Qur’an] is contradicted by the hadith and logical analogy.

[144] He said in sura “The Cow”: “How can you not believe in God when you were dead and He brought you to life; then He will cause you to die, then He will bring you back to life.”³²⁴ These words say that God created all people from the children of Adam and that He caused them to die and He brought them back to life, and this is among its best words, there is no doubt about it.³²⁵ But a hadith emerged that contradicted this verse. It was what Sufyān al-Thawrī³²⁶ reported from Hishām ibn ‘Urwa³²⁷ from his father,³²⁸ from ‘Ā’isha that she said: I heard Muḥammad say: “Every one of the children of Adam, when he dies, two angels will come to him at the hour when people finish burying him and go away from him. The name of one of them is Munkar and the other one is Nakīr.³²⁹ They will seize the dead by the beard and if she was a woman, seize [her] by her bangs. They seat them while wearing the shroud. God will give his soul back to him so he will live just as he used to. The two of them will say to him: ‘Who is your Lord and who is your prophet and what is your religion?’ So if he says: ‘God is my Lord and Muḥammad is my prophet and Islam is my religion’, the two of them will open a window at his head which leads to Paradise. The two of them will say to him: ‘Smell the fragrance of the living Paradise and its breeze

323 Ibn Rajā’ is certainly quoting a hadith from a written source, but I have not identified its origin.

324 Q 2:28.

325 This passage is an allusion to Psalm 104:29–30.

326 Sufyān al-Thawrī (d. 778); Sezgin, *GAS*, 518–519; *EI*², 9:770.

327 Hishām ibn ‘Urwa ibn al-Zubayr (d. 763); Sezgin, *GAS*, 88–89.

328 ‘Urwa ibn al-Zubayr (d. 712); Sezgin, *GAS*, 278–279.

329 These two angels, known as the “Denied” and the “Denier” are tasked with questioning the souls of the departed after death. During this intermediate state between death and the final resurrection and judgment (*barzakh*), the angels question the dead and the believers are sent to the pleasures of heaven and the unbelievers receive the punishment of hell, as explained by Ibn Rajā’. These traditions are found in the hadith collections, such as al-Tirmidhī, *Jāmi’ at-Tirmidhī*, 2:443–444 (Book 8, #1071). See also Juynboll, *ECH*, 459 and “Munkar wa-Nakīr,” *EI*², 7:576–577.

وإن قال لهما: لا علم لي بهؤلاء ولا بما تقولون ولا دريت. فيضربانه ضرباً ينزل من تلك الضربة إلى سبع أراضٍ. ثم يطلعان به ويفتحان عند رأسه (طاقةً) تنفذ إلى النار. ويقولون له: لا تنزل كذلك إلى اليوم - يوم القيامة.

[١٤٥] وهذا محال من القول ويناقض القرآن لأنه قال: وَكُنْتُمْ أَمْوَاتًا فَأَحْيَاكُمْ ثُمَّ يُمِيتُكُمْ ثُمَّ يُحْيِيكُمْ.

5 فلم يذكر في القرآن إلا موتة واحدة لا غير. وقال في هذا الحديث الذي رواه أنه يعيش بعد موته لسؤال الملكين. ثم يموت موت أخرى ثم يعيش يوم القيامة. وقال في سورة الدخان: لَا يَذُوقُونَ فِيهَا الْمَوْتَ إِلَّا الْمَوْتَةَ الْأُولَى. وقد كان ينبغي (أن) يقول: إِلَّا الْمَوْتَتَيْنِ الْأُولَى. وهذا تناقض من قوله واختلاف. [١٤٦] وأعجب من هذا قوله أن الملكين يفتحان عند رأس الميت طاقةً تنفذ إلى الجنة. ويقولان

له: اشمّ ريح الجنة ونسيمها وتمتّع بأكلها وشربها ولذاتها إلى يوم القيامة. وكيف يجوز ذلك في المعقول

والقياس أن يفتح في الأرض طاقةً تنفذ إلى الجنة وأنتم لا تعلمون مستقر الجنة؟ ولا توجدوا لها موضعاً. 10 لأنه قال لكم في القرآن في سورة آل عمران: وَجَنَّةٍ عَرْضُهَا السَّمَاوَاتُ وَالْأَرْضُ. فكيف ينبغي أن تكون في الأرض أو في السماء؟ إذا السموات السبع عرضها، فما بال الطول؟ وكيف ينبغي أن يكون الميت الذي هو جيفة ملقاة قد صارت عظامه بالية تمزياً كل ويشرب ويشتم ويتلذذ؟ فإذا يشتم وقد صار منخرأه صديداً وسالت عيناه وتقطعت أوصاله وصار تراباً؟ وكيف يجوز أن تكون الناس في 15 قبورهم يأكلون ويشربون؟ فإن كان ذلك، فليس بأموات. ولو قلمت أن الروح تأكل في الجنة وتشرب وتتعمّم، لكان ذلك أحسن لكذبكم. وكيف ينبغي أن تقولوا ذلك وقد قال لكم في سورة آل عمران:

50^v C يعيش 6 لما قال C adds طاقة 2 ضربتيا C [ضرباً] || فيضربانه C [فيضربانه] || إلا C adds [و] 1

51^r C [أن] 15 السموات C [السَّمَاوَاتُ] 11 روح C [روح] 9 الاوله C [الأولى] || الموتى C [الموتة] 7

and enjoy its food and drink and pleasant things until the Day of Resurrection'. And if he said to the two of them: 'I don't recognize them or what you are saying and I don't know', then they will strike him, which will send that one down [the length of] seven earths. Then the two of them will bring him up and open [a window] at his head which leads to Hell. They will say to him: 'You will remain in this state until the day – the Day of Resurrection'."

[145] These are impossible words, and it contradicts the Qur'an, because he said: "You were dead and He brought you to life; then he will cause you to die, then he will bring you back to life."³³⁰ He only mentioned one death in the Qur'an, nothing else. He said in this hadith that we reported that he lives after his death in order to be questioned by the two angels. Then he dies another death, then he lives on the Day of Resurrection. He said in sura "The Smoke": "They will not taste death except for the first death."³³¹ He should have said: "Except the first two deaths." This is a contradiction from his statement and an inconsistency.³³²

[146] Stranger than that is his statement that the two angels open a window at the head of the dead which leads to Paradise. They say to him: "Smell the fragrance of Paradise and its breeze and enjoy its food and drink and pleasant things until the Day of Resurrection." According to reason and logic, how can he open a window on earth connected to Paradise when you don't know Paradise's location? You can't find a place for it. Because he said to you in the Qur'an in sura "The Family of 'Imrān": "Paradise [is] as wide as the Heavens and earth."³³³ So how can it be either on earth or in Heaven? If the seven Heavens³³⁴ are its width, then what about [its] length? How can a dead [man], who is a discarded corpse after his bones have decomposed and been burned,³³⁵ be able to eat and drink and smell and enjoy pleasant things? What does he smell when his two nasal passages become pus and his eyes are drooped and his joints are disconnected and he becomes clay? How can people eat and drink in their tombs? If that were the case, then they are not dead. If you say that the spirit eats in Paradise and drinks and enjoys things, then that would be better for your lies. How can you say that, when he said to you in sura "The Family of 'Imrān": "Do not

330 Q 2:28.

331 Q 44:56.

332 The argument is somewhat different in Ibn Qutayba, *Ta'wil Mushkil al-Qur'an*, 22. In this passage, the critic asks how can he exclude people who died in this world from their stay in Heaven.

333 Q 3:133.

334 Medieval Christians and Muslims both believed in the existence of seven heavens, e.g., Q 41:12. Paul mentions being caught up to the third heaven in 2 Corinthians 12:2–4.

335 The word is unclear in the Arabic text but "burned" appears in the Latin translation.

وَلَا تَحْسَبَنَّ الَّذِينَ قُتِلُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ أَمْوَاتًا بَلْ أحيَاءٌ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ يُرْزَقُونَ فَرِحِينَ بِمَا آتَاهُمُ اللَّهُ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ. فقد أعلمكم أن أجساد الشهداء يأكلون عند ربهم ويرزقون، وأن موتاكم الذين في الأرض (لا) يأكلون ويشربون في قبورهم.

[١٤٧] وأباحكم في القرآن لباس ما تشتهون من الزينة وأكل الطيبات. وقال في سورة الأعراف: قُلْ مَنْ حَرَّمَ زِينَةَ اللَّهِ الَّتِي أَخْرَجَ لِعِبَادِهِ وَالطَّيِّبَاتِ مِنَ الرِّزْقِ؟ وأمركم بصوم شهراً في السنة. وأطلق لكم الأكل فيه من غروب الشمس إلى طلوع الفجر. وطائفة منكم يقولون بمذهب الأعمش يرون أن يأكل الصائم إلى أن يسلم الإمام من صلاة الصبح. فإذا كان الإنسان يأكل مع صلاة الصبح ومع غروب الشمس، فما الذي بقي للصوم؟ وما لله في هذا العبادة؟ وإنما الله أمر الناس بالصوم لينالوا بعد المشقة من الجوع والعطش ليكمل لهم الثواب والأجر. وأمركم صاحبكم في الصوم بالغداء والعشاء، وأكد عليكم في ذلك. وحثكم على السحور، حتى قال لكم: تسحروا ولو شفقة تمرة.

[١٤٨] ثم أمركم بالوطة في الصوم، وأحضكم على ذلك. وقال في سورة البقرة: أَحَلَّ لَكُمْ لَيْلَةَ الصِّيَامِ الرَّفَثُ إِلَى نِسَائِكُمْ. هُنَّ لِبَاسٌ لَكُمْ وَأَنْتُمْ لِبَاسٌ لَهُنَّ عَلِمَ اللَّهُ أَنَّكُمْ كُنْتُمْ تَخْتَانُونَ أَنْفُسَكُمْ فَتَابَ عَلَيْكُمْ وَعَفَا عَنْكُمْ. ثم قال أيضاً محمد: بأشروهن وأبتغوا ما كتب الله لكم. وهو - محمد - يؤكد ويقول احرصوا لا تخلوهم في شهر رمضان. ثم قال لكم أنكم في الجنة تطؤون حور العين. ذكر ذلك في سورة ياسين حيث يقول: إِنَّ أَصْحَابَ الْجَنَّةِ الْيَوْمَ فِي شُغْلٍ فَكَاهُونَ. سئل الحسن البصري، فقيل له: ما

الذي [التي] 5 يأكلون عند ربهم ويرزقون، وان موتاكم الذين في الارض [الأرض] 2

الرفد [الرفث] 12 أحطكم [وأحضكم] || 51^v [الصوم] || بالوطي [بالوطة] 11 ذلك [ذلك] 10

فلان [محمد] || ماماديوس [محمد] 13 تحتاجون [كُنْتُمْ] الزقتالي

think of those who have been killed in the way of God are dead. Rather, they are alive with their Lord, receiving provision, rejoicing in what God has bestowed upon them of His favor.”³³⁶ So he taught you that the bodies of the martyrs will eat with their Lord and receive provision, and that your dead who are on earth will [not] eat and drink in their tombs.

[147] He made it lawful for you in the Qur’an to wear whatever adornments you would like and eat delicious things. He said in sura “The Heights”: “Say: Who has forbidden God’s adornment which he has produced for his servants and the delicious things of provision?”³³⁷ He commanded you to fast a month each year. He permitted for you to eat during [Ramaḍān] from sunset to sunrise. A group of you in the school of al-A‘mash³³⁸ say they think that a fasting person can eat until the imam finishes the morning prayer. If a man were to eat at the morning prayer and at sunset, then what is left for fasting? What does God gain in this worship? However, God commanded the people to fast in order to be rewarded after severe thirst and hunger, in order to perfect the reward and recompense for them. Your companion [Muḥammad] commanded you to have breakfast and dinner while fasting and he assured you about that. He encouraged you to have the evening meal even saying to you: “Eat the evening meal, even if it is a part of a date.”³³⁹

[148] Then he commanded you to have sex during fasting and he encouraged you to do that. He said in sura “The Cow”: “It has been permitted for you the night preceding fasting to go to your wives [for sex]. They are clothing for you and you are clothing for them. God knows that you used to deceive yourselves, so He accepted your repentance and forgave you.”³⁴⁰ Then Muḥammad said further: “have sex with them and seek that which God has written for you.”³⁴¹ And he – Muḥammad – assures and says to make sure not to leave them in the month of Ramaḍān. Then he said to you that in Paradise you will have sex with wide-eyed virgins.³⁴² He mentioned that in sura “Yā’ Sīn” when he says: “The companions of Paradise, that Day, will be busy in their rejoicing.”³⁴³ Al-Ḥasan

336 Q 3:169–170.

337 Q 7:32.

338 Sulayman ibn Mihrān al-A‘mash (d. 765); *ET*², 1:431.

339 On the origin of this hadith, (“So save yourself from the Fire even with half a date”), see al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, 9:365 (Book 97, #7512); and Juynboll, *ECH*, 109, 498.

340 Q 2:187.

341 Q 2:187.

342 These wide-eyed virgins of Paradise are the “houris” referenced in Q 44:54, 52:20, 55:72, and 56:22.

343 Q 36:55.

شغلهم ذلك اليوم؟ قال: الجماع. وروى عنه أيضاً أنه قال: طول عجيرة الحور إبريد في إبريد. وإن الله يطول إحلل كل واحد منهم يوم القيامة حتى يكون طوله بريداً ولا يقدر يحمله. فيستخر الله سبعين من النصارى واليهود يحملون إحلله. وإذا كان طوله بريد، لكان الله يستخر في حمله من أهل ملته إذ هم أحق (من أن) يستخر النصارى واليهود. وإن عقولاً تقبل هذا العقول الدينية. فليت شعري أي كتاب وجد هذا فيه، وأي نبي قبله ذكر ذلك لأمته مثله! وهو يزعم أنه خير الأنبياء حتى اقتدى بفعله فيه. 5 وأي نبي يطلق لأمته مثله؟ وهو يزعم أنه خير الأنبياء وأفضلهم.

[149] ولو ذكرنا صنيع المتقدمين من الأنبياء والأخبار واجتهادهم في العبادة، وما ألزموا أنفسهم من الأحزان والنصب في هذا الدنيا ونعيمها، لطال شرحنا له. ولقد حدث عن يحيى ابن زكريا - وهو خير الأنبياء وآخرهم - أنه ما نكح في عمره امرأة ولا أكل خبز ولا كان طعامه إلا من نبات الأرض - غير الحشيش - إلى أن لقي الله هكذا. أسماء الصبي في تفسير القرآن. فلا تأسى بواحد من هؤلاء الأنبياء في فعله. غير أنه أمركم بأكل الطيبات في الدنيا. وأمر بالغاء والعشاء في الصيام وأمركم بالنكاح فيه. وحثكم على أن تحتلوا بأزواجكم فيه. ومع هذا يعظم هذا الشهر على سائر الأشهر. حتى أنه قال لكم أن فيه ليلة يقال لها ليلة القدر: خير من ألف شهر تنزل الملائكة والروح فيها. فقد كان ينبغي أن يوقر هذا الشهر بالكف عن النكاح فيه. ويحثكم على العبادة والاجتهاد ولا يحثكم على الأكل والوطء. ولا يوقر الشهر على حالة من الحالات، لا في طعام ولا في شراب ولا في الوطء. 15

3 C 52^r [حتى] 5 ايسخر C [يسخر] 4 لا كان C [لكان] 3

الوطي C [الوطء || الوطي] C [والوطء] 15 C 52^v [و] 14 أعظم C [خير] 13 صبياً

al-Baṣrī³⁴⁴ was asked and it was said to him: “What makes them busy that day?” He said: “Sexual intercourse.” It was reported from him further that he said: “The length of the clitoris of the virgins is a sizable distance. God lengthened the penis of every one of them on the Day of Resurrection so that its length would be so sizable that he is not able to hold it. Then God would employ seventy Christians and Jews to carry his penis.”³⁴⁵ If its length is sizable, then God should employ the people of his own religion to carry it, since they have more right to be employed than Christians and Jews. Such minds that would accept this are worldly minds. How ridiculous! In which book did he find this, and which prophet before him mentioned that to his community like him! He alleges that he is the best of the prophets so that his works are an example. Which prophet would permit that for his community like him? He alleges that he is the best of the prophets and their most favored.

[149] If we mentioned the works of earlier prophets and the accounts of their struggles in worship and what they required of themselves, including sorrows and hardship in this world, and its delight, then it would take me a long time. It was reported about John the son of Zechariah – and he is the best of the prophets and their own final one – that he did not marry any woman during his life nor did he eat bread and his food was only what came from the earth – not including grass – until he met God.³⁴⁶ He called him “The Child” in the commentary on the Qur’an. [Muḥammad] did not take even one of those prophets as an example in his actions. Besides that, he commanded you to eat the good things of this world. He commanded [you to eat] breakfast and dinner while fasting and he commanded you to have sex during [Ramaḍān]. He urged you to have sex with your wives during it. Despite that, he considers this month more important than the rest of the months. For he said to you that in it is a night called the “Night of Power”: “It is greater than a thousand months, and the angels and the Spirit were revealed during it.”³⁴⁷ So he should have revered this month by abstaining from sex in it. He should have urged you to exert yourself in worship and he should not have urged you to eat and have sex. He did not revere the month under any circumstances, not in [eating] food nor in drink nor in having sex.

344 On al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī (d. 728), see Sezgin, *GAS*, 591–594; *EI*² 3:247–248.

345 This legend is not found in the canonical editions of the hadith but was most likely the product of an interpretation of Q 2:187 attributed to al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī. There is little reason to doubt that Ibn Rajā’ is drawing from an Islamic source as other Christian apologists referenced this report as a carnal description of heaven.

346 The phrase means “until he died.”

347 Q 97:3–4.

[١٥٠] وقال لكم أنكم في القبور تأكلون، وفي السماء تأكلون، وأنكم تطؤون في الجنة. ولعلكم إذا وطئتم تحبل أزواجكم منكم وتلدن. فليت شعري إذا كان في الجنة هؤلاء الحور تطؤونهن، فكيف تكون أزواجكم الذين كانوا معكم في الدنيا؟ وإذا حصلوا في الجنة من يطؤونهن؟ لكن في الجنة، فلعمري القرآن ما بين في وطنهن شيئاً. ولا قال لكم أنكم تطؤونهن، ولا ذكر أنكم تطؤون حور العين لا غير. فإذا كان أزواجكم الذين في الجنة ليس لهم من يطؤونهن، فقد أحرمن لذة عظيمة إذ كانت اللذات كلها عندهم في الوطاء. لأنه روي عنه أنه قال: حجب إلي من دنياكم ثلاث: النساء والطيب، وجعل قرة عيني الصلاة. فبدأ بالنساء أولاً، لأن كان ذلك عنده أكبر الملاذ. وثني بالطيب، وجعل الصلاة آخر ذلك كله والصلاة عندهم عمود الدين. وجعلها ما تتقرب به المرؤ إلى الله. فلو كان ينبغي لو كان قدم ذلك على النساء والطيب؟

[١٥١] وهذا الكلام إذا فرغناه لزمنا عليه من الاحتجاج ما يطول له الشرح. وإن عقولاً لا تميز هذا القول لعقولاً ضالة. ونحن نرغب بأنفسنا عن ذكر شيء من هذا الجهالة. ونرغب لمن قرأ كتابنا هذا من إخواننا المسيحيين عن سماع ذلك. وإنما بينا عوارهم وجهلهم، وبالله أستعين على ذلك. آية ينقضها الحديث والنظر.

[١٥٢] قال في يسألونك في سورة الأعراف: يسألونك عن الساعة أيان مرساها قل إنما علمها عند ربي لا يجليها لوقتها إلا هو - معنى وقت تأتي. وقال في سورة لقمان: إن الله عنده علم الساعة. ثم روي عنه من كتاب أبي معمر أنه قال: لا تأتي بمائة سنة وعلى ظهر الأرض نفس منفوشة. فلم يشك

C [الوطاء] 6 تطون C [تطؤون] || تطوهن C [تطؤونهن] 4 يطاهن C [يطؤونهن] 3 قالكم C [لكم] 1
 C [وجعلها] 8 لا C [لأن] 7 اجعل C [وجعل] || ثلث C [ثلاث] || حب C [حجب] || وفي الوطي
 لم C [نرغب] || طالت C [ضالة] 11 الإحتجاج C [الاحتجاج] || 53² C [و] 10 تتقربون C [تتقرب] || اجعل
 C [يجليها] 15 قال C [قل] || اياذن مرسلها C [مرساها] || شلونك C [يسألونك] 14 بيننا C [بيننا] 12 نرغب
 معشر C [معمر] 16 تخليها

[150] And he said to you that while you are in the tombs you will eat and in Heaven you will eat and that you will have sex in Paradise. Suppose that when you have sex, you get your wife pregnant and she would give birth. I wish I knew if you could have sex with those virgins in Paradise, but what about your wives who are with you in this world? If they attain Paradise who will have sex with them? But, by my life, the Qur'an did not explain anything whatsoever about having sex with them in Paradise. It did not say to you that you would have sex with [your wives] and it did not mention that you would only have sex with virgins with dark eyes. If your wives were the ones in Paradise and they did not have someone to have sex with them, then a great pleasure would be taken away from them, since all of the pleasures would be for you in having sex. Because it was reported that he said: "Most endearing to me in your world are three [things]: women, fragrances, and [God] made prayer the apple of my eye."³⁴⁸ So he listed women first, because for him that was the greatest pleasure. He listed fragrances second, and he placed prayer last among all of these, although for you, prayer is the pillar of the religion. He made it what someone would use to get closer to God. Then shouldn't he place that above women and fragrances?

[151] And this argument, were I to finish it, would require a number of justifications which would take a long time to explain. Such minds that do not use this common sense are feeble minds. As for me, I would prefer not to mention anything about this ignorance. I don't want whoever reads this book of mine among our Christian brothers to listen to that. Rather, I have clarified their blindness and their ignorance, and I have made that demonstrable by [the assistance of] God. One verse is contradicted by the hadith and by insight.

[152] He said in "They ask you" in sura "The Heights": "They ask you about the Hour, when will it arrive? Say: 'Its knowledge is only with my Lord, none will reveal its time except him'"³⁴⁹ – meaning the time it comes. He also said in sura "Luqmān": "God has knowledge of the Hour."³⁵⁰ Then it was reported about [Muḥammad] in the book of Abū Ma'mar³⁵¹ that he said: "One hundred years from now not a soul will remain upon the surface of the earth."³⁵² Not one of

348 The hadith is attributed to ʿĀ'isha as: "Most endearing to me in this world are women and perfume, but my solace lies in prayer." For more on its appearances in Islamic sources, see Juynboll, *ECH*, 75.

349 Q 7:187.

350 Q 31:34.

351 On Abū 'Ubayda Ma'mar ibn al-Muthannā (d. 824), see *ET*², 1:158.

352 For more on this hadith, see Juynboll, *ECH*, 28; and al-Tirmidhī, *Jāmi' at-Tirmidhī*, 4:299–300 (Book 31, #2250–2251).

أحداً من اصحابه أن القيامة تقوم في مائة سنة. وهذا محال من القول لا حقاً به. لأننا طاعنون في سنة أربعمائة والناس أوفر ما كانوا. وهذا اختلاف وتناقض، آية تنقضها آية.

[153] قال في سورة التور: أَنْكِحُوا الْأَيَامَىٰ مِنكُمْ وَالصَّالِحِينَ مِنْ عِبَادِكُمْ وَإِمَائِكُمْ إِنْ يَكُونُوا فُقَرَاءَ يُعْطِهِمُ اللَّهُ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ. وأمرهم لا يمسكوا عن النكاح خشية الفقر. ومن كان منهم فقيراً، فلينكح ويسترزق. ويسل الله عز وجل فإن الله يغنيه من فضله. ثم قال على أثر هذا الآية - نقضها الآية 5 الأولى - وَلَيْسَتَعْفِيفَ الَّذِينَ لَا يَجِدُونَ نِكَاحًا حَتَّىٰ يُعْطِيَهُمُ اللَّهُ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ. فأمرهم ألا يتعرضوا للنكاح في حال الفقر. ولا يتعرض له إلا من كان له جدة وطول. فأين هذا النبي من الترغيب الأول؟ وهذا اختلاف وتناقض، آيات تناقض بعضها والقياس.

[154] في سورة الأنعام: مَنْ جَاءَ بِالْحَسَنَةِ فَلَهُ عَشْرٌ مِمثَلًا. ثم نقض ذلك في سورة سبأ فقال: فَأُولَئِكَ لَهُمْ جَزَاءُ الضَّعْفِ بِمَا عَمِلُوا وَهُمْ فِي الْغُرُفَاتِ آمِنُونَ. فأين هذا الكلام من الأول؟ وهذا 10 تناقض واختلاف، آيات تناقض آية والقياس.

[155] قال في سورة البقرة: وَوَصَّىٰ بِهَا إِبْرَاهِيمُ بَنِيهِ وَيَعْقُوبُ يَا بَنِيَّ إِنَّ اللَّهَ اصْطَفَىٰ لَكُمُ الدِّينَ فَلَا تَمُوتُنَّ إِلَّا وَأَنتُمْ مُسْلِمُونَ. وقال في هذا السورة أيضاً: أَمْ كُنْتُمْ شُهَدَاءَ إِذْ حَضَرَ يَعْقُوبَ الْمَوْتَ إِذْ قَالَ لِبَنِيهِ مَا تَعْبُدُونَ مِنْ بَعْدِي قَالُوا نَعْبُدُ إِلَهَكَ وَالْهَ أَبَانِكَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَإِسْمَاعِيلَ وَإِسْحَاقَ إِلَهاً وَاحِداً وَنَحْنُ (لَهُ) مُسْلِمُونَ. وقال في آل عمران: مَا كَانَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ يَهُودِيًّا وَلَا نَصْرَانِيًّا وَلَكِنْ كَانَ حَنِيفًا مُسْلِمًا وَمَا 15

وليس تعفف C [وَلَيْسَتَعْفِيفَ] 6 الفقراء C [الْفُقَرَاءَ] 53^v C [فَضْلِهِ] || يعينكم C [يُعْطِيَهُمْ] 4 تكونوا C [يَكُونُوا] 3
C adds [قال] 12 لآمنون C [آمِنُونَ] || في دهر العرفان C [الْغُرُفَاتِ] ليؤجر C [جَزَاءُ] 10 عشرة C [عَشْرٌ] 9
C [قَالَ] 14 C 54^r [شُهَدَاءَ] || ان C [أَمْ] || تموتون C [تَمُوتُنَّ] 13 بها C omits [بِهَا] قال لهم ووصا بها ابراهيم
[حَنِيفًا] 15 اله واحد C [وَاحِداً] || اسحق C [وَإِسْحَاقَ] || اسمعيل C [وَإِسْمَاعِيلَ] || لنبية C [لِبَنِيهِ] || قال omits
حنيفاً C

his companions doubted that the resurrection would be in one hundred years. This is impossible and has no truth to it, because we have passed four hundred years and people increase more than ever.³⁵³ This is an inconsistency and a contradiction; one verse contradicted by another verse.

[153] He said in sura “The Light”: “And marry the unmarried among you and the righteous among your male slaves and female slaves. If they are poor, God will enrich them from his favor.”³⁵⁴ He commanded them not to abstain from marriage for fear of poverty. Whoever among them was poor should marry and seek a means of living. He asks God for God to enrich him from his favor. Then he said immediately after this verse – contradicting the first verse – “Let them who do not obtain the means of marriage, abstain from sex until God enriches them from his favor.”³⁵⁵ So he commanded them not to marry while poor. No one should go for it unless he is serious and has the means. How can this prohibition be reconciled with the first recommendation? This is an inconsistency and a contradiction; some verses contradict each other and logical analogy.

[154] [He said] in sura “The Cattle”: “Whoever comes [at the Hour] with a good work, then he will have ten times its like [to his credit].”³⁵⁶ Then he contradicted that in sura “Sheba” when he said: “For them there will be the double reward for what they did, and they will be safe in the upper chambers [of Paradise].”³⁵⁷ How is this remark like the first one? This is a contradiction and an inconsistency; some verses contradict another verse and logical analogy.

[155] He said in sura “The Cow”: “And Abraham instructed his sons and Jacob, [saying]: ‘My sons, God has chosen for you this religion, so do not die except while you are Muslims.’”³⁵⁸ In addition, he said in this sura: “Or were you witnesses when death approached Jacob, when he said to his sons, ‘What will you worship after me?’ They said: ‘We will worship your God and the God of your fathers, Abraham and Ishmael and Isaac – one God. We are Muslims (to him).’”³⁵⁹ He said in “The Family of ‘Imrān”: “Abraham was neither a Jew nor a Christian, but he was a Gentile Muslim. He was not one of the poly-

353 According to the Hijra calendar, 400 AH began in August 1009. This reference to four hundred years since the life of Muḥammad therefore suggests that Ibn Rajā’ composed his work ca. 1009–1012 under the reign of the Fatimid caliph al-Ḥākim (d. 1021).

354 Q 24:32.

355 Q 24:32.

356 Q 6:160.

357 Q 34:37.

358 Q 2:132.

359 Q 2:133.

كَانَ مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ. وَقَالَ فِي سُورَةِ الْحَجِّ: مَلَّةَ أَبِيكُمْ إِبْرَاهِيمَ هُوَ سَمَّاكُمْ الْمُسْلِمِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِ. وَقَالَ فِي سُورَةِ الْمَائِدَةِ: وَإِذْ أُوحِيَتْ إِلَى الْخَوَارِجِيِّينَ أَنْ آمِنُوا بِي وَبِرِسُولِي قَالُوا آمَنَّا وَاشْهَدُوا بِأَنَّا مُسْلِمُونَ. فَأَعْلَمَهُمْ بِأَنَّ الْخَوَارِجِيِّينَ كَانُوا مُسْلِمِينَ. وَفِي الْقُرْآنِ مِثْلُ هَذَا كَثِيرٌ لَا فَائِدَةَ فِي إِعَادَتِهِ عَلَى الْكَمَالِ. يَعْلَمُهُمْ أَنَّ جَمِيعَ الْأَنْبِيَاءِ وَالْمَلَائِكَةِ وَالرُّسُلِ (و) مِنْ مَضَى مِنَ الشُّهَدَاءِ وَالصَّالِحِينَ وَسَيِّدِنَا الْمَسِيحَ وَالْخَوَارِجِيِّينَ، كُلُّ هَؤُلَاءِ عِنْدَهُ مُسْلِمُونَ. ثُمَّ نَقَضَ ذَلِكَ وَأَكْذَبَ نَفْسَهُ بِقَوْلِهِ فَقَالَ فِي سُورَةِ الْأَنْعَامِ: قُلْ إِنِّي أُمِرْتُ 5 أَنْ أَكُونَ أَوَّلَ مَنْ أَسْلَمَ. فَقَالَ فِي أَوَّلِ الْكَلَامِ أَنَّ مَنْ كَانَ قَبْلَهُ سَبَقَهُ إِلَى الْإِسْلَامِ. وَقَالَ فِي هَذَا الْمَوْضِعِ أَنَّهُ أَوَّلَ مَنْ أَسْلَمَ. وَهَذَا تَنَاقُضٌ وَاجْتِمَاعٌ.

[156] وَيَنْبَغِي إِنْ كَانَ الْأَنْبِيَاءُ الَّذِينَ جَاءُوا قَبْلَهُ مُسْلِمِينَ ثُمَّ جَاءَ هُوَ أَيْضًا بِمَا جَاءَ بِهِ أَوْلَاتُكَ، أَنْ يَسْلُكَ مِنْهَا جِهَةً وَطَرِيقَهُمْ. فَمَا رَأَيْنَاهُ تَأْسِي فِي شَيْءٍ وَاحِدٍ وَلَا عَمَلٍ لَهُمْ شَيْءٌ. قَدْ كَانَ مُوسَى يَحْفَظُ السَّبْتَ، وَصَاحِبُكُمْ لَمْ يَحْفَظْهُ. وَقَدْ حَرَّمَ التَّوْرَةُ أَكْلَ أَشْيَاءَ كَثِيرَةٍ مِنَ الْأَنْعَامِ. وَنَبِيُّكُمْ قَدْ أَمَرَ فِي 10 الْقُرْآنِ بِأَكْلِ جَمِيعِ مَا خَلَقَ مِنَ الْحَيَوَانَ وَغَيْرِهِ. وَلَمْ يَحْرَمْ عَلَيْكُمْ إِلَّا الدَّمَ وَالْمَيْتَةَ وَالْحَمَّ الْخَنْزِيرِ وَمَا ذَبِحَ لِغَيْرِ اللَّهِ. أَلَمْ تَسْمَعْ إِلَى قَوْلِهِ فِي سُورَةِ الْأَنْعَامِ: قُلْ لَا أَجِدُ فِي مَا أُوحِيَ إِلَيَّ مُحَرَّمًا عَلَى طَاعِمٍ يَطْعَمُهُ إِلَّا أَنْ يَكُونَ مَيْتَةً أَوْ دَمًا مَسْفُوحًا أَوْ لَحْمَ خَنْزِيرٍ فَإِنَّهُ رِجْسٌ أَوْ فِسْقًا (أَهْلًا) لِغَيْرِ اللَّهِ. فَأَحَلَّتْ لَكُمْ هَذَا الْآيَةَ أَكْلَ جَمِيعِ الْأَشْيَاءِ وَمَا كَانَ حَرْمَهُ عَلَيْكُمْ فِي الْقُرْآنِ مِثْلُ: الْمُنْخَنَقَةِ وَالْمَوْقُودَةِ وَالْمُتَرَدِّدَةِ وَالنَّطِيجَةَ وَمَا أَكَلَ السَّبْعُ.

[157] وَهَذَا خِلَافٌ لِمَا فِي التَّوْرَةِ. فَإِنْ كَانَ مُوسَى جَاءَ إِلَى بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ بِالْإِسْلَامِ، فَقَدْ كَانَ يَنْبَغِي لِنَبِيِّكُمْ أَنْ يَقْتَضِيَ فِعْلَ الْمُسْلِمِينَ الَّذِينَ كَانُوا قَبْلَهُ، وَيَحْلُلُ مَا أَحْلَوْهُ وَيَحْرِمُ مَا حَرَّمَهُ. فَمَا رَأَيْنَا فِعْلَ

C [بَأْتْنَا] || اشهدنا C [وَاشْهَدَ] || الخواريون C [الْخَوَارِجِيِّينَ] || اوجهه C [أَوْحِيَتْ] 2 و C adds [إِبْرَاهِيمَ] 1
 لا اخذ C [فِي] || الى C [أ] 12 جاوا C [جَاؤُوا] 8 C 54^v [و] 7 اذ يقول C adds [الأنعام] 5 بأتنا
 C [والموقودة] || المنخقة C [المنخقة] 14 مسفوكا C [مَسْفُوحًا] || ميتا C [مَيْتَةً] 13 أن C adds [طَاعِمٍ] || مما
 C 55^r [فعل] 17 الا C adds [والتطيحة] || المدفونة

theists.”³⁶⁰ He said in sura “The Pilgrimage”: “[It is] the religion of your father, Abraham. He named you ‘Muslims’ before [in former Scriptures].”³⁶¹ He said in sura “The Table”: “[Remember] when I revealed to the disciples: ‘Believe in me and in my messenger [Jesus]’. They said: ‘We have believed, so bear witness that we are Muslims.’”³⁶² So he taught them that the disciples [of Jesus Christ] were Muslims. In the Qur’an there are many examples like this so there is no point in repeating all of it. He taught them that all of the prophets and the angels and the messengers [and] whoever came before among the martyrs and righteous and our Lord Christ and the disciples, every one of them was a Muslim.³⁶³ Then he contradicted that and he made a liar of himself in his statement when he said in sura “The Cattle”: “Say: I have been commanded to be the first who became Muslim.”³⁶⁴ So he said in the first remark that whoever came before him preceded him into Islam. Yet he said in this place that he was the first to enter Islam. This is a contradiction and an inconsistency.

[156] It should be the case that if the prophets who came before him were Muslims, and then he came later with what they had brought, then he should have followed their methods and their ways. We don’t see him take even one thing as an example which they had done. Moses used to observe the Sabbath, and your companion did not observe it. The Torah forbids the eating of many types of cattle. Your prophet has commanded in the Qur’an to eat all kinds of creatures and other things. He only forbade for you blood and carrion and pork flesh and whatever is slaughtered without [invoking] God. Didn’t you hear his words in sura “The Cattle”: “Say: I do not find within that which was revealed to me [anything] forbidden to one who would eat it unless it is carrion or blood or pork flesh – it is impure – or it is [slaughtered in] disobedience, without [invoking] God.”³⁶⁵ So this verse permits you to eat all things, except for what the Qur’an forbids you, such as strangled animals, beaten animals, fallen animals, and animals that died fighting, and what lions eat.

[157] But this is different from what is in the Torah. If Moses came to the people of Israel with Islam, then your prophet should have used the actions of the Muslims who came before him as an example, and permit what they permitted

360 Q 3:67.

361 Q 22:78.

362 Q 5:111.

363 As a response to critiques, medieval Muslims interpreted the Qur’an to indicate that all pre-Islamic biblical figures were Muslims or righteous Gentiles (*ḥunafāʾ*).

364 Q 6:14.

365 Q 6:145.

فعلهم ولا شيئاً منه. فقد خالف الآن جميع المتنبئين، وأتى بشرائع غير شرائعهم وسنناً لا توافق سننهم. ألم تسمع إلى قوله في سورة المائدة: لِكُلِّ جَعَلْنَا مِنْكُمْ شِرْعَةً وَمِنْهَاجًا.

[١٥٨] فقد أكذب الآن قوله أن جميع النبيين (و)الناس كانوا مسلمين. ولقد ادعى على موسى

وقومه في سورة يونس أنهم كانوا مسلمين. فقال: وَقَالَ مُوسَى يَا قَوْمِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ آمَنْتُمْ بِاللَّهِ فَعَلَيْهِ تَوَكَّلُوا

٥ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ مُسْلِمِينَ. فدلّ قوله أن قوم موسى كانوا مسلمين. ثم نقض ذلك، وادعى عليهم في سورة

الأعراف أنهم كانوا يهوداً. وذلك قوله: وَاخْتَارَ مُوسَى قَوْمَهُ سَبْعِينَ رَجُلًا لِمِيقَاتِنَا فَلَمَّا أَخَذَتْهُمُ الرَّجْفَةُ

قَالَ رَبِّ لَوْ شِئْتَ أَهْلَكْتَهُمْ مِنْ قَبْلِ وَآيَايَ. أَتَهْلِكُنَا بِمَا فَعَلَ السُّفَهَاءُ مِنَّا؟ إِنْ هِيَ إِلَّا فِتْنَتُكَ تُضِلُّ بِهَا

مَنْ تَشَاءُ وَتَهْدِي مَنْ تَشَاءُ. أَنْتَ وَلِيُّنَا فَاغْفِرْ لَنَا وَارْحَمْنَا وَأَنْتَ خَيْرُ الْغَافِرِينَ. وَأَكْتُبْ لَنَا فِي هَذِهِ الدُّنْيَا

حَسَنَةً وَفِي الْآخِرَةِ إِنَّا هُنَا إِلَيْكَ - يعني هذا إليك. كذا فسرها جميع المفسرين منهم: الحسن البصري،

١٠ محمد ابن سيرين، وابو العالية الرياحي، والبديع ابن اليسر، ومجاهد، وعطاء ابن أبي رباح، وعطاء ابن

الخراساني، وعطاء ابن يسار. فقد اختلف بقوله في أصحاب موسى فقال في موضع أنهم كانوا مسلمين.

ذلك C ذلك 5 يا قوم C omits [قَوْم] 4 منهاجه C [وَمِنْهَاجًا] || الى الم C [ألم] 2

والينا C [وَلِيْنَا] 8 تظل C [تُضِلُّ] || وابان C adds [قَبْلُ] 7 كميقتنا C [لِمِيقَاتِنَا] || من C add [مُوسَى] 6

الخراساني C [الخراساني] 11 رياح C [رياح] || ابوا C [وابو] 10 هذا C 55^v || حسنه C adds [الآخِرَةَ] 9

and forbid what they forbade. We don't see him acting like they did or anything of it. So now, he deviates from all of the prophets, and he brought laws different than theirs, and traditions that did not conform with their traditions. Don't you hear his statement in sura "The Table": "To each of you we prescribed a law and a method"?³⁶⁶

[158] So he has now made his statement a lie that all of the prophets [and] the people were Muslims. He claimed about Moses and his people in sura "Jonah" that they were Muslims. He said: "Moses said: 'My people, if you have believed in God, then rely upon Him, if you would be Muslims.'"³⁶⁷ His statement suggested that Moses' people were Muslims. Then he contradicted that and he claimed that they were Jews in sura "The Heights."³⁶⁸ That was when he said: "And Moses chose from his people seventy men for Our appointment. And when the earthquake seized them, he said: 'My Lord, if You had willed, You could have destroyed them before, as well as me. Would You destroy us for what the foolish among us have done? This is only Your trial by which You send astray whom You will and guide whom You will. You are our Protector, so forgive us and have mercy upon us; You are the best of forgivers. Decree for us in this world what is good and in the Hereafter; indeed, we have turned toward You,'"³⁶⁹ – this means "to become Jews."³⁷⁰ This is the way that all of the commentators interpreted it: al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī,³⁷¹ Muḥammad ibn Sīrīn,³⁷² and Abū al-Āliya al-Riyāḥī,³⁷³ and al-Badī' ibn al-Yusr,³⁷⁴ and Mujāhid,³⁷⁵ and 'Aṭā' ibn Abī Rabāḥ,³⁷⁶ and 'Aṭā' ibn al-Khurāsānī,³⁷⁷ and 'Aṭā' ibn Yasār.³⁷⁸ So he was inconsistent in his statement about the companions of Moses when he said in one place that they were Muslims, and he said in another place that they were

366 Q 5:48.

367 Q 10:84.

368 Q 7.

369 Q 7:155–156.

370 Ibn Rajā' contends that the Qur'an recalls how Moses and the Israelites repented and asked God for forgiveness, and that in this context the Arabic words *hudnā ilayka* means that they turned to Judaism, and did not become Muslims, as suggested in other passages.

371 Al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī (d. 728); Sezgin, *GAS*, 591–594; *EI*², 3:247–248.

372 Muḥammad ibn Sīrīn (d. 728); Sezgin, *GAS*, 633.

373 Abū al-Āliya al-Riyāḥī (d. 708); Sezgin, *GAS*, 34; *EI*², 1:104.

374 al-Badī' ibn al-Yusr (d. 712).

375 Abū al-Ḥajjāj Mujāhid ibn Jabr (d. 722) of Mecca was known for his use of Christian and Jewish sources for his commentary. See Sezgin, *GAS*, 29.

376 Abū Muḥammad 'Aṭā' ibn Abī Rabāḥ (d. ca. 732); Sezgin, *GAS*, 31; *EI*², 1:730.

377 'Aṭā' ibn Abī Muslim al-Khurāsānī (d. ca. 753/7); Sezgin, *GAS*, 33.

378 'Aṭā' ibn Yasār al-Hilālī (d. 722); *EI*², 4:369.

وقال في موضع آخر أنهم كانوا يهوداً. وقال في موضع آخر أنه أول من أسلم. وهذا اختلاف، آية ينقضها الحديث والقياس.

[١٥٩] قال لهم في القرآن أن الله قال له: يا محمد، قُلْ أَعُوذُ بِرَبِّ الْفَلَقِ، مِنْ شَرِّ مَا خَلَقَ، وَمِنْ شَرِّ غَاسِقٍ إِذَا وَقَبَ، وَمِنْ شَرِّ النَّفَّاثَاتِ فِي الْعُقَدِ - وهم السحرة. فأمر أن يتعوذ من السحرة. ثم رويتم عنه أن اليهود سحره. وجعلوا سحره في بئر ذي أروان إلى أن رأى في المنام يخبرونه أنه مسحور 5 وأعلموه موضع سحره. فوجه علي ابن أبي طالب إلى ذلك البئر الذي طرحوه فيها اليهود سحره. فاستخرج منه صورة شبه صورة محمد مغرزة بالإبرة. وكان كلاً قلع علي ابن أبي طالب الإبر السابرة، وجد محمد الوجع خفّ. فلما فرغ علي ابن أبي طالب من قلع الإبر، قام محمد كأنه نشط من عقال.

[١٦٠] ثم رويتم عنه أنه مات مسحوراً، وقيل مسموماً من سم اليهودية، وأنها سمته في عرق اسمه 10 أورطى. وصل السم إلى قلبه فمات. وكيف يجوز ذلك أن يكون على قولكم رسول الله يحيق فيه السحر؟ والسحر فإتما هو عمل الشياطين وهو يقول في القرآن: لَا يَأْتِيهِ الْبَاطِلُ مِنْ بَيْنِ يَدَيْهِ وَلَا مِنْ خَلْفِهِ. هذا مع قوله ان الله تعالى وضع يده بين كتفيه ويحيق فيه السحر الذي هو من عمل الشياطين! فما تزعمون من حياطة الله وتشديده له؟ مع روايتكم أن كان إذا صبح أو مسي يكون بين يديه من الملائكة سبعون

فلان C [محمد] 7 بريدي اروا C [أروان] 5 فلان ماماديوس C [محمد] 3 يهودياً C [يهوداً] 1
 فلان ماماديوس C [محمد] 8 || 56^r C [وجد || من قلع C deletes C [طالب || ماماديوس
 اعيرة C [أورطى] 10 اسره C [اسمه] 9 ماماديوس C [محمد] خفا

Jews. He said in another place that he was the first to submit to Islam. This is an inconsistency; one verse is contradicted by the hadith and logical analogy.

[159] He said to them in the Qur'an that God said to him: "Muḥammad, say: 'I seek refuge in the Lord of daybreak, from the evil of that which he created, and from the evil of darkness when it settles, and from the evil of those who blow in knots,'"³⁷⁹ and they are the sorcerers.³⁸⁰ So he was commanded to seek refuge from sorcerers. Then you reported about him that the Jews did sorcery on him. They put a bewitchment on him at the well of Dhū Arwan, until he saw in a dream [the angels Michael and Gabriel] telling him that he was bewitched and they showed him where his bewitchment was located. So he sent 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib to that well in which the Jews put his bewitchment. So he took an image out of it that looked like Muḥammad pricked full of needles. Every time 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib would take out one of the deeply set needles, Muḥammad found the pain reduced. When 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib finished taking out the needles, Muḥammad stood up as if he had been freed from a deathly illness.³⁸¹

[160] Then you reported about him that he died while bewitched, or it is said that he was poisoned by a Jewish woman, and that she poisoned him in a vein named the aorta. The poison reached his heart and he died.³⁸² How can it happen as you say, that sorcery would work on God's messenger? Sorcery is indeed an act of demons and he says in the Qur'an: "Falsehood cannot approach it, from before it nor from behind it."³⁸³ Adding to that is his statement that God put His hand between his shoulders, yet sorcery, which is the work of demons, would work on him! How can you allege he has God's protection and His strength? Adding to that is your report that when he awoke or

379 Q 113:1-4.

380 The interpretation of these people as sorcerers is confirmed in the commentary tradition such as in the analysis of Q 113:4 by al-Ṭabarī, *Tafsīr al-Ṭabarī*, 24:749-751.

381 This legend is found in a number of early Muslim commentaries on Q 113 and the hadith collections. See Juynboll, *ECH*, 198-200. According to Burman, *Religious Polemic*, 337: "The kernel of the story is that a Jew named Lubid ibn al-A'ṣām (or his daughters) once bewitched (*sahara*) Muḥammad in a manner very similar to the one described here – including the use of needles and a well – and for this reason God revealed these two sūrah, the reciting of which cured Muḥammad."

382 For this account see al-Ṭabarī, *The History of al-Ṭabarī*, 8:124: "The Messenger of God said during the illness from which he died – the mother of Bishr b. al-Barā' had come in to visit him – 'Umm Bishr, at this very moment I feel my aorta being severed because of the food I ate with your son at Khaybar'. The Muslims believed that in addition to the honor of prophethood that God had granted him the Messenger of God died a martyr."

383 Q 41:42. Ibn Rajā' interprets this passage not in reference to scripture, as it appears, but to Muḥammad – falsehood cannot approach him from the front or back.

صنفاً يرعونه ويحرسونه. فما وجدنا لهذا كله حقيقة، بل وجدنا حقيقة بطلانه. وإن الله لأكرم من أن يجعل يده على شيء أو يحرس شيئاً أو يأمر الملائكة بحفظ شيء، ويحيق فيه السحر الذي هو أعمال الشياطين. وهذا اختلاف وتناقض.

[الفصل التاسع عشر]

- 5 [١٦١] الرد عليه في تفضيله نفسه على غيره.
- [١٦٢] روي عنه انه قال: أنا سيّد ولد آدم، وأوّل من تنشق عنه الأرض يوم القيامة. وروي عنه أيضاً أنّه قال: لو كان جميع من مضى (من) المتنبئين في وقتي لما وسعهم إلا أن يتبعوني. وروي عنه أيضاً أنّه قال أنّ الله لما خلق آدم نظراً إلى سرادق العرش مكتوباً محمد وعلي وفاطمة والحسن والحسين. وهذا قوله الروافض، واما ان النواصب فانهم يقولون، ان مكتوباً محمد وابو بكر وعمر وعثمان وعلي. فقال: يا رب هل خلقت خلقاً قبلي؟ قال: لا. قال: فمن هؤلاء؟ رأيت أسماءهم مكتوبة على سرادق
- 10

went to bed, he would have seventy kinds of angels with him protecting and guarding him.³⁸⁴ We cannot find all of this truthful; rather, we found the truth of its falsehood. God is more exalted than placing His hand upon something or guarding something or commanding the angels to preserve something, and sorcery, which is the work of demons, would work on it. This is an inconsistency and a contradiction.

[Chapter 19]

[161] A refutation against [Muḥammad] favoring himself over others.³⁸⁵

[162] It was reported about him that he said: "I am the master of the children of Adam, and the first one emerging from the earth on the Day of Resurrection."³⁸⁶ In addition, it was reported about him that he said: "If all [of] the former prophets lived in my time, then they would have been able to do nothing but follow me."³⁸⁷ In addition, it was reported about him that he said that when God created Adam, he looked at the throne's canopy, where [the names] Muḥammad and 'Alī and Fāṭima and al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn were written.³⁸⁸ This is what the [Shī'ī] dissenters say and as for the [Sunnī] opposition, they would say that Muḥammad and Abū Bakr and 'Umar and 'Uthmān and 'Alī are written.³⁸⁹ Now [Adam] said: "Lord, did You create others before me?" He replied: "No." He said: "Then who are those ones? I saw their names written

384 See Q 8:9: "When you appealed to your Lord for help, He answered you: 'I will aid you with a thousand angels in a file.'" The canonical hadith and commentaries make the claim he was watched over by an angel in reference to Q 11. They also mention seventy thousand angels watching over the sick due to prayer. See Juynboll, *ECH*, 55.

385 The purpose of this chapter is to demonstrate the differences between Jesus' life and that of Muḥammad. For Ibn Rajā', Jesus' parents were holy and they are now in heaven, while Muḥammad's parents were polytheists and reside in hell – and Muḥammad was a polytheist as well.

386 This saying was widespread among Muslim commentators. See for instance al-Tirmidhī, *Jāmi' at-Tirmidhī*, 6:311, 315 (Book 46, #3610, 3615).

387 This saying is found in commentaries related to the interpretation of Q 3:31–32.

388 This is a hadith from the Shī'a community which can be found in works of Ibn Bābawayh al-Qummī (*ʿIlal al-sharāʿi'*) and Muḥammad Bāqir al-Majlisī (*Biḥār al-anwār*); see Amir-Moezzi, *The Spirituality of Shī'ī Islam*, 137–138.

389 In both cases, Ibn Rajā' uses the titles that each group used against one another: the Shī'a were dissenters to the caliphate while the Sunnīs were in opposition to 'Alī's family. Given the fact that he lived under the Fatimids, Ibn Rajā' would have been familiar with both traditions from his educational upbringing and cultural setting.

العرش. فقال: لولا هؤلاء ما خلقتك، ولا خلقت سماء ولا أرض ولا جنة ولا نار. وهذا جهل في الكلام وإغلاء في القول. ثم إنكم فضلتموه على جميع الأنبياء والرسل والملائكة. ولم يقنعكم ذلك حتى قلتم أنه خيراً من المسيح. فوجب علينا أن نرد عليكم كفركم. ولا يكون ردّاً واحتجاجاً عليكم إلا من كتابكم.

5 [١٦٣] بل نقول لكم: أخبرونا عن نبيكم، هل كان أبوه نبياً؟ فإنهم يقولوا: لا، لم يكن نبياً، ولا كان إلا جاهلياً يعبد الأصنام. فنقول لهم: أخبرونا عن أمه ما كانت؟ فإنهم يقولون: كانت تعبد الأصنام. فنقول لهما: فهما طاهران أم نجسان؟ فإنه لا يسعهم يقولان إلا نجسان. والدليل على ذلك أنه قال في القرآن في سورة براءة: يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِنَّمَا الْمُشْرِكُونَ نَجَسٌ. فنقول: فهما في الجنة أم في النار؟ فإنهم مجمعون على أنهما في النار. والدليل على ذلك أنه روي أنه قال: ليت شعري، ما فعل بأبوي. قال فأنزل عليه في سورة البقرة: وَلَا تُسْأَلُ عَنْ أَصْحَابِ الْجَحِيمِ.

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[١٦٤] فنقول لهم بعد ذلك: أخبرونا عن نبيكم، حتى تدعوا أنه صار نبياً؟ فإنهم يقولون أنه ما يتنبي حتى مضى من عمره أربعين سنة. فنقول لهم: فإذا كان الدين في هذا الأربعين سنة؟ فإنهم يقولوا أنه يدين بدين قومه من عبادة الأصنام والضلالة. بهذا تواترت الأخبار الصحيحة التي لا خلاف بينكم فيها. فإن قال قائل أنه ما كفر بالله قط، فقد كذب وأبطل، وقد رددنا عليه ذلك في الفصل بعد هذا.

upon the throne's canopy." So He replied: "Were it not for those ones, I would not have created you, nor created the Heavens and the earth nor Paradise nor Hell." These are ignorant words and exaggerated statements. Then you favored him over all of the prophets and the messengers and the angels. That didn't satisfy you, so that you even said that he was better than Christ. So we needed to refute your unbelief. The only refutation or argument that you [accept] is from your own Scripture.

[163] Rather, we say to you: "Tell us about your prophet, was his father a prophet?" They say: "No, he wasn't a prophet, and he was only an unlettered person who worshipped idols." So we say to them: "Tell us about his mother, what was she?" They will say: "She was an idol worshipper." So we say to those two [points]: "These two, were they pure or impure?" It won't be possible for them to say anything other than "impure." The proof of that is that he said in the Qur'an in sura "Repentance": "Those who have believed, indeed, the polytheists are unclean."³⁹⁰ So we say: "Are these two in Paradise or in Hell?" They agree that both of them are in Hell.³⁹¹ The proof of that is that it was reported that he said: "I wish I knew what He did with my parents."³⁹² He said it was revealed to him in sura "The Cow": "You will not be asked about the companions of Hell."³⁹³

[164] So we say to them after that: "Tell us about your prophet, the one whom you claim that he became a prophet?" They say that he did not become a prophet until after he was forty years of age. So we say to them: "What was [his] religion during those forty years?" They say that he professed his people's religion in the worship of idols and falsehood. This is in the successive authentic accounts about which there is no difference between you. If someone says that he never disbelieved in God at all, then he has lied and it is invalid, and we will refute that in the next chapter.

390 Q 9:28.

391 On Muḥammad saying his father is in Hell, see Abū Dāwūd, *Sunan Abu Dawud*, 5:222 (Book 39, #4718); see also Q 9:113.

392 This argument comes from a commentary on Q 2:119. See al-Ṭabarī, *Tafsīr al-Ṭabarī*, 2:481: "The messenger of God said: 'I wish I knew what He did with my parents'. Then it was revealed (you will not be questioned concerning the inmates of hell)." See also al-Ḥusayn ibn Mas'ūd al-Baghawī, *Tafsīr al-Baghawī, al-Juz' al-awwal* (Riyadh: Markaz al-Turāth lil-Barmajiyāt, 2013), 143: "'Aṭā' said on the authority of Ibn 'Abbās (may God be pleased with them): So the Prophet (peace be upon him), said one day: 'I wish I knew what He did with my parents'. Then this verse was revealed (Q 2:119)." Q 9:113, 2:134, 2:141 and 60:4 also say not to ask or pray for unbelievers.

393 Q 2:119.

[الفصل العشرون]

[١٦٥] الرد على من يقول أنه لم يكفر ولم يعبد الأصنام طرفة عين.

[١٦٦] فنقول لهم: قد امرتم على انفسكم وأحاديث صاحبكم، أن أبويه كانا كافرين يعبدان الأصنام، نجسان وهما في النار. وأنه أقام أربعين سنة يعبد الأصنام. فأخبرونا الآن عن السيد المسيح، ما ينبغي لكم أن تقولوا إلا أنه روح الله وكلمته ألقاها إلى مريم؟ فهذا نطق قرآنهم. فنقول لهم: هل 5 كفر؟ فإنهم يقولون: لا. فنقول لهم: أخبرونا عن مريم البتول، ما قولكم فيها؟ فإنهم يقولون: أنها طاهرة مقدسة لم يخاطبها نجس ولا دنس. فهذا نطق قرآنهم. فنقول لهم: يا عميان القلوب، فتجعلون من كان كافراً أربعين سنة يعبد الأصنام مضلاً، وأن أبويه كانوا كافرين نجسين عابدين الأصنام - وأنهما في النار - أفضل من روح الله وكلمته! أليس ذلك منكم جهلاً غلطاً، وغلواً في القول؟ وأحادوا عن الحق وغلواً اتباعاً للباطل عياناً.

[١٦٧] وما الذي وجدتموه لنبികم من الفضل ما لم تجدوه للمسيح؟ وقرآنكم يخبر أن المسيح كان يخرج الشياطين. ويعافي أولي العاهات - من المجانين - والجذام والبرص والعميان ويقيم الموتى. لا خلاف بينكم فيه، تتلوا الليل والنهار وتدينون الله بذلك. وأنتم تزعمون عن نبیکم - لا خلاف بينكم في ذلك - أنه سحر وأن السحر قد حاق فيه وهو من عمل الشياطين، وأنه مات مسحوراً مسموماً. ولا خلاف أن نبیکم لم يحيي ميت واحد، ولا أخرج شيطاناً ولا فتح أعين أعمى ولا طهر أبرص، ولا 15 فعل شيئاً واحداً مما كان سيدنا المسيح يفعله هو وحواريه. فشتان ما بين صنيع سيدنا المسيح وصنيعه. ولكنكم لا تميزون ولا تفعلون.

C [أولي] 12 C 58^r [الحق] 10 غلطاً C [غلطاً] 9 احادية C [وأحاديث] 3 يعبداه C [يعبد] 2

C [فما] 16 البرصاً C [والبرص] || الجذماً C [والجذام] || اول

[Chapter 20]

[165] A response to whoever says that [Muḥammad] never disbelieved nor worshipped idols, even for the blink of an eye.³⁹⁴

[166] We reply to them: “You yourselves and your companion’s hadith reports conveyed the fact that his parents were unbelievers, worshippers of idols, and they were both impure and are in Hell. He spent forty years worshipping idols. Now tell us about the Lord Christ, what can you say except that he is the Spirit of God and His Word whom He cast forth into Mary?” Their Qur’an testifies to this. So we say to them: “Did he disbelieve?” They say: “No.” So we say to them: “Tell us about the Virgin Mary, what do you say about her?” So they say: “She is pure, holy, and there is no trace of impurity or stain in her.” Their Qur’an testifies to this.³⁹⁵ So we say to them: “Blind-hearted ones, you have made someone who disbelieved for forty years, going astray worshipping idols, and his parents who were impure unbelievers who worshipped idols – and the two of them are in Hell – better than the Spirit of God and His Word! Doesn’t that seem to you ignorant and mistaken, and an exaggeration in claiming?” They deviate from the truth and they become fanatics openly following falsehood.

[167] What kind of favor did you find your prophet possessing that was not found belonging to Christ? Your Qur’an reports that Christ cast out demons. He healed those who had illnesses – among the mad – as well as mutilation and leprosy and blindness and he caused the dead to rise. There is no disagreement between you [Muslims] about it, you recite [it] night and day and you worship God with that. You allege about your prophet – there is no disagreement among you about that – that he was bewitched and that sorcery worked on him and it was the work of demons, and that he died bewitched and poisoned. There is no disagreement that your prophet did not bring back anyone from the dead, nor that he cast out a demon, nor that he opened the eyes of the blind, nor that he healed the lepers, nor that he did anything which our Lord Christ and his disciples used to do. What a distance between the actions of our Lord Christ and his actions. But you are incapable of making that distinction and you do not make it.

394 The following section demonstrates how Ibn Rajā’ is primarily concerned with Islam alone, and not with comparisons with Christianity or Muḥammad with Jesus. He probably approached his material in this way because of his detailed knowledge of Islamic tradition, and the fact that he was probably less conversant with the details of Coptic theology.

395 Some examples from the Qur’an that are cited in the Latin translation but not here include Q 3:45 and 4:171, which both affirm the Annunciation to Mary and her high status as mother of Jesus the Word.

[١٦٨] الرد على من يقول أنه لم يكن يعبد الأصنام، ولا كفر بالله طرفة عين.

[١٦٩] فإن قال قائل من هؤلاء الروافض أن محمد لم يكن يعبد الأصنام، ولا كفر بالله طرفة عين،

فقد كذب قائل ذلك. ولا يخلو أن يكون هذا القائل جاهلاً لا يعلم، فتكلم بجهل أو عالماً بطريقة الحق فأحاد عنها إلى الباطل. ونحن نرد عليك من القرآن والأحاديث إن شاء الله تعالى. من ذلك أنه قال في القرآن في سورة الضحى: أَلَمْ يَجِدْكَ يَتِيمًا فَآوَىٰ وَوَجَدَكَ ضَالًّا فَهَدَىٰ؟ فهذه آية من القرآن يخبر 5 أنه كان ضالاً فاهتدى.

[١٧٠] ودليل آخر في سورة الفتح: إِنَّا فَتَحْنَا لَكَ فَتْحًا مُّبِينًا لِيَغْفِرَ لَكَ اللَّهُ مَا تَقَدَّمَ مِن ذَنْبِكَ وَمَا

تَأَخَّرَ. فقد ذكرنا هاهنا أنه قد كان له ذنوب متقدمة.

[١٧١] ودليل ثالث يروى عنه أنه زوج ابنته الكبرى لعتبة ابن أبي لهب قبل أن يظهر الإسلام.

- 10 وهو كافر يعبد الأصنام. وأنه طلقها فتزوجها العاص ابن ربيع، وهو أيضاً كافر يعبد الأصنام. فلما ظهر الإسلام وقوي طلقها عليه. وقال له: إن اخترتها فأسلم وأردّها عليك. فأسلم العاص، فردّها عليه بالنكاح الأول. وأنها ولدت منه ابنة تسمى أمامة، تزوجها علي ابن أبي طالب بعد موت فاطمة. حدثني بصحة ذلك محمد ابن احمد، قال حدثنا محمد ابن القاسم، قال حدثنا ابو عبد الرحمن النسائي، قال حدثنا قتيبة ابن سعيد الشامي، قال حدثنا مالك عن زيد ابن أسلم عن عطاء ابن يسار عن أبي

C [ضالاً] كم [ألم] الضحا C [الضحى] 5 انشاء C [شاء] 4 58^v C [و] فلان ماماديوس C [محمد] 2

C [النسائي] 13 59^r C [علي] 12 ازوج C [زوج] 9 الله C omits الله 7 ظالاً C [ضالاً] 6 ظالاً

C [يسار] [يسار] قتيبة C [قتيبة] 14 التسري

[168] A refutation of whoever says that [Muḥammad] did not used to worship idols nor disbelieve in God even for the blink of an eye.

[169] If someone among the [Shīʿa] dissenters says that Muḥammad did not use to worship idols nor disbelieve in God even for the blink of an eye, then whoever says that has lied. It is either that the one who says this is ignorant and without knowledge, so he speaks with ignorance, or that he knows the path of truth and he deviated from it into error. We will respond to you from the Qurʾan and the hadith reports, God willing. From that, he said in the Qurʾan in sura “The Morning Brightness”: “Did He not find you an orphan and give [you] refuge? And He found you astray and guided [you]?”³⁹⁶ So this verse from the Qurʾan tells that he was astray and then he was guided.

[170] Another proof is in sura “Victory”: “We have given you a clear victory that God may forgive you for what is past of your sin and what is to come.”³⁹⁷ He reminded us there that he had earlier sins.

[171] A third proof relates about him that he married his eldest daughter to ʿUtba ibn Abī Lahab before Islam appeared. He was an unbeliever who worshipped idols. He divorced her and al-ʿĀṣ ibn Rabīʿ married her, and he was an unbeliever who worshipped idols as well. When Islam appeared and he became stronger, [Muḥammad] divorced her from him. He said to him: “If you choose her, then convert to Islam and I will return her to you.” So al-ʿĀṣ converted to Islam, and he returned her to him in the former marriage.³⁹⁸ She had a daughter with him called Umāma, ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib married her after Fāṭima died. That was reported to me as authentic by Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad,³⁹⁹ from Muḥammad ibn al-Qāsim,⁴⁰⁰ from Abū ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Nasāʿī,⁴⁰¹ from Qutayba ibn Saʿīd al-Shāmī,⁴⁰² from Mālik⁴⁰³ from Zayd ibn Aslam,⁴⁰⁴ from ʿAṭāʾ ibn Yasār⁴⁰⁵

396 Q 93:6–7.

397 Q 48:1–2.

398 Ibn Rajāʾ may be conflating the stories of two of Muḥammad's daughters. According to Islamic tradition, Ruqayya (the second-eldest) married ʿUtba ibn Abī Lahab while Zaynab (the eldest) married al-ʿĀṣ ibn Rabīʿ. On Ruqayya, see *EI*², 8:594–595 and on Zaynab see *EI*², 11:485; and Guillaume, *The Life of Muhammad*, 313–317.

399 This is likely Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad ibn al-Faraj Abū Bakr al-Qammāh, from whom Ibn Rajāʾ quotes another hadith earlier in the text.

400 Ibn Rajāʾ is referring to Abū Ishāq Muḥammad ibn al-Qāsim ibn Shaʿbān, a tenth-century Egyptian Mālikī jurist known as Ibn al-Qurtī.

401 On al-Nasāʿī, see Sezgin, *GAS*, 167–169.

402 On Qutayba ibn Saʿīd al-Shāmī, see Sezgin, *GAS*, 167; *EI*², 7:691.

403 On Mālik ibn Anas, see Sezgin, *GAS*, 457–464.

404 On Zayd ibn Aslam (d. 753), see Sezgin, *GAS*, 405–406.

405 On ʿAṭāʾ ibn Yasār, see *EI*², 4:369.

هريرة أن محمد زوج ابنته الكبرى من عتبة ابن أبي لهب. وطلقها فتزوج بها من بعده العاص ابن ربيع. وذلك قبل ظهور الإسلام. فلما انتشر الإسلام طلقها عليه، وقال: إن اخترتها، فأسلم. فلما أسلم ردها عليه بالنكاح الأول.

[١٧٢] فكيف ينبغي أن يكون نبي الله ينتحل بهذا الدعاوي العظيمة، من فضله ومنزلته من الله، وأن الله لم يخلق شيء من الخلق إلا من أجله، يعمد إلى ابنته يزوجهها لكافر بعد كافر؟ أما كان الله 5 يقدر يحجز نبيه عن ذلك بعصمة منه؟ أليس هذا دليل واضحاً يشهد أنه كان يدين بدين الجاهلية؟ فإن قلت أنه لم يدين بدين الجاهلية ولم يكن إلا مسلماً وأن الله عصمه من الشرك والكفر، قلنا لكم: فلم زوج ابنته لكافرين؟ أما كان الله يأمره ألا يفعل ذلك ويعصمه منه كما عصمه من الكفر على زعمكم المحال؟ أو يوحى إليه مع بعض ملائكته؟ فالذين يزعمون أنهم كانوا يأتونه قبل أن يتنبي فيجلسون معه 10 ويسلمون عليه، فقد كان ينبغي لو أن واحداً من هؤلاء الملائكة نهاه عن ذلك؟ وكان الله عز وجل يريه ذلك في منامه وينهاه عنه. فإن كان في ذلك الوقت ما الكفار عليه من الكفر، ويعلم أن ذلك ضلالة زوجهن ابنته على علمه بذلك، فقد عمل ما (لم) يسبقه إليه أحد من نبي ولا غير نبي.

[١٧٣] وإن قلت أنه كان يدين دين قومة من الكفر، وإنما زوجهم ابنته على علم منه بذلك، قلنا لهم: فلم تدعون أنه (لم) يكفر بالله طرفة عين؟ وهذا دليل واضح على الرد عليكم وآخر ما يجد به مخالفكم الطريق إلى مناظرتكم ورخص حجتكم. ولو فكرتوا في ذلك لكان لكم فيه مقنع. 15 [١٧٤] الرد عليه في تفضيل بنات محمد على مريم الطاهرة البتول.

ازواجهن C [زوجهن || ضلالة C [ضلالة 12 C 59] أما || ازوج C [زوج 8 فلان ماماديوس C [محمد 1

16 [محمد C name for Muhammad written in Coptic script as MEMEΔIOG

from Abū Hurayra that Muḥammad married his eldest daughter to ‘Utba ibn Abī Lahab. He divorced her so al-‘Āṣ ibn Rabī‘ married her after him. That was before the appearance of Islam. When Islam spread, he divorced her from him and he said: “If you choose her then convert to Islam.” When he converted to Islam, he returned her to him in the former marriage.

[172] So how can a prophet of God make these great claims about his favor and his rank from God and that God only made creation for him, [yet] undertake to marry his daughter to one unbeliever after another? Wasn’t God able to prevent His prophet from that by protecting him? Isn’t that a clear proof that testifies that he professed a pre-Islamic religion? If you say that he did not profess a pre-Islamic religion and that he was only a Muslim and that God protected him from polytheism and unbelief, [then] we say to you: “Then why did he marry his daughter to unbelievers? Wouldn’t God command him not to do that and protect him from it, just as He protected him from unbelief, according to the impossibility that you allege? Or would He reveal [the command] to him through some of His angels? Those who allege that [angels] used to come to him before he became a prophet, and they would sit down with him and greet him, would it be proper if one of those angels would forbid him from [doing] that? God would have shown him that in his dreams and forbid him from it. If in that time he [embraced] the infidels’ unbelief, and he knew that that was in error, marrying his daughter despite his knowledge of that, then he would have done what [no] prophet or non-prophet had done before him.”

[173] Suppose you say that he professed a religion of an unbelieving people, and that he married his daughter to them despite [his] knowledge of that. We reply to them: “Then why do you allege that he did [not] disbelieve in God even for the blink of an eye?” This is a clear proof responding to you, and the final thing which your opponent will find as a way to debate with you and reduce your argument. If you think about that then you will find it convincing.

[174] A refutation regarding the favor of Muḥammad’s female children over the pure Virgin Mary.⁴⁰⁶

406 This was a political claim made by the Ismā’īlī Fatimids asserting their authority and genealogical connection to Muḥammad’s family since they claimed their ancestry through him. Interestingly, Sunnī scholars argued against this Fatimid claim regarding Fāṭima. This section is a response to Fatimid claims but it may reflect the arguments made by anti-Fatimid Muslims. See den Heijer, “Religion, Ethnicity and Gender under Fatimid Rule,”

[١٧٥] وإن قال قائل فإن فاطمة ابنة محمد أفضل من مريم، قلنا له: ولم ذلك؟ ألم نبين لك في الفصل الذي قبل هذا أمر نبيك وكفره وكفر أبويه وهم في النار، وأن نبيك كفر بالله أربعين سنة وزوج ابنته الكبرى من كافرين وأحبها أحدهما؟

الفصل الحادي والعشرون

- [١٧٦] الرد عليه في قوله: إِنَّ مَثَلَ عِيسَى عِنْدَ اللَّهِ كَمَثَلِ آدَمَ خَلَقَهُ مِنْ تُرَابٍ ثُمَّ قَالَ لَهُ كُنْ فَيَكُونُ. 5
- [١٧٧] قال لهم في سورة آل عمران: يَا مَرْيَمُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُبَشِّرُكِ بِكَلِمَةٍ مِنْهُ اسْمُهُ الْمَسِيحُ. قال لهم في سورة النساء: إِنَّمَا الْمَسِيحُ عِيسَى ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ وَكَلِمَتُهُ أَلْقَاهَا إِلَى مَرْيَمَ وَرُوحٌ مِنْهُ. وهذا حسن في القول لا شك فيه. ولو ثبت على هذا القول، لانتضح للناس أمر الثالوث، وانحل عليه ناموسه. فنقض ذلك بقوله: إِنَّ مَثَلَ عِيسَى عِنْدَ اللَّهِ كَمَثَلِ آدَمَ خَلَقَهُ مِنْ تُرَابٍ ثُمَّ قَالَ لَهُ كُنْ فَيَكُونُ. وهذا جهل وغلو في القول. قد أقررتم أن الله القى كلمته وروحه إلى مريم فكان ذلك المسيح. ثم زعمتم أن ذلك كآدم 10 الذي خلقه من تراب! وكيف يجوز أن كلمة الله وروحه تراب، والتراب لا يكون إلا من التراب؟ فقد جعلتم الله تراباً. وهذا التراب لا يخلوا من مكون كونه، وكذلك المكون مكون آخر إلى ما نهاية له. فقد بطل أمر اللاهوت على قياسكم الفاسد. فبعد أن قال الله لآدم كون، فكان بتكوين الله له.
- [١٧٨] فَنَ كَوَّنَ رُوحَ اللَّهِ وَكَلِمَتَهُ حَتَّى كَانَ مِنْ ذَلِكَ كَوْنٌ غَيْرَ اللَّهِ - تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى - الَّذِي 15 أَرْسَلَ كَلِمَتَهُ وَرُوحَهُ إِلَى مَرْيَمَ الطَّاهِرَةَ؟ خَلَّ ذَلِكَ فِيهَا وَتَوَلَّدَ مِنْهَا. وَاكْتَسَى مِنْ لَحْمِهَا وَدَمِهَا النَّاسُوتَ،

This section marks the beginning of manuscript P, the Karshuni text [العشرون] 4 أزواج C [وزوج] 3 C 60^r الذي [الذي] 2 Same as above. [محمد] 1 [بِكَلِمَةٍ] 6 كون فكان C [فَيَكُونُ] C omits [ثُمَّ] 5 [رَسُولُ] P [المسيح] C omits [المسيح] P omits this citation || [كَلِمَتَهُ] C كون [فَيَكُونُ] 9 وهذا حسن في القول لا شك فيه P omits [فيه] 8 زوج فيها P [مِنْهُ] || روح من المسيح P [المسيح] || التي C [التي] || تعالى P [الله] || أقروا C [أقررتم] القرآن C [القول] 10 فكان [الله] || C 60^v [فقد] 12 والتراب لا يكون إلا من التراب P omits [التراب] || روح القدس C [وروحه] 11 [الذي] || ما كان C adds [ذلك] 14 بعد قال الله P [الله] قال C [الله] 13 مكان C [مكون] || عز وجل P [اكتسبت] C [واكتسى] || ولدت C [وتولّد] 15 omits

[175] If someone says that Fāṭima the daughter of Muḥammad is better than Mary, then we say to him: “Why is that? Didn’t we explain to you in the previous chapter the matter of your prophet and his unbelief and the unbelief of his parents, who are in Hell, and that your prophet disbelieved in God for forty years and he married his eldest daughter to two unbelievers and one of them got her pregnant?”

Chapter 21

[176] A refutation of whoever says: “Jesus’ likeness, for God, is like that of Adam. He created him from dust; then He said to him, ‘Be’ and he was.”⁴⁰⁷

[177] He said to them in sura “The Family of ‘Imrān”: “Mary, God gives you good news of a Word from Him, whose name will be Christ.”⁴⁰⁸ He said to them in sura “The Women”: “Christ Jesus, son of Mary, is God’s Messenger and His Word, cast into Mary, and a Spirit from Him.”⁴⁰⁹ This is a good statement, no doubt about it. If he stood firm with this statement, then the matter of the Trinity would have been clear to people and his doctrine would have fallen apart. But he abrogated that by saying: “Jesus’ likeness, for God, is like that of Adam. He created him from dust; then He said to him, ‘Be’ and he was.”⁴¹⁰ This is ignorance and an exaggeration in claims. You have admitted that God cast His Word and His Spirit into Mary and that was Christ. Then you allege that that [Jesus] is like Adam whom He created from dust. How is it proper that the Word of God and His Spirit should be dust when dust cannot be anything but dust? You have made God dust! This dust cannot be without a Creator creating it. Likewise, the Creator of another has a different essence which is infinite. Because of your corrupted logic, the divine has become obsolete. After that, God said to Adam “Be!” and he was forming him by means of God.

[178] Who could have formed the Spirit of God and His Word so that there was [a being – Jesus] other than God who sent His Word and His Spirit into the pure Mary? Then he became incarnate in her and he was born from her. [Jesus’] humanity was clothed from her flesh and blood. In her, he was per-

407 Q 3:59.

408 Q 3:45.

409 Q 4:171.

410 Q 3:59.

فكان فيها إلهاً كاملاً بكمال الكلمة والروح. وتجسد منها الجسد والدم. فلما مضى له تسعة شهور كواكمل، ظهرت للناس تلك الكلمة وتلك الروح فتجسدت من مريم بالناسوت. فأقام بين الناس ومشي على الأرض. ولو ظهرت الكلمة والروح بغير جسد، لما استطاع أحداً أن ينظر إلى ذلك. وكان هلك كل أحداً. وإنما احتجب عن خلقه في جسدها طاهر سليم من الأنجاس والعاهات. وكانت فعالة من إحياء الموتى وإظهار العجائب التي (لا) تنكرونها، بقوت لاهوتيته في هذا الجسد. وأفعاله الناسوتية من الأكل والشرب والنوم، والجوع والعطش، والرقعة والاستعانة، والضرب والتفعل في الوجه، والصلب، والموت، والظعن، موافقاً للناسوت الذي كان فيه من ناسوتيته والدته العذرى.

[179] فكان إلهاً واحداً كاملاً متجسداً بطبيعة واحدة وأقنوم واحد ومشئئة واحدة. فدخل في بطن مريم وتجسد منها. وبعد ولادتها له ومقامه على الأرض وطلوعه إلى السماء، بغير افتراق اللاهوت من الطبيعة الناسوتية ولا من الأقنوم ولا من المشئئة ولا الاستحالة. بل إلهاً واحداً كامل فسمي ابن الله لا كتولد بني آدم بعضهم من بعض، لكن كتولد الحرارة من النار، والضوء من الشمس، والعقل من النفس، وضياء الجوهر من الجواهر. ولا ينبغي لذي عقل ولسان، يقول أن الحرارة أقدم من النار، ولا ضوء الشمس أقدم منها ولا من حرارتها، لا أن ضياء الجواهر أقدم من الجواهر. كذلك الله - تبارك وتعالى - ليس هو أقدم من كلمته وروحه، ولا روحه وكلمته أقدم منه. ولا يعرف إلا بكلمته وروحه ولا تعرف كلمته وروحه إلا به بغير افتراق ولا استحالة.

[180] كقول القائل: بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ. وليس الرحمن أقدم من الرحيم. ولا الرحيم محدث دونهم. كل هو ثلاثة أسماء، ذات وكلمة وروح الله واحد - تبارك وتعالى - الذي تثابت الانبياء على ظهوره. فهذا الكلام هو الطريق إلى عبادة الله وتوحيده. وبهذا جاءنا وأمرنا ووعدنا بملكوته ما دنا نعبده بهذا العبادة. ولسنا مثلكم الذين جعلتم روح الله وكلمته التي هي منه تراباً.

1 Manuscripts C & P reverse the order of some of the content in this section. The editor follows C because it fits the argument in a more logical way where he first explains his points about Jesus and then he critiques the Islamic view of Jesus. [و 6 C
61^r 10 C omits [بل 15 C omits به 18 C omits this example [ظهوره 18
C 61^v] إلى] ||

fect God through the perfection of the Word and Spirit. The flesh and blood became incarnate from her. When, for him, nine months passed exactly, that Word and Spirit manifested to the people, so [his] humanity became incarnate from Mary. He grew up among the people and he walked upon the earth. If the Word and Spirit appeared without a body, then no one would have been able to understand that. Everyone would have perished. Rather, he veiled himself from his creatures in her body, pure and spotless without stain or defect. His actions included bringing the dead to life and revealing miracles – which you do [not] deny – through the power of his divinity in this body. His actions included eating, drinking, sleeping, hunger, thirst, compassion, seeking help and being beaten, spitting in [his] face, crucifixion, death and piercing [his side], corresponding to the humanity which were compatible with the humanity of his Virgin mother.

[179] He was one God perfectly incarnate with one nature, one hypostasis, and one will.⁴¹¹ He entered Mary's womb and he became incarnate from her. After she gave birth to him and he stayed on earth, he rose to Heaven, without [his] divinity separating from his humanity nor from the hypostasis nor from the will, and nothing is changed. Rather, he is one perfect God, so he is called the Son of God, not in the way that the children of Adam are generated from one another. Rather, it is like heat generated from fire, and light from the sun, and the intellect from the soul, and the light of a jewel from jewels. It is not proper that someone with reason and rationality would think that heat comes before fire. Nor does sunlight come before the sun or its heat, nor the light of the jewel before the jewels. Likewise, God is not prior to His Word and His Spirit. Nor are His Spirit and Word prior to Him. He is known only by His Word and Spirit. His Word and Spirit are known only through Him. It is without division and change.

[180] It is like someone who says: "In the name of God, the Compassionate One, the Merciful One." The Compassionate One is not prior to the Merciful One. The Merciful One is not generated without them. Each one is three names, Essence, Word and Spirit, One God, about whose appearance the prophets foretold. These words are the path to God's worship and His unity. He came to us and commanded us and promised us His kingdom as long as we worship Him in this way. We are not like you who make the Spirit of God and His Word – which is from Him – dust.

411 This language reflects Coptic Miaphysite Christology. The Latin translation changed this to "one God incarnate with two natures and two wills, a divine and a human." See Burman, *Religious Polemic*, 352–353.

[١٨١] وهمتم بخالفتكم أنّ الله روحاً وكلمة ولم تعبدوا ذلك وجعلتموه تراباً. وصرتم تعبدون آلهة بغير روح ولا كلمة. فذلك صنم لا يأمر ولا ينهى ولا يسمع ولا يبصر. بل هو الهاً واحداً قادر سميع بصير له كلمة وروح. تجسّد ذلك من قدسيته وظهر للناس مسيحاً ومخلصاً، رحمة منه لعباده وشفافاً لهم. كما قال إشعياء النبي: الرب يعطيكم آيةً: هوذا العذراء تحبل وتلد ابناً - من غير ما مبطله - ويدعو اسمه عثمائيل، الذي تاويله الهاً معنا.

5

[١٨٢] ولم يزل عن موضعه الذي كان فيه، ولم يخلا منه مكان. فإن زعتم أنّ في التراب الذي خلق الله منه آدم روح الله وكلمته، فهذا كفر ومحال، وقلب الله ونقص منكم به - تعالى وجلّ. لأنّه لو كان في آدم روح الله وكلمته، ما يقدر إبليس اللعين ان يظهره عليه ولا يصرعه في شهواته التي أكلها وخالف امر ربه. وإن كان في آدم روح الله وكلمته وقدر إبليس أن يصرعه ويغلب روح الله وكلمته، فليس ذلك إله ينبغي أن يعبد - تبارك الله وتعالى عن ذلك.

10

[١٨٣] غير أنّا نقول أنّ آدم لا روح الله ولا كلمته. وإنّما الله الذي قال لآدم كون فكان. هو الكلام الذي أبرأ به براياه كلها، نخلق الملائكة والسماء والأرض والإنس والجن والطير والهوام والوحوش والدبابات والسباع، وجميع الخلق بكلمته وأمره. كما قال داؤود النبي: بكلمة الرب خلقت السماوات وبروح فم جميع جنوده. وكلم الأنبياء بذلك الكلام. وأوحى إلى الرسل الحواريون به أيضاً. وبذلك الكلام خاطب أصفياه وأولي الجاه عنده. والكلمة الذي تولّد منها المسيح هي الكلمة الأزلية الساكنة في الأب ومتوحدة به. كما قال يوحنا الرسول المنتخب في الإنجيل الطاهر: في البدء كان الكلمة، والكلمة كان عند الله، والله هو الكلمة. هذا كان منذ الازل عند الله كل شيء به كان وبغيره لم يكن شيء مما كان.

15

ذلك 10 وكلمته P omits || انكا C] كان 9 C omits] منكم 7 C omits this citation] معنا 5

C 62r] الكلام || C omits this citation] جنوده 14 بكلامه C adds] بكلمته 13 وجل C adds

هذا كان منذ C omits] كان 18 المقدس C adds] الإنجيل 16 اولى الالباب ولو الجاه C] وأولى 15

الازل عند الله كل شيء به كان وبغيره لم يكن شيء مما كان

[181] You commenced with your disagreement that God is Spirit and Word, yet you do not worship that and you have equated him with dust. You began to worship gods without Spirit or Word. That is an idol which does not command, nor forbid, nor hear, nor see. Rather, He is One God Almighty, Hearing, Seeing, with a Word and Spirit belonging to Him. That one became incarnate from His holiness and he appeared to the people as Messiah and Savior, a mercy from [God] for worshippers and an honor to them. Just as the prophet Isaiah said: “The Lord will give you a sign. Behold, the virgin will conceive and give birth to a son” – without what invalidates him – “and call his name Immanuel,” which means “A god with us.”⁴¹²

[182] He remained in the position in which he was, yet no place was absent of him. Yet if you allege that the Spirit of God and His Word are in the dust from which God created Adam, then this is unbelief and impossible. It is subverting God[’s acts] and negligence from you. Because if the Spirit of God and His Word was in Adam, then the cursed Iblīs would not be able to triumph over him nor cause him to fall in his appetite by which he ate [the fruit] and disobeyed his Lord’s command. If the Spirit of God and His Word was in Adam and Iblīs was able to cause his fall and defeat the Spirit of God and His Word, then that is not a god that should be worshipped – may God be blessed and exalted from that.

[183] But we say that Adam is not the Spirit of God or His Word. Rather, God is the one who said to him “Be!” and then he was. It is the Word by which He created all of His creatures. He created the angels, the Heavens and the earth, humans and jinn, birds and insects, wild animals and crawling animals, and lions and all of creation through His Word and His command. Just as the prophet David said: “By the Word of the Lord the Heavens were created and by the Spirit of His mouth His entire host.”⁴¹³ He spoke to the prophets with that Word. He revealed it to the disciples as well. With that Word, he preached to his chosen friends and those honored ones with him. The Word from which Jesus was born is the Eternal Word dwelling in the Father and united with Him. Just as John the chosen messenger said in the pure Gospel: “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. This one was with God for eternity. Everything came to be through him and without him nothing was made that has been made.”⁴¹⁴

412 Isaiah 7:14.

413 Psalm 33:6.

414 John 1:1–3.

[١٨٤] وهذا لما شاء الله ظهورها ليخلص بها خلقه، ألقاها إلى مريم. فتجدست من أحشائها وكانت ظهورها من مريم تكلوها فيها. وكان ذلك سرّاً من الله لم يطلع عليه مقرباً ولا نبياً مرسلًا، غيره وقد سبته. فضله بذلك على جميع الملائكة والحواريون والأنبياء والأصفياء والأتقياء. لما اختصّها الله به من أسرار العلوية اللاهوتية الروحانية.

الفصل الثاني العشرون

5

[١٨٥] فإن قال قائل: وكيف يجوز في المعقول والقياس أن يكون الله محصوراً في بطن امرأة؟ وكيف يسعه ذلك إذ السموات والأرضين لا تحيط به، وهو يحيط بها وبأضعافها؟ ولا ينبغي للألسن أن تتكلم على مكانه. ولم يعلم أحداً علم ذلك.

[١٨٦] فنقول له صدقت أنّ الله تعالى لا يحده موضع ولا يحيط به مكان. بل هو محيط بالأشياء ويظهر عليها. غير أنّه عزّ وجلّ قد رحمننا بفضله. وعلم أنّ عقولنا لا تطيق أن تبلغ كنه ذلك ولا معرفته، وأنّ أنفسنا توسوس لنا في ذلك. فأعلمنا في الكتب العتيقة من ذلك ما أزال الشك من قلوبنا. وأوجدنا السبيل إلى الرد عليك، أيها المخالف لديننا، ورخص حجتك. فمن ذلك أنّ التوراة أخبرتنا أنّ الله عزّ وجلّ دخل إلى الجنة، وأنّ آدم سمع وطء قدميه. وناداه: آدم آدم، أين أنت؟ فقال آدم: هأنذا يا رب. فإذا يسعك أيها المخالف أن تقول في ذلك إنّ الجنة وسعت الله عزّ وجلّ حين دخلها. فعلمنا أنّ قدرة الله لا يقال لها كيف ولم، إذ هو داخل في الأشياء غير خارج، وخارج منها غير داخل - بمشيئته وقدرته. ومحيط بالأشياء من غير أن يحيط به شيء.

تبارك وتعالى [تعالى] 9 P omits this sentence 3 كانه [وكانت] 2 خلقه [خلقته] 1
 عن [من] 11 كينه [كنه] || تستطيع [تطيق] || تبارك وتعالى [وجلّ] || 62^v؛ ظاهراً [ويظهر] 10
 [وجلّ] 14 نادا [وناداه] || وطى [وطء] || تبارك وتعالى [وجلّ] 13 لدينا [لدينا] 12
 بمشيئته [بمشيئته] 16 إذ [إذ] || كيف [كيف] || عزّ وجلّ [الله] 15 عزّ وجلّ [وجلّ] omits

[184] This is when God willed to reveal [the Word] in order to save His creatures through him, He cast [the Word] into Mary. Then he became incarnate from her flesh and his appearance from Mary was like his arrival in it. That was a secret from God, who did not share it with a confidant or a prophet, only Him and His holiness. He favored him with that over all of the angels and disciples and prophets and chosen friends and the God-fearing. God favored her through [the Word] with His sublime divine spiritual secrets.

Chapter 22

[185] Suppose someone says: “Using reason and logic, how can God be encompassed in a woman’s womb? How can that contain Him, since the Heavens and the two earths do not encompass him, while he encompasses them and their manifold? It is not proper for people to speak about his location. No one has that knowledge.”⁴¹⁵

[186] Then we reply to him: “You have spoken truthfully that God is not located in a single place and no place encompasses him. Rather, he encompasses everything and he appears above them. But He had mercy upon us through His favor. He knew that our minds would not be able to ascertain the true nature of that nor know it, and that our souls whisper to us about that. He taught us in the Old Testament⁴¹⁶ about that which removed doubt from our hearts. He showed us the way to respond to you, opponent to our religion, and cheapen your argument. Among them is that the Torah informs us that God entered the Garden, and that Adam heard the tread of His feet. He called out to him, ‘Adam, Adam, where are you?’ Adam replied, ‘Here I am, Lord’.⁴¹⁷ So what can you say about that, opponent, namely, that the Garden encompassed God, when He entered it. For we know that one cannot say of the power of God ‘How?’ or ‘Why?’ – since He is inside things rather than outside, and outside of them rather than inside – by His will and His power. He encompasses things without anything encompassing Him.”

415 There is a shift in Ibn Rajā’s approach in this section. Now he begins to repeat dialectical *kalām* arguments that Muslims commonly employed against Christians.

416 Literally “ancient books.”

417 Genesis 3:8–10.

[١٨٧] ثم ما كان من أمر إبراهيم ودخول الله تعالى إلى منزله من غير أن يكون منزل إبراهيم أَسْعَ ولا زال عن موضعه وحاله. وكان كَلَّمَ موسى من العليقة من غير أن تكون العليقة عظمت في خلقها ولا تحولت عن حالها. وكان دخوله الجنة ودخوله منزل إبراهيم وظهوره لموسى في الشجرة، وكونه في بطن مريم وعلى الأرض وعلى الصليب، كان كل ذلك بالقدرة الإلهية اللاهوتية التي لا تبلغها الأفهام ولا العقول البشرية.

5

[١٨٨] رأيت أيها المخالف: أليس في قرآنك أن الله تعالى جالساً على كرسي، وأن الكرسي على العرش، وأن العرش دون الكرسي، وأن ذلك فوق السموات السبعة، وأن قرآنك يقول: وَسِعَ كُرْسِيُّهُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ. فكيف تكون السموات السبعة والأرض في سعة كرسيه والكرسي أكبر من العرش، وكل ذلك فوق السموات؟

[١٨٩] ودليل غير ذلك، قد تواترات الأخبار التي لا تشكون في صحتها أنه إذا كان يوم القيامة أمر الله بأهل النار وأن يلقون في النار. وتصيح النار وتقول: هل من مزيد؟ فكل ما قالت هل من مزيد، ألقى فيها. فلا تزال كذلك حتى يجعل الله عز وجلّ رجلاه فيها، فتمتلي وتقول: قط قط، أي حسبي حسبي. وأن الله يدخل يده في جهنم فيخرج منها من أراد. فإذا يسعك أيها المخالف أن تقول في ذلك أن جهنم وسعت رجل الله حين جعلها فيها، أو يده حين أدخلها فيها؟ وكالم يقبل عقلك أن الكلمة الأزلية لا يحوطها بطن امرأة، كذلك ينبغي ألا يقبل عقلك أن جهنم وسعت رجل الله أو يده. فبان

15

[العليقة 2 من غير أن يحيط به شيء. ثم ما كان من أمر - P omits the transition to this topic] أمر 1
 P [البشرية || C 63^f و] 5 الذي C [التي || كان P omits] كان 4 الشجرة C [العليقة || الشجرة C
 P [العرش 7 تبارك و C adds] تعالى || رأيت أيها المخالف P omits [المخالف 6 البشرية P
 هل مزيداً C [مزيد || في C adds] وتصيح 11 السبعة والأرض P omits [والأرض 8 وأن العرش
 C [من 13 وتقول C omits] وتقول || الله P omits [وجلّ رجلاه C adds] الله || P unclear [تزال 12
 الله] P [ذلك C omits] ذلك || P omits and leaves an open line here [المخالف] فهذا C [فإذا || ما
 تعالى P adds] الله || ينبغي ألا P omits [ألا 15 C omits] وكالم || إليها C [فيها || تبارك وتعالى P adds

[187] Then consider Abraham's situation and the entrance of God into his home, without Abraham's home becoming bigger and it remained in its place and state.⁴¹⁸ Likewise He spoke to Moses from the boxthorn bush, without the boxthorn bush becoming greater in its nature or changing from its state.⁴¹⁹ His entrance into the Garden and His entrance into Abraham's home and His appearance to Moses in the bush and His existence in Mary's womb and being upon the earth and upon the cross, all of that is through His divine godly power, which our understanding and human minds cannot ascertain.

[188] Do you see, opponent, is it not in your Qur'an⁴²⁰ that God is sitting upon a chair⁴²¹ and that the chair is upon the throne,⁴²² and that the throne is underneath the chair, and that that is above the seven Heavens and that your Qur'an says: "His chair encompasses the Heavens and the earth"?⁴²³ How can the seven Heavens and the earth be as big as His chair and the chair bigger than the throne and all of that be over the Heavens?⁴²⁴

[189] Another proof is the accounts that were given successively, about which you do not doubt their authenticity, that when it is the Day of Resurrection, God will command the people of fire to be cast into Hell. Hell will shout, saying: "Are there more?"⁴²⁵ So every time it says "are there more?" more will be cast into it. It will continue that way until God puts His foot on it. Then it will become full and say "Enough, enough!" which is "no more, no more."⁴²⁶ God puts His hand into Gehenna and then He takes out of it whoever He wants. So what can you say about that, opponent, namely, that Gehenna is spacious enough to accommodate God's foot when He put it on it or His hand when He put it in it? As your mind does not accept the fact that the Eternal Word cannot be encompassed in a woman's womb, likewise it should make sense for your mind to reject that Gehenna is spacious enough for God's foot or hand. So it

418 Genesis 18:1.

419 Exodus 3:2-6; Q 28:29-30.

420 Ibn Rajā uses direct address towards Muslims here, which is not merely a rhetorical device but suggests that he expected his readers to include Muslims as well as Christians.

421 See "Kursī," *EI*² 5:509.

422 On God's throne (*arsh*), which appears 21 times in the Qur'an. For example, see Q 7:54.

423 Q 2:255.

424 Ibn Rajā demonstrates his knowledge of intra-Islamic speculation about God being seated on both a chair (*kursī*) and a throne (*arsh*) and their relationship to one another in heaven.

425 Q 50:30.

426 This is a canonical hadith; see Juynboll, *ECH*, 33. See also al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, 6:317 (Book 65, #4848, 4849), and 9:291, 333, (Book 97, Prior to #7383, #7449).

لك أيها المخالف أن القدرة اللاهوتية لا يحتملها عقل ولا فهم. فدل ذلك على أن الله تجسد للناس وظهر لهم بقدرته وجبروته.

الفصل الثالث والعشرون

[190] فإن قال هذا المخالف: فكيف يجوز في المعقول والقياس أن يكون الله عزّ وجلّ - الذي وصفتموه بهذه الصفة الجليلة العظيمة - أن يكون لليهود من الاستطاعة أن يظهر عليهم وينالون منه ما تزعمون من الضرب والصلب والتفيل في الوجه والقتل والظعن؟ وكيف ينبغي لله أن تسرع إليه الأيادي، كيف ينبغي أن يموت إذ هو خالق الموت، وهو يميت كل أحداً؟ ولما مات وأقام هذه الثلاثة أيام في القبر - التي تزعمون أنه أقامها - من كان يدبر السموات والأرض وما بينهما؟

[191] فإننا نجيبه على ذلك بأن نقول له: لو كان ظهور اليهود عليه من غير علمه بذلك، ولا أخبر

- 10 الحواريون الأطهار قبل ذلك بصنيع اليهود له، وإنما كان صنيعهم به من غير علمه، احتالوه بها أو حيله تمت لهم عليه في ذلك حتى صلبوه، لكان لك في ذلك مقال. ولكنه قال للحواريون قبل ذلك، كما أخبرنا في الإنجيل: إني جئت أسلم نفسي للموت، وأنا قادر أن أسلمها وآخذها، ولا يقدر أحداً يأخذها مني. وقال لنا أيضاً في الإنجيل الطاهر أنه أخبر بطرس تلميذه بما يكون من اليهود إليه. فقال: إن اليهود يأخذوني ويصلبوني. ووصف له ما يكون منهم إليه. فقال له بطرس: لا يكون هذا بك أبداً. فقال له المسيح: إذ ذهب عني يا شيطان، فانت لي عثرة. ترى رأي إبليس وليس ترى رأي الله. فإنني

C [الفصل 3 عقلاً] CP [عقل] || أيها المخالف ان تقول القدرة اللاهوتية. ذلك الذي C [اللاهوتية 1 أن] || عليه من C [من 5 تبارك وتعالى] C [وجلّ] || فإن قال هذا المخالف P omits [المخالف 4 63^v وان تسرع C [الأيادي 7 كيف ينبغي لله C omits لله] || التفيل في الوجه P omits [الوجه 6 ما C C has a different word order] || أحداً || الموت] C omits || ام and adds كيف ينبغي أن P omits [أن] || الأيادي عليه جواب على ذلك P [ذلك 9 الذي] C [التي] || P omits [الثلاثة 8 هذا] C [هذه] || الحواريون 10 غير علمه P omits [علمه] || إليه C [له] || قبل ذلك C omits [ذلك] || الحوارية P [الحواريون 10 اليهود 14 الموت] C omits; الموت] P [للهموت] || الطاهر P adds [الإنجيل 12 الحوارية P [الحواريون] omits P omits || المسيح 15 كالمتوجع P adds [بطرس] P omits [منهم] || له] P omits || السيد فانت لي عثرة. ترى رأي إبليس وليس ترى رأي الله P omits [الله] || السيد

should be clear to you, opponent, that neither intellect nor understanding can ascertain the divine power. So that proves that God became incarnate to the people and appeared to them through His power and omnipotence.

Chapter 23

[190] Suppose this opponent says: "Using reason and logic, how is it necessary for the God – whom you have described with this sublime and glorified attribute – that the Jews should be victorious over him and accomplish with him what you claim about beating, crucifixion, spitting in his face, death, and piercing? How can hands be set upon God; how can he die, since he is the creator of death and causes death for every one? And when he died and he remained those three days in the tomb – which you allege that he remained in it – who was directing the Heavens and the earth and what is between them?"⁴²⁷

[191] So we answer that by saying to him: "If the Jews' victory over him was without his knowledge in that matter, and he did not tell the pure disciples about the Jews' actions toward him beforehand, rather their actions toward him were without his knowledge, [and] they deceived him, or planned a stratagem for them in order to crucify him, then you would have a case. But he said to the disciples before that, just as he told us in the Gospel: 'Truly I came to submit my soul to death and I have the power to submit it and take it up again. No one is able to take it away from me.'⁴²⁸ He said to us also in the pure Gospel that he told Peter his disciple about what the Jews would do to him. He said: 'The Jews will take me and crucify me'. He described to [Peter] what they would do to him. Then Peter said to him: 'This shall never happen to you'. Then Christ said to him: 'Get away from me, Satan. You are a stumbling block to me. You have in mind the things of the Devil and not in the mind the things of God. I came only for

427 This was a common medieval Islamic polemical argument, typically associated with the Incarnation so that Muslims would ask how Jesus directed the heavens and the earth while in Mary's womb. See for instance, Nasry, ed., *The Caliph and the Bishop*, 222; and John Lamoreaux, ed., *Theodore Abū Qurrah* (Provo, UT: Brigham Young University Press, 2005), 222–224.

428 John 10:17–18.

انما جئت لخلاص اوليائي. فقد أعلنك أيها المخالف المناظر أنهم لم يظهروا عليه من غير علمه. ولا أنه أحاط أحداً منهم بعلم ولم يعلمه هو. بل هو تعالى عالم بالأشياء قبل كونها. ولا مكوّن لها غيره بلطفه وتدييره.

- [192] وأحسن من هذا أنه تنبّى على المسيح أربعة وعشرين نبي. فتنبّوا بوحى الله لهم وتجدّد كلمته الأزلية من قدسية. وتنبّوا على بشارة الملاك جبرائيل الذي هو أفضل الملائكة وأمين الله على سره، 5 الذي حمّله البشارة إلى السيدة الطاهرة القديسة وخصّه بما لم يخص به غيره من الملائكة. فكان كل ذلك نغراً لجبرائيل له على سائر الملائكة، إذ لم يؤهل الله أحداً منهم لما أهله إليه. فكان فضله وافتخاره على سائر الملائكة كفضل الحواريون على من سواهم بما اختصهم به سيدنا المسيح حيث قال لهم: كثير من الأنبياء والرسل تمّنوا أن يسمعوا ما سمعتم، ويعاينوا ما عاينتم، فطوبى لأعينكم إذ رأت ولآذانكم إذ سمعت. فضّلهم بهذا عن سائر الخلق، لما عاينوا وسمعوا من الحكمة والأسرار المكتومة العلوية. 10
- [193] فكان فضل جبرائيل على سائر الملائكة، كفضل الحواريون على من سواهم بما خصه الله به من الشرف والافتخار. حمل السر من البشارة إلى والدته. ولم تفصل لهذا المعنى فنشرحه أكثر من هذا. وإنما ذكرنا ذلك لأن أصحابنا المسيحيين في تقديم جبرائيل على ميكائيل مختلفين. فطوائف منهم

ولا أحاط احد P [بعلم] 2 أيها المخالف المناظر P omits [المناظر] || إني الم اجئت لهذا الخلاص و C [جئت] 1 من قدسية. وتنبّوا على P omits [على] 5 السيد P adds [المسيح] 4 تعالى- عالم P omits [عالم] || بعلم له علمه [والرسل] 9 هو P [إليه] || لاجل ان P [لم] 7 قدسيته C [القديسة] || السيدة الطاهرة C omits [الطاهرة] 6 انها نظرت P [رأت] || فلم يعاينوا C adds [عاينتم] || فلم يسمعوا C adds [سمعت] || الملوك P انها P [إذ] 10

C 64^v [أكثر] C فشرحه [فنشرحه] || تفصل C [نفصل] 12

the salvation of my friends'.⁴²⁹ So we have shown you, disputatious opponent, that they were not victorious over him without his knowledge. None of them fully comprehended any knowledge which he did not already know. Rather, the Most High knows all things before they come into being. Only He creates it through His benevolence and His providence."

[192] More convincing than this is that twenty-four prophets prophesied about Christ. Through God's inspiration to them, they prophesied concerning the incarnation of His Eternal Word of holiness. They prophesied about the Annunciation of the angel Gabriel, who is most favored among the angels, and the keeper of God's secrets, whom [God] entrusted with the Annunciation to the pure and Holy Lady. He chose him for that which other angels were not chosen. All of that was an honor for Gabriel over the rest of the angels, because God did not find any one of them more suitable. His favor and honor over the rest of the angels was like the disciples' favor over others, for that which our Lord Christ honored them, since he said to them: "Many prophets and messengers longed to hear what you have heard and see what you have seen. Blessed are your eyes since they saw and your ears since they heard."⁴³⁰ He favored them in this over the rest of creation, because of what they saw and heard of wisdom and higher hidden secrets.

[193] Gabriel was favored over the rest of the angels like the disciples were favored over others for the honor and glory that God conferred on him. He carried the secret of the good news to [Jesus'] mother. We will not go into detail about this and explain it more than this. We only mentioned that because our Christian companions differed in the matter of Gabriel's precedence over

429 Matthew 16:21–23.

430 Paraphrasing Matthew 13:16–17.

يقدمون ميكائيل على جبرائيل، ولم أعرف لهم في ذلك حجة ولا وجدت له عندهم من الفضل ما وجد به جبرائيل. وطائفة تقدم جبرائيل على ميكايل، وهو الصحيح وبه نقول لما سبق في احتجاجنا في ذلك.

[١٩٤] ثم رجعنا إلى النبوات. ثم تنبوا على حملة وعلى ميلاده وعلى تربيته وعلى معموديته، وعلى مقامه بين الناس، وعلى إظهاره الآيات والعجائب. وعلى ما كان من اليهود إليه شيئاً بعد شيء من 5 التقل والضرب في الوجه. وحملهم له صليبه على منكبيه، واقتسام ثيابه، وصلبه وموته بالناسوت وطعنه ودفنه وحياته وطلوعه. وكانت هذه الآلام كلها لاحقة بالجسد المتجسد من الناسوت، بسكون اللاهوت فيه بحاله من غير افتراق ولا استحالة، كاحتجاج اللؤلؤة في صدقتها.

[١٩٥] مثل: أرأيت لو أنّ الملك أراد أن يحرق إنساناً. وأمر به فجعل في بيت لا منفذ له وأحرقه.

10 هل كان الملكان اللذان كانا معه يمتنعان من الدخول معه في البيت خشية من النار أن تحرقهما، أو يدخلان معه؟ فإن قلت أنّهما يدخلان معه، قلنا لك: فلها دخلا معه وأضرم النار عليهم، هل كان الملكان يحترقان معه أم نفس الانسان احترقت كما احترق جسده؟ فإنه لا يسعك أن تقول ذلك.

C adds [و] || من بعضه P adds [والعجائب] 5 P omits this paragraph [ذلك] 3 وجده C [له] 1
 [ودفته] 7 بالناسوت C omits [بالناسوت] || يعني كتفه P adds [منكبيه] 6 وعلى متبعيه وعلى مخالفينه
 P [الذنان] 10 C omits [مثل] 9 C omits [فيه] 8 لتكون C [بسكون] || P omits [كلها] || P omits
 ام نفس C omits [جسده] 12 قلم P [قلت] || C 65^r [معه] 11 يمتنعان C [يتمنعان] || P omits [كانا] || الذين
 الانسان احترقت كما احترق جسده

Michael. Several groups of them honor Michael over Gabriel, although I don't know that they have any evidence for that and I have not found with them what supports [Michael's] favor as is found with Gabriel. Another group favors Gabriel over Michael, and that is the truth we have established in our argument about that which just preceded.⁴³¹

[194] Now we return to the prophecies. They prophesied about his conception, birth, upbringing and baptism, as well as his life among the people and how he revealed signs and miracles, as well as thing after thing that the Jews did to him, including beating and spitting in his face. They made him carry his cross upon his shoulders, and the division of his clothing and his crucifixion and his death in humanity, and his piercing and his burial and his returning to life and his ascension. All of these sufferings were indeed in the incarnate flesh of the humanity, with the divinity indwelling in its own state, without separation or change like the veiling of a pearl in its seashell.

[195] For example: suppose that a king wanted to burn a man.⁴³² He commanded it and put him in a house with no exit to it and he burned it. Will the two angels who accompany him be reluctant to enter with him into the house for fear of the fire that would burn them, or would they enter with him? If you say that the two of them should enter with him, we reply to you: "When the two of them entered with him and he set the fire upon them, will the two angels be burned up with him or is the man's soul burned up just as his body is burned up? Indeed, you cannot say that."

431 It is possible that within the Coptic Church, there were differences over the rank of Gabriel and Michael among the seven archangels, which are spiritual and bodiless powers from heaven (Michael, Gabriel, Raphael, Suriel, Zedekiel, Serathiel, and Ananiel). Michael is connected with prayers on the twelfth of each month and with the rising of the Nile River each year. Gabriel is connected with the Annunciation. The different opinions of Copts about them in this period are unknown. Gabriel and Michael were both recognized as angels in the Islamic tradition as well, such as the hadith that Gabriel and Michael were witnesses to the heavenly marriage of Muḥammad to Zaynab. See also Monferrer Sala, "The Creation of Seven Archangels and their Hosts in a Coptic-Arabic Hexaemeron Attributed to Epiphanius of Cyprus." See also C. Detlef G. Müller, *Die Engellehre der koptischen Kirche* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1959). According to the Muslim commentator al-Suyūṭī (d. 1505), Muslims also gave Gabriel precedence over Michael among the angels, so this discussion was relevant to both groups.

432 The following two examples may be allusions to martyrdoms, and we know from Ibn Rajā's biography that he witnessed at least one in his youth. The examples may have their origin in personal experience.

[196] مثل اخر: اذا أمر الملك بتوسيط انسان وضربه السيف بسيف وجعل جسده قطعتين، هل انقطعت نفسه مع جسده؟ ما يمكنك أن تقول ذلك. وكذلك سيدنا المسيح - لم يفارق ناسوته لللاهوته من غير أن يلحقه ما لحق جسده. ولو ضربنا في ذلك الأمثال لأطلنا، ولكننا اختصرنا.

[197] فكان الاتحاد في بطن مريم العذرى وهو على عرشه، وعلى الارض وهو على عرشه، وفي

- 5 اللحد تحت الأرض - يعني في القبر - وهو على عرشه. ثم طلع بعد أن تتم سائر النبوات شيئاً بعد شيء، لا يغادر بعضه بعضاً. فلما صار على الصليب قال: الآن قد تمت النبوات كلها. فحينئذاً آمال رأسه وأسلم نفسه الفاضلة لخلاص أوليائه وأمته. واستقدهم من عبادة إبليس. ودعاهم إلى النعيم الدائم الذي لا زوال له. واقتدوا حواريه بفضل من بعد هذا كله. فدعوا الأمم الضالة إلى نور الحق بغير سيف ولا عصا، بل بإظهار العجائب التي كان سيدنا المسيح أظهرها كلها، إذ كان جعل لهم من القوة ما يفعلون ذلك به. فعذبوا بأنواع العذاب، ولم يجزعوا من اراقة دمائهم لمحبة السيد المسيح. 10 فعوضهم عن ذلك نعيم لا يزول وقرّة عين لا تبيد.

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[198] فإن قال هذا المخالف، نبينا قد قال لنا في القرآن: وَمَا قَتَلُوهُ وَمَا صَلَّوهُ وَلَكِنْ شُبِّهَ لَهُمْ.

[199] فنقول له: بان سفهك وكفرك في هذا الكلام. لم ينبغي لك أن تعتقدوه. إذا أنت قلت:

وَلَكِنْ شُبِّهَ لَهُمْ، من الذي شبه لهم ذلك؟

P [جسده] || ناسوته اللاهوتيه C [للاهوته] 3 له المجد P [المسيح] || C omits this sentence [ذلك] 2
 C omits this [عرشه] || العذرى C [العذرى] || الاتحاد في P [في] 4 لاهوته ما ليس جسده
 [شيء] 6 P omits [بعد] || وهو على عرشه C [عرشه] || يعني في القبر P [القبر] 5
 C [الضالة] || اجمع P [الأمم] 8 الروح C [الفاضلة] || الكريم P [رأسه] 7 شيئاً C
 من P [دمائهم] || وقاسوا باراقة C [اراقة] 10 الذي C [التي] || بظهارهم الايات و P [بإظهار] 9
 P [المخالف] || C 65v [فإن] 13 بالمسيح C [المسيح] || لمحبة السيد C [السيد] || قبل
 قولك P [قلت] || وكفرك P [جواب] P [فبقول] 14 في القرآن P [القرآن] phrase ||

[196] Another example: If a king commanded a man to be cut in half and the swordsman struck him with a sword and he cut his body into two pieces, will his soul be cut with his body? You cannot say that. It was the same with our Lord Christ – his humanity did not separate from his divinity, while his [divinity] is not affected by what affected his body. If we gave [further] examples about this matter, then we would take a long time, but we have abbreviated it.

[197] The union was in the Virgin Mary’s womb while He was upon His throne; [the Word] was on the earth while He was upon His throne, and in the grave beneath the earth – meaning in the tomb – while He was upon His throne. Then he ascended after he fulfilled all of the prophecies, one after another, not omitting anything. When he was on the cross he said: “Now all of the prophecies have been fulfilled.”⁴³³ At that moment he lowered his head and he surrendered his noble soul for the salvation of his friends and his community. He led them away from the worship of the Devil. He called them to eternal grace which has no end. His disciples emulated his virtue after all of that. They called the lost communities to the light of truth not with a sword or a rod, but through the manifestation of all the miracles which our Lord Christ showed to them, since he granted them power to do that. They suffered different kinds of torments, but they were not anxious about shedding their blood for the love of the Lord Christ. For that, he rewarded them with an unending grace and a continual delight.

Chapter 24

[198] Suppose this opponent says: “Our prophet said to us in the Qur’an: ‘They did not kill him or crucify him but it appeared so to them.’”⁴³⁴

[199] Then we reply to him: “Your foolishness and unbelief are clear in this argument. It is not proper for you to believe it. If you say: ‘But it appeared so to them’, who is the one who made it appear so to them?”

433 Paraphrasing John 19:30: “It is finished.”

434 Q 4:157; while Islamic tradition interprets this verse as denying the crucifixion, the meaning of this verse in its qur’anic context is disputed. See Gabriel Said Reynolds, “The Muslim Jesus: Dead or Alive?” *Bulletin of SOAS*, 72 (2009): 237–258.

[٢٠٠] فإذا قال: الله الذي شبه ذلك، قلنا له: فالله الذي أضلّ الناس؟ حاشا الله أن يضلّ الناس، ولا يقصد عاقل ذلك. فإذا كان الله تعالى يضلّ الناس، فلا شيء سبب أن يوجه إليهم الرسل ليعظونهم، ويردونهم إلى الله؟ بل هو ظالم الرسل الذي وجههم يهدون قوماً من كفرهم، والله يريد لهم ذلك الكفر والضلال. وكلما زادوا في وعظهم واجتهدوا في صلاحهم، زاد الله في تشبه الكفر لهم صلاحاً والصلاح كفرًا. فإذا قتلوهم، لم يكن عليهم حينئذٍ ذنب ولا عقوبة. بل الله الذي وجههم إلى من يقتلهم، تبارك الله تعالى عن الظلم. غير أنّ الحواريون قد رأوه مصلوباً ورأوه من بعد القيامة من بين الموتى. فأقام معهم أربعين يوماً. ثم طلع إلى السماء حياً متجسداً. والحواريون أيضاً عندكم في القرآن، أنصار الله وحواريه. ولهم المدح عندكم ما لا كفاية عليكم.

[٢٠١] ألا تسمع إلى الحديث المشهور الذي جاء عن صاحبكم؟ وهو حجة لنا عليكم. حدثني أبو

العباس أحمد النيسابوري، قال حدثنا أبو عبد الرحمن أحمد ابن شعيب النسائي قال حدثنا قتيبة ابن سعيد، قال حدثنا مالك ابن أنس عن الزهري، عن سعيد ابن المسيب، أنّ أبا هريرة سأل محمد فقال له: أخبرني عن معنى قول النصراني في صلب المسيح. فضحك وقال له: إنّه لما أراد اليهود صلب المسيح،

[يضلّ] C اضلّ || لهم من الذي شبه لهم ذلك؟ فإذا قال: الله الذي P omits by scribal error [الذي 1 الناس،] || يظل C [يضلّ] || حاشا الله أن يضلّ الناس، ولا يقصد عاقل ذلك P omits ذلك 2 يظل C [رأوه 6 زاد C [زادوا || الظلال C [والضلال 4 لا P [أن || معنى P [سبب || يضلهم P [النيسابوري 10 حقا به C [كفاية || ولهم المدح P omits [المدح 8 راووه C [ورأوه || راووه [قتيبة || 66f C [حدثنا || النشائي P; الشيباني C; أحمد ابن شعيب P omits [النسائي || النيسابوري C; النيسابوري C adds [صلب 12 ماماديوس C [محمد || المشيب C [المسيب || ابن مالك عن C [ابن 11 قتيبة P; قتيبة C صلبون

[200] If he says: “God is the One who made it appear so,” then we reply to him: “Then God is the one who led the people astray? Far be it from God to lead the people astray, and no one with reason could mean that. If God leads the people astray, then why would He send messengers to them in order to exhort them, and bring them back to God? Rather, He would be unjust to the messengers whom He sent to guide people from their unbelief, while God would want that unbelief and error for them. The more they increased their exhortations and strove for goodness, the more God made unbelief appear to them as goodness, and goodness as unbelief. If they killed [the messengers], then there would be no blame and no punishment for them. Rather, God would be the one who had sent them to the ones who killed them. Blessed and exalted be God from injustice! However, the disciples had seen [Jesus] crucified and they saw him after his resurrection from the dead. He remained with them for forty days. Then he ascended into Heaven bodily and living. In addition, according to you in the Qur’an, the disciples are patrons of God and his supporters. According to you they were praised, yet it does not suffice for you!

[201] Don’t you listen to the famous hadith that came from your companion [Muḥammad]? It is an argument for us against you. Abū al-‘Abbās Aḥmad al-Naysabūrī⁴³⁵ reported from Abū ‘Abd al-Raḥmān Aḥmad ibn Shu‘ayb al-Nasā’ī⁴³⁶ from Qutayba ibn Sa‘īd,⁴³⁷ from Mālīk ibn Anas⁴³⁸ from al-Zuhrī⁴³⁹ from Sa‘īd ibn al-Musayyab⁴⁴⁰ that Abu Hurayra asked Muḥammad saying to him: “Tell me about the significance of the Christian claim regarding the crucifixion of Christ.” He laughed and said to him: “When the Jews wanted to crucify

435 The figure Abū al-‘Abbās Aḥmad al-Naysabūrī is most likely the Ismā‘īlī writer Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad (/Ibrāhīm) al-Naysabūrī (Sezgin, *GAS*, 579; *EI*², 7:732), who flourished under al-‘Azīz (975–996) and al-Ḥākim (996–1021) in Egypt. However, he would have cited al-Nasā’ī’s words from a text, since Aḥmad al-Naysabūrī was not likely active prior to al-Nasā’ī’s death in 915. On Aḥmad al-Naysabūrī, see Lalani, *Degrees of Excellence*, and Ivanow, *Ismaili Tradition concerning the Rise of the Fatimids*, 157–183.

436 On al-Nasā’ī, see Sezgin, *GAS*, 167–169.

437 On Qutayba ibn Sa‘īd al-Shāmī, see Sezgin, *GAS*, 167; *EI*², 7:691.

438 On Mālīk ibn Anas, see Sezgin, *GAS*, 457–464.

439 On al-Zuhrī, see Sezgin, *GAS*, 280–283.

440 On Abū Muḥammad Sa‘īd ibn al-Musayyab see Sezgin, *GAS*, 276; *EI*², supplement, 311.

جاء إلى جماعة جلوس. فقال لهم: أيكم الذي ألقى عليه شبهي فيصلب ويكون له الجنة؟ فقال له رجل: أنا. فألقى عليه شبهه. فجأؤوا اليهود وأخذوا ذلك الرجل. وهم يظنون أنه المسيح فصلبوه.

[٢٠٢] فلما صار على الصليب، أظلمت الشمس وحال لون القمر إلى الدم، وقام من القبور طائفة من الموتى متوجهين إلى بيت المقدس. واحمّرت السماء، واضطربت الجبال والأرض. وهذا محال من القول لا يقبله العقل. أن يكون هذا الذي كان على الصليب غير السيد المسيح، فتظلم الشمس له 5 ويحول لون القمر، وتقوم الناس من قبورهم وتممر السماء وتضطرب الأرض وما عليها. بسبب هذا الرجل الذي ليس هو المسيح ولا نبي، وإنما هو من أفنى الناس.

[٢٠٣] ولقد قتل جماعة من الأنبياء المحققين ومن هم أفضل من الأنبياء، وهم الحواريون. فما أظلمت الشمس ولا حال لون القمر ولا كان شيء مما ذكرناه. فكيف تظهر هذه العجائب عند صلب هذا الرجل الذي تزعمون أن ليس هو السيد المسيح ولا نبي ولا حواري؟ وهذا دليل على اضطراب 10 قولكم. واثبت في حجتنا لصلب السيد المسيح وظهور العجائب والآيات له وحده، لا لشبهه. آية يفسدها الحديث والقياس.

الفصل الخامس والعشرون

[٢٠٤] قال لهم في سورة الحج: وَلَيَطَّوَّفُوا بِالْبَيْتِ الْعَتِيقِ، وليس العتيق عندهم القديم. وإنما المعنى في العتيق عندهم أن الله أعتقه من الجبارة، فلا يظهر عليه جبّار إلى الأبد. وحدثني بصحة ذلك أحمد ابن 15

C adds [لون] 3 فجأؤوا اليهود P omits [اليهود] 2 و C adds [أيكم] || جماعتنا C [جماعة] 1
 C [شيء] 9 الناس C adds [من] 8 السيد C omits [السيد] || عود C adds [على] 5 إلى الدم C omits
 الرجل ... تزعمون C omits [أن] 10 هذا الآيات C [العجائب] || ظهرت C [تظهر] 66v C [فكيف] || شيئاً
 C [لشبهه] 11 اضطراب C [اضطراب] || وإنما هو من أقنا الناس C adds [حواري] || السيد C omits [السيد] || أن
 P [والقياس] 12 واثبت في حجتنا لصلب السيد المسيح وظهور العجائب والآيات له وحده، لا لشبهه C omits
 قولهم C [في] || وليس العتيق C omits [العتيق] 14 العيان

Christ, he went to where all of them were seated. He said to them, ‘Which one of you will take my appearance upon himself in order to be crucified, and Paradise will belong to him?’ Then a man said to him, ‘I will’. Then [Christ] put upon [the man] his appearance. Then the Jews came and they seized that man. They supposed he was Christ so they crucified him.”⁴⁴¹

[202] But when [Jesus] was upon the cross, the sun became dark and the moon’s color turned to blood. A group of the dead rose from their tombs and faced towards Jerusalem. The sky turned red and the mountains and the earth shook.⁴⁴² This claim of yours is impossible for any mind to accept. Namely, that the one who was upon the cross was not the Lord Christ, and the sun became dark for him and the moon’s color changed and the people rose from their tombs, and the sky turned red and the earth and whatever is upon it shook, because of this man who is not Christ nor a prophet; he was the most mortal of people.

[203] Many of the true prophets have been killed, and also those who were more favored than the prophets, the disciples. But the sun did not darken and the moon did not change color and nothing of what we have already mentioned occurred. Why would these signs appear at this man’s crucifixion whom you allege was not the Lord Christ or a prophet or a disciple? This is a proof against your confused claim. It confirms our argument for the crucifixion of the Lord Christ and the appearance of miracles and signs for him alone, not to his look-alike. [It is] a verse contradicted by the hadith and logical analogy.

Chapter 25

[204] He said to them in sura “The Pilgrimage”: “Let them circle around the *‘atīq* house [the Ka’ba].”⁴⁴³ But the word *al-‘atīq* for them does not mean “ancient.” The meaning of *al-‘atīq* for them is only that God “freed” it from tyrants.⁴⁴⁴ No tyrant should ever be victorious over it. Aḥmad ibn Muḥam-

441 This hadith is well known for Muslim polemics against Christians, especially in commentaries on Q 4:157, such as that of al-Ṭabarī, *Tafsīr al-Ṭabarī*, 7:650–660. Aslisho Qurboniev has noted, however, that Ismā‘īlī Muslims could accept the crucifixion and could view Jesus Christ as Son of the Universal Intellect in an esoteric approach to knowledge. In this respect, the hadith report seems more likely from Sunnī authorities than an Ismā‘īlī, unless the substitution theory was used for Jesus to immediately ascend into his rightful place.

442 Matthew 27:45, 51–53.

443 Q 22:29; on this passage in relation to the Meccan pilgrimage and its rituals, see the commentary in Reynolds, *The Qur’ān and the Bible*, 527–528.

444 See “Ka’ba,” *EI*² 4:317–322.

محمد، قال حدثنا عبد الرحمن ابن عبد الله ابن عبد الحكم، قال حدثنا عبد الله ابن وهب، عن عطاء ابن رباح، عن سعيد ابن المسيب، (أنّ) ابن عباس سئل عن معنى قوله في القرآن: فَلْيَطَّوَّفُوا بِالْبَيْتِ الْعَتِيقِ وما معنى العتيق. فقال معناه أنّ الله أعتقه من الجبارة فلا يظهر عليه جبار إلى الأبد. وهذا محال لا حقاً به. والدليل على ذلك أنّ الحجاج ابن يوسف الثقفي سار إليه في أيام عبد الملك ابن مروان لحرب عبد الله ابن الزبير - وهو ابن عمّة محمد. فقتله وصلبه على جبل أبي قبيس. ونصب المناجيق على الجبال وفي البيت الحرام، بالحجارة المملطخة بالقدز. بعد ان احرق جميع ما كان عليه من الكسوة. [٢٠٥] وسار إليه القرامطة في سنة سبعة عشر وثلثمائة - الجنابي متقدمهم. فأخذوا جميع ما كان فيه من ذهب وفضة وقلعوا بابي البيت. وكانوا - على ما زعمتم - من ذهب مصبوب. وقلعوا الحجر الأسود من موضعه ودفنوه ببطحاء مكة. ولم يعلم به أحداً منكم. فلما كان بعد سنين وجهو من أخرجه وردّه إلى موضعه. ويقال أنّ الجنابي جعله نصفين، حتى اخلاه من موضعه. وانه اقام معه ذلك حتى

قال حدثني عمي عبد الله C repeats [وهب || أخني C adds; ابن اخي P adds] حدثنا || الرحمان C [الرحمن 1
 [وسار 7 P omits] الحرام 6 C omits [الثقفي || كفاية and adds حقاً به 4 P omits] ابن وهب
 C 67^r [و 9 مقدمهم P; الجنابي متقدمهم C omits] متقدمهم || صار

mad⁴⁴⁵ verified its truth to me, from ‘Abd al-Raḥmān ibn ‘Abd Allāh ibn ‘Abd al-Ḥakam,⁴⁴⁶ from ‘Abd Allāh ibn Wahb,⁴⁴⁷ from ‘Aṭā’ ibn Abī Rabāḥ,⁴⁴⁸ from Sa‘īd ibn al-Musayyab⁴⁴⁹ [that] Ibn ‘Abbās was asked about the meaning of [Muḥammad’s] statement in the Qur’an: “Let them circle around the ‘atīq house”⁴⁵⁰ and what is the meaning of *al-‘atīq*. He said that its meaning is that God freed it from tyrants. No tyrant should ever be victorious over it. This is impossible and there is no truth to it. The proof regarding this matter is that al-Ḥajjāj ibn Yūsuf al-Thaqafī⁴⁵¹ traveled to [the Ka‘ba] in the days of ‘Abd al-Malik ibn Marwān,⁴⁵² to do battle with ‘Abd Allāh ibn al-Zubayr⁴⁵³ – he was the son of Muḥammad’s paternal aunt [i.e., his cousin]. He killed him and crucified him upon the mountain Abū Qays. He installed catapults upon the mountains and [bombarded] the sacred house with stones mixed with refuse. Afterward he burned all that was left of the [Ka‘ba’s] covering.⁴⁵⁴

[205] In the year 317 [930], the Qarmatians⁴⁵⁵ traveled to it with al-Jannābī⁴⁵⁶ as their leader. They took all of the gold and silver that was in it and they ripped off the house’s gate. As you allege, they were cast of gold. They ripped off the Black Stone from its location and they buried it in a valley in Mecca. Not one of you knew its whereabouts. After some years they sent someone to take it out and return it to its place. Others have said that al-Jannābī broke it into two halves to transport it from its location. It remained with him until he left

445 Ibn Rajā’'s reference is not entirely clear, but it may be to Abū Bakr Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad ibn Ishāq al-Dīnawārī ibn al-Sunnī (d. 975), who was a student of al-Nasā‘ī; see Sezgin, *GAS*, 198. He may also be referring to Abū Bakr Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad ibn al-Muhandis (d. 995/996). See also Melchert, *Hadith, Piety and Law*, 96.

446 On Ibn ‘Abd al-Ḥakam, see Sezgin, *GAS*, 355–356; *EI*², 3:674.

447 ‘Abd Allāh ibn Wahb (d. 813), was an Egyptian scholar in Egypt and important proponent of the Mālikī school and connected with Ibn ‘Abd al-Ḥakam; see Sezgin, *GAS*, 466; *EI*², 3:963.

448 On ‘Aṭā’ ibn Abī Rabāḥ, see Sezgin, *GAS*, 31; *EI*², 1:730.

449 On Sa‘īd ibn al-Musayyab, see Sezgin, *GAS*, 276; *EI*², supplement, 311.

450 Q 22:29.

451 On al-Ḥajjāj ibn Yūsuf al-Thaqafī, see *EI*², 3:39.

452 ‘Abd al-Malik ibn Marwān (d. 705) was the fifth Umayyad caliph; *EI*², 1:76.

453 ‘Abd Allāh ibn al-Zubayr (d. 692); *EI*², 1:54.

454 The black brocaded carpet covering the walls of the Ka‘ba. On the conquest of Mecca and details of these events, see al-Ṭabarī, *The History of al-Ṭabarī: The Victory of the Marwānids*, transl. Michael Fishbein (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1990), 21:224–232.

455 On the Qarāmiṭa (Qarmatian) Ismā‘īlī movement, see *EI*², 4:660–465.

456 Abū Ṭāhir al-Jannābī (d. 943) was the Qarmatian leader who sacked Mecca and took the Black Stone. See “Abū Ṭāhir al-Djannābī,” *EI*², 2:452.

سار عن مكة ودفنه، فلما مات الجنابي اخذوه وذهبوا بكسره. شهدوا الشهود بذلك الى اليوم فيه، وردوه الى موضعه. فما رأينا لقوله أنّ الله أعتقه من الجبيرة تصديقاً.

[٢٠٦] ولقد رفع الناس من شأن هذا البيت ما لا يستحق. وأكد عليهم في الحج إليه كل سنة. حتى أنّه قال لهم: إن أحرتم الحج سنة واحدة، لم يسقيكم الله في تلك السنة ماء. فقد كان ينبغي إذا كان لهذا البيت من الجاه العظيم عند الله - كما ذكر - أن ينزل العقوبة على هؤلاء الذي ظهروا عليه. لتكون 5 آية للبيت وتصديقاً لقوله. فما رأينا لذلك تصديقاً لقوله لا في القرآن ولا في الحديث.

[الفصل السادس والعشرون]

[٢٠٧] ذكر الحجر الأسود.

[٢٠٨] زعمتم عن صاحبكم أنّه جاءكم بكسر الأصنام ورفضها. ودعاكم إلى التوحيد. فوضع لكم في ركن هذا البيت - الذي تقدم ذكره - حجر أسود. وأمركم بالسجود له وتقبيله. فما الفرق بين هذا الحجر 10 الأسود وبين الأصنام التي نهاكم عنها؟

[٢٠٩] غير أنّكم قد أكثرتم الكلام فيه، واختلفت فيه الروايات. فرويتم من طريق أنّ هذا الحجر جوهرة، وأنّ الله عزّ وجلّ أطمس نورها حتى لا تروه. ولو لم يطمس نوره، لكان يضيء على نور الشمس والقمر. ورويتم عنه أيضاً من طريق آخر، أنّ هذا الحجر يمين الله في أرضه يصاغ بها عباده. ورويتم من طريق آخر، أنّ الله عزّ وجلّ جعله شاهداً ليشهد لكل من يحج، فإذا كان يوم القيامة شهد 15

[الناس] 3 رأيناه C [لقوله] || C omits the previous two sentences 2 ذهب P [وذهبوا] 1

ذلك C [لتكون] || يترك P [ينزل] 5 لكم C [لهم] 4 عليكم وهم C [عليهم] || اليه P C omits;

الذي C [التي] || [الأسود] 11 هذا خبر P [ذكر] 8 فما رأينا لذلك تصديقاً P omits [تصديقاً] 6

C [نور] || يروونه C [تروه] || عز وجل C omits [وجلّ] 13 من طريق أنّ P omits [أنّ] || عنه C [فيه] 12

C [شهد] || [وجلّ] 15 C omits [عباده] P omits this sentence due to scribal error 14 omits

from Mecca and he buried it. When al-Jannābī died, they took it and brought its fragments. Many witnesses testified about it until today, and they returned it to its location. So we do not consider the statement true that God freed [the Ka'ba] from tyrants.

[206] The people elevated this house's status without merit. He encouraged them to do the pilgrimage to it every year. He even said to them: "If you postpone the pilgrimage one year, God will not give you any water that year." So it should make sense, if this house had that great rank with God – as he mentioned – to inflict punishment upon those who attacked [the Ka'ba]. For that would be a sign for the house and a confirmation of his statement. But I cannot see what supports his statement in the Qur'an or in the hadith.

[Chapter 26]

[207] On the Black Stone.

[208] You allege regarding your companion that he brought you the idea of breaking idols and rejecting them. He called you to strict monotheism. He placed for you in a corner of this house – which has previously been mentioned – a Black Stone. He commanded you to bow to it and kiss it. So what is the difference between this Black Stone and the idols against which he prohibited you?

[209] But there are many arguments about it, and you have different versions about the story. You reported from one source that this stone is a jewel and that God obscured its light so that you could not see it. [And you claimed that] if He did not obscure its light, then it would shine more than the light of the sun and the moon.⁴⁵⁷ In addition, you have reported from another source that this stone was God's right hand on His earth, through which His worshippers may touch Him.⁴⁵⁸ You have reported from another source, that God made it a witness to certify everyone who does the pilgrimage, so when the Day of the

457 On it as a white stone of Paradise blackened by humans, see al-Tirmidhī, *Jāmi' at-Tirmidhī*, 2:290 (Book 7, #877).

458 This legend is mentioned by Ibn Qutayba, *Ta'wīl mukhtalaf al-ḥadīth*, 195–196.

لكل واحد منكم بحجة. ورويت من طريق آخر، أنّ جبرائيل الملاك جاء به إلى إبراهيم وإسماعيل وهما يبنيان البيت. فقال لهما: إنّ الله يأمركم أن تجعلان هذا الحجر في ركن البيت ليتمسح به الناس فيمسح خطاياهم. وكان الحجر يوم جاء به جبرائيل أبيض كالثلج، فلما تمسح به الكفار وعبدة الأوثان اسودّ من ذنوبهم وكفرهم. فهذه أربعة دلائل متناقضات غير صحيحات.

[فصل]

5

[٢١٠] أمّا قوله أنّ هذا الحجر كان جوهرة وأنّ الله أطمس نورها حتى لا تروه ولو لم يطمس نوره لكان يضيء على الشمس والقمر، فما الفائدة في أن يطمس نوره لكي لا يضيء؟ قد كان ينبغي ألا يطمس نوره ويجعل ذلك ظاهراً للناس. فيكون لذلك البيت آية، ولنبيكم أيضاً بها آية كبيرة حسنة. لا يقدر احد ان ينكرها. ويكون لكم على سائر مخالفاتكم من سائر الناس مقال وحجة وافتخاراً. وإنما الله عزّ وجلّ يظهر آيات النبيين للناس ليكون ذلك أقوى لحجتهم وأعلى لشأنهم. فكيف ينبغي أن يكون الله تعالى يظهر آيات للنبيين - الذين يزعم نبيكم أنّه أفضل منهم - ويطمس نوره ودلالته على الناس؟ فما رأينا لهذا الرجل الذي تفضله على غيره، حقيقة يفتخر بها عليهم. قد أحيا الأنبياء طوائف من الموتى، ولم يحيي نبيكم ميتاً واحداً. وأظهروا الآيات والعجائب، ولم يظهر نبيكم آية ولا أعجوبة. فقد كان ينبغي لو كانت له في هذا الحجر آية. فيكون له معتمداً يعتمد عليه، ولا يجعل هذه الجوهرة حجراً لأن ذلك نقص ودناه منزلة، إذ كانت هذه الجوهرة فطمس الله عليها حتى صارت حجراً. وإذا ذلك السبيل 15 والدليل إلى حجة مخالفاتكم وعليكم.

وهذا أربع دلائل متناقضات غير صحيحات C [صحيحات] || وكفرهم P omits 4 C omits الملاك 1

[يضيء] || ولو لم يطمس نوره لكان يضيء على الشمس والقمر P omits 7 طمس C [أطمس] 6

P للناس 10 C omits الناس || ينكرها 9 C [لذلك] 8 لكي لا يضيء C omits

P [نوره] C omits 11 مقال وحجة وافتخاراً. وإنما الله - عزّ وجلّ - يظهر آيات النبيين للناس P omits

وإذا 15 C 68^r [لو] 14 احياوا C [أحيا] || يفتخر بها عليهم C omits [عليهم] 12 وهو أعلى C [على] ||

C omits [والدليل] 16 الطريق C [السبيل] || C omits

Resurrection came, it would testify for every one of you regarding the pilgrimage.⁴⁵⁹ You have reported from another source that the angel Gabriel brought it to Abraham and Ishmael when they were building the house [Ka'ba].⁴⁶⁰ He said to them: "God commands that the two of you shall place this stone in the corner of this house, in order for the people to rub it and cleanse their sins."⁴⁶¹ The day that Gabriel brought the stone white as snow, when the unbelievers and worshippers of idols rubbed it, it became black from their sins and unbelief. These four explanations are contradictory and untrue.

[Section 1]

[210] As for his statement that this stone was a jewel and that God obscured its light so that you could not see it, and that if he did not obscure its light, it would shine more than the sun and the moon, then what is the point of obscuring its light so it won't shine? It would have been better not to obscure its light and made that clear to the people. Then that house would have a sign, as well as a great and noble sign with it for your prophet. No one would be able to deny it. You would have an argument and a proof and something to be proud of against all your opponents among the rest of the people. But God reveals the prophets' signs to the people in order to strengthen their argument and elevate their prestige. Why would God reveal signs to the prophets – whom your prophet alleges to be better than – yet obscure its light and its proof for the people? We cannot see any truth for this man whom you favor which elevates him over others. The prophets raised groups from the dead, and your prophet did not raise even one dead person. They revealed signs and miracles and your prophet did not reveal a sign or any miracle. It would have made sense for this stone to be a sign for him, so it would be a pillar to use as a support, and he should not have made this jewel into a stone, because that diminished and lowered its status since this was a jewel. Then God obscured it so that it became a stone. Therefore, that is the way and the proof for your opponents' argument and [a case] against you.

459 al-Tirmidhī, *Jāmi' at-Tirmidhī*, 2:358 (Book 7, #961).

460 Q 2:127; while the Qur'an mentions that Abraham and Ishmael were involved in the building of a house, this has been interpreted by Islamic tradition to indicate the Ka'ba. On this passage as a biblical recollection perhaps connected with Hebron, see Reynolds, *The Qur'an and the Bible*, 69–71.

461 On these different interpretations of the Black Stone, see the Gabriel version in al-Ṭabarī, *The History of al-Ṭabarī: Prophets and Patriarchs*, transl. William Brinner (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1987), 2:70.

[٢١١] وقد تواترت الأخبار الصحيحة عنكم، أن عمر ابن الخطاب لما حج ووقف عند الحجر الأسود، فنظر إليه طويلاً ثم قال: والله إنِّي لأعلم أنك حجر لا تضر ولا تنفع، ولكني رأيت النبي يقبلُك فأنا أقبلُك لأجل ذلك. ولم يقول له: والله إنني لأعلم أنك جوهرة فسحك الله حجراً - وكان عمر أجلد من ذلك. وإنما فعل ذلك ليرى ذوي العقول: أني لست جاهل في أني أقبل حجراً. وإنما قبلته لما رأيت محمد يقبله. فأنا أقبله اتباعاً لذلك. ولو صح عند عمر ابن الخطاب أنه من الجنة، لم يقل له: لا تضر 5 ولا تنفع، لأنه ليس من الجنة شيئاً يضر. ولا قال له أيضاً: والله إنِّي لأعلم أنه يمينا الله في أرضه يصاغ بها عباده. ولا قال له: والله إنِّي لأعلم أن الله جعلك هاهنا تشهد لكنن يحج. ولا قال له: والله إنِّي لأعلم أن جبرائيل جاء بك إلى إبراهيم وإسماعيل من الجنة. وأمر الناس بعبادتك. لم يقول من كل ذلك شيئاً. ولا قال: ألا إنِّي لأعلم أنك حجراً لا تضر ولا تنفع، ولكني رأيت محمد يقبلُك، فأنا أقبلُك اتباعاً لذلك لا غير. فما رأينا لقولكم أن هذا الحجر جوهرة، وأن الله أمركم بعبادته وجعله حجراً مذنباً يتصرف 10 إليه.

فصل

[٢١٢] وأما قولكم أن هذا الحجر يمينا الله في أرضه يصاغ بها عباده، فهذا غلو في القول وجهل وكفر. وأن تجعلوا لله يمينا من حجارة يصاغ بها الناس. وكيف ينبغي أن تكون يمينا الله حجارة؟ فإن كانت 15 يده من حجارة، فهو من حجارة - تبارك الله وتعالى عن هذا الكفر.

حجراً لا يضر ولا [تنفع] P omits أنك || لا أعلم C [لأعلم] 3 اعلم C [لأعلم] || الاسود C omits [الأسود] 2 حد C [عند] 1
 [ذوي] 4 تضر ولا تنفع، ولكني رأيت النبي يقبلُك فأنا أقبلُك لأجل ذلك ولم يقول له والله إنني لأعلم أنك
 لا يضر ولا [تنفع] 6 C omits [الخطاب] || ماماديوس C [محمد] 5 [جاهل] C [تري ذي] C
 لا اعلم ان الله [أن] C adds [أن] 8 شاهد C [تشهد] 7 لا أعلم C [لأعلم] || شيئاً يضر P omits [يضر] || ينفع
 P omits [وكفر] 13 C 68; P omits [وجعله] || أمركم بعبادته C omits [بعبادته] 10 ماماديوس C [محمد] 9
 يد C [يمينا] 14

[211] The trusted accounts according to you narrate that ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb when he made the pilgrimage, stood next to the Black Stone, and he looked at it for a long time. Then he said: “By God, I know that you are a stone that does not have harm or benefit. But I saw the prophet kiss you and I kiss you because of that.”⁴⁶² He did not say to it: “By God, I know that you are a jewel that God made into a stone,” – ‘Umar was braver than that. But he did that so that reasonable people would see: “I am not ignorant in that I kiss a stone. I only kiss it because I saw Muḥammad kissing it. So I will kiss it following that [tradition].” If that were true according to ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb, namely, that it is from Paradise, then he would not have said to it: “You do no harm or benefit,” because there is nothing from Paradise that harms. Further, he did not say to it: “By God, I know that you are God’s right hand upon His earth, so that through it His worshippers may touch Him.” He did not say: “By God, I know that God put you here to testify to everyone who makes the pilgrimage.” He did not say to it: “By God, I know that Gabriel brought you to Abraham and Ishmael from Paradise. He commanded the people to worship you.” He did not say anything of that kind. He only said: “I know that you are a stone that does not have harm or benefit. But I observed Muḥammad kissing you. Therefore, I will kiss you following that [tradition] and nothing else.” So we do not acknowledge your claim that this stone is a jewel and that God commanded you to worship it, and made it a gilded stone to which you should go.

Another Section [2]

[212] As for your statement that this stone is God’s right hand on His earth through which He touches hands with His worshippers, this is an exaggerated statement and ignorance and unbelief. You made for God a hand of stone through which people may touch His hand. How could God’s hand be made of stone? If His hand were stone, then He would be of stone – blessed and exalted be God from this unbelief.

462 On this hadith, see Juynboll, *ECH*, 15, 114, 138; and al-Tirmidhī, *Jāmi‘ at-Tirmidhī*, 2:277 (Book 7, #860).

فصل آخر

[٢١٣] وأما قولكم أنّ الله جعله شاهداً يشهد لكل من يحج، فإذا كان يوم القيامة شهد لكل واحد منكم بحجة. فهذا كلام له معاني إن كان الله تعالى أعجز حفظ ذلك حتى جعل هذا الحجر يحفظ ذلك له، فهذا محال. وإن كنتم لم تتقوا الله تعالى في ذلك فجعل هذا الحجر شاهداً بينكم وبينه، فهذا من هوانكم عليه إذ جعل الحجر لكم شاهداً، وهذا أيضاً محال.

5

فصل آخر

[٢١٤] وأما قولكم أنّ جبرائيل جاء به إلى إبراهيم وإسماعيل من الجنة، وأنه كان أشدّ بياضاً من الثلج، فلما التمسوه المشركون اسودّ من ذنوبهم وكفرهم. فقد كان ينبغي لما ذهب تلك الأمة الكافرة المشركة وجاءت بعدها أمة محمد وأصحابه - وهي عندكم أمة الصلاح والعفاف ومن لها عند الله من الجاه والفضل ما لم يكن لمن كان قبلهم بزعمكم - فتمسحوا به، أنّه يبيّض ويذهب عنه السواد وترجع إليه حالته الأولى. وكما أنّ الكفر سودّه، كذلك بيّضه الصلاح والإيمان. فإنا رأينا لكم في الحجر حجة تحتجون بها.

[٢١٥] ولقد حدثني محمد ابن أحمد، قال حدثنا عبد الله ابن محمد، قال حدثنا أحمد ابن حنبل، قال حدثنا سفيان الثوري، وسفيان ابن عيينة عن جعفر ابن محمد ابن علي ابن الحسين ابن علي ابن أبي طالب عن أبيه: أنّ محمد (ابن) الحنفية - وهو ابن علي ابن أبي طالب، قال: سمعت أبي علي ابن أبي

15

1 وهو السادس والعشرون A marginal note in C indicates that this section begins chapter 26: [آخر 1

However, the logical sequence would indicate that the topic of the Black Stone has already begun and continues throughout these examples. This section of the page in P has been torn off.

3 C omits [تعالى || تتقون بالله P] الله || كفر C [محال 4 حتى جعل هذا الحجر يحفظ ذلك P omits] ذلك

5 كفرهم C [وكفرهم || اشتمله C] التمسوه 8 كفر C [محال || C omits] الحجر || عليه C [عليه 5

C [تحتجون || P omits] فإنا || C omits] الأولى 11 عود P [أنّه 10 فلان C] محمد 9 وشركهم

[و || النوري P; التوزي C] الثوري 14 جميل P; جميل C [حنبل || عبد الله ابن C] ابن 13 تحتجوا

ابن C [ابن 15 عينية P; عتبية C] عينية || سفين C [وسفيان || C 69^r

Another Section [3]

[213] Now for your statement that God made it a witness, testifying for everyone who performs the pilgrimage, so when it is the Day of Resurrection, it will testify for every one of you about his pilgrimage. This remark has the meaning that God was unable to preserve that [memory], so He made this stone to remember that for Him, but this is impossible. If you do not fear God in that, so He made this stone as a witness between you and Him, then this shows no respect for you, namely, that He made the stone as a witness for you, and this is also impossible.

Another Section [4]

[214] Now for your statement that Gabriel brought [the stone] to Abraham and Ishmael from Paradise, and that it was whiter than snow, then when the polytheists touched it, [the stone] became black from their sins and unbelief. It would have made sense, when that unbelieving polytheist community went away and Muḥammad's community and his companions came after them – which, according to you, is a community of righteousness and modesty which has prestige and favor with God, which, according to your allegation, those who came before them did not have – and they rubbed [the stone], that it should have returned to white and the blackness would disappear and it would return to its original state. Just as unbelief blackened it, likewise righteousness and faith should whiten it. But regarding this stone, we don't think you have any argument which you can use.

[215] Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad⁴⁶³ reported, from 'Abd Allāh ibn Muḥammad,⁴⁶⁴ from Aḥmad ibn Jamīl,⁴⁶⁵ from Sufyān al-Thawrī⁴⁶⁶ and Sufyān ibn 'Uyayna,⁴⁶⁷ from Ja'far ibn Muḥammad ibn 'Alī ibn al-Ḥusayn ibn 'Alī Abī Ṭālib,⁴⁶⁸ from his father,⁴⁶⁹ that Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥanafīyya⁴⁷⁰ – who is the son of 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib, said: I heard my father 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib was asked

463 In an earlier hadith, Ibn Rajā' cited Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad and then 'Abd Allāh ibn Muḥammad ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz as his immediate sources. It is possible that this transmission line is referring to the same two figures. This transmission line (*isnad*) seems to come from the Shī'ī tradition.

464 On 'Abd Allāh ibn Muḥammad ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz al-Baghawī, see Sezgin, *GAS*, 175.

465 I have not identified Aḥmad ibn Jamīl.

466 On Sufyān al-Thawrī, see Sezgin, *GAS*, 518–519; *EI*², 9:770.

467 On Sufyān ibn 'Uyayna, see Sezgin, *GAS*, 96; *EI*², 9:772.

468 On Ja'far al-Ṣādiq, see *GAS*, 528–531; *EI*², 2:374.

469 Muḥammad al-Bāqir (d. 733/5) was the fifth imam in the Shī'a tradition; see Sezgin, *GAS*, 528; *EI*², 7:397.

470 Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥanafīyya (d. 700); *EI*², 7:402.

طالب قد سئل عن الحجر الأسود. فقال: وهل هو إلا من بعض حجارة هذه الأودية؟ فقد شهد علي ابن أبي طالب أنه كسائر هذه الحجارة. وعلي ابن أبي طالب عندكم من الرايخون في العلم.

[٢١٦] وقد ذكر بعض المتكلمين عن شأن هذا الحجر أنه طلسم. وضعه المتقدمون من السحرة ليجلب الناس إليه كل سنة. ولست أشك في صحة ذلك. فإن قال قائل: قد كان ينبغي أن ينقطع الناس عن الحج تلك السنين الذي قلع القرامطة فيها الحجر ومضوا به معهم. في ذلك أن القرامطة لم يحملوه معهم 5 وإنما دفنوه في بطحاء مكة. أخبرني ذلك مشيخة أهل مكة لما مضيت أنا إلى مكة وقت كنت كافراً ضالاً. وهذا دليل على تناقض قولكم في الحجر.

الفصل السابع والعشرون

[٢١٧] وأعجب من هذا أنهم إذا قضوا حجهم ليلة عيد النحر وأصبحوا يوم العيد، قد جاؤوا إلى موضع يعرف بمنى. مع كل واحد منهم سبعون حصاة قد كسروها من جبل عند المشعر الحرام. فيتراجمون 10 به كالجانين في أربعة أيام. فمن لم يفعل ذلك فقد بطل حجه. فما الفائدة في ذلك؟ وما في هذا مما يرضي الله إذا فعلوه، أو يسخطه إذا تركوه؟ أليس ذلك هو من اللهو والحرق وغباء العقول؟

فصل الثامن والعشرون

[٢١٨] ثم إنهم يذبحون من الماشية ويخرون من الإبل ما يطول شرحه. فإن قال قائل لنا: في هذا آية الدم، لأننا نذبح هذا الذبائح كلها، ونجمع دم ذلك والأوساخ في ذلك الوادي، مما يضاف إلى 15

عن أبيه: أن محمد (ابن) الحنفية - وهو ابن علي ابن أبي طالب، قال: سمعت أبي علي ابن أبي P omits [طالب 1
C] ضالاً 7 المتقدمين [المتقدمون 3 Manuscript P ends here. الأودية || ان C] عن || طالب
C] ونجمع 15 C 69^v [و 12 لجانين C] كالجانين 11 يقال له المرذلة C adds [جبل 10 مضافاً إلى
تجمع

about the Black Stone. He replied: "Isn't it only one of the stones of these valleys?" So 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib testified that it was like the rest of these stones. 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib, according to you is one of the pillars of knowledge.⁴⁷¹

[216] Some of those who spoke on the subject of this stone mentioned that it was a talisman. The ancients among the magicians produced it in order for people to come back to [Mecca] every year. I don't doubt the truth of that. Suppose someone says: "People should have ceased doing pilgrimage during these years when the Qarmatians ripped off the stone and they took it away with them." Regarding that, the Qarmatians did not take it with them, rather they buried it in a valley in Mecca. The leaders of the Meccan people told me that when I went to Mecca when I was a straying unbeliever.⁴⁷² This proves that your statement about the stone is contradictory.

Chapter 27

[217] More strange than this is that when they conclude their pilgrimage on the evening before the celebration of the sacrifice, they wake up to the Day of Celebration and they go to a place known as Mina. Every one of them has seventy⁴⁷³ stones which they broke off from a mountain near the sacred station. Then then throw stones like crazy people over the course of four days. Whoever does not do that, his pilgrimage has been invalidated.⁴⁷⁴ But what is the point of that? Which part of this will satisfy God if they do it, or make him angry if they abandon it? Isn't that just a bit of amusement and foolishness and lacking sense?

Chapter 28

[218] Then they sacrifice cattle and camels which would take a long time to explain. Suppose someone says to us: "In this blood is a sign, because we

471 By referring to 'Alī as a pillar of knowledge, Ibn Rajā' is alluding to Q 3:7 ("But no one knows its interpretation except God and those firmly grounded in knowledge"), which the Shī'a understood as referring to the imams. This suggests that Ibn Rajā' is directing his comment at Fatimid Ismā'īlī Muslims here.

472 Ibn Rajā' made the pilgrimage to Mecca at least once, just prior to his conversion to Christianity which occurred during his return from Mecca to Cairo.

473 This number is not inaccurate, as that many stones were needed in order to hit each side of each wall seven times. See al-Nu'man, *The Pillars of Islam*, 404.

474 On these details such as making sacrifices, gathering at Mina, and throwing rocks at the walls, see "Al-Hadjdj," *EI*², 3:36.

ذلك من هذا الحجارة التي نرميها. فلو بقي ذلك في موضع لا اجتماع منه على طول السنين ما يسد ذلك الوادي. فإذا جئنا في السنة الآتية فلم نجد في ذلك الوادي من ذلك كله شيئاً، فنحن أنّ ذلك قد رفع إلى السماء وتقبل الله منا.

[٢١٩] في هذا منجل كذبكم الذي تفتخرون به. ويوهمون مخالفهم الذين لم يروا ذلك الموضع بالحال. والدليل على كذبهم أنّ الأمطار في بلد الحجازة أعظم من أمطار مما سواه من البلدان. فإذا جاءت 5 الأمطار والسيول، جرت تلك الحجارة والأوساخ ولو كان أضعاف ذلك. حتى أنّه إذا جاء الشتاء يجير من الصخور ما لو ذكرنا ذلك لم يحتمله عقل من لم يشاهده، ولم يصدق به. ولهذا قد أتاهم السيل غير سنة وهم في ذلك الموضع، فخرّهم ومحاملهم وجمالهم وما معهم، ولم يعرف لهم خبر. فإذا الدليل على قولهم - إذ لم يروا ذلك الحصا الذي يتراجمون به ولا شيئاً من ذلك الدماء - أنّ ذلك قبل منهم ورفع إلى السماء؟ فكذبوا، وهي السيول تأتي عليه فلا بقي من ذلك شيئاً.

10

الفصل التاسع والعشرون

[٢٢٠] آيات تنقض آيات غيرهن والحديث.

[٢٢١] قال لهم في سورة البقرة: يَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الْخَمْرِ وَالْمَيْسِرِ قُلْ فِيهِمَا إِثْمٌ كَبِيرٌ وَمَنَافِعُ لِلنَّاسِ. والميسر عندهم القمار. وقد قال أنّ في الخمر منافع للناس من أمراض تلحقهم، وعلاجات يضطرون 15 إلى إضافة الخمر إليها. فما المنفعة أيضاً في القمار حتى جعل لكم فيه بعض الرخصة؟ وما منفعة القمار في الأبدان للأدوية والعلاجات كمنفعة الخمر الذي هو غفلة وقلة تمييز، بمن جعل منفعة القمار كمنفعة الخمر.

C adds [ما 7] يخمر || يجير || ذلك [C] تلك 6 فما [C] مما 5 فيقن [C] فنحن 2 لا جميع [C] لا اجتماع 1
C has this word [القمار 14] كثير [C] كبير || فيها [C] فيها 13 70² [C] السماء 10 فذا [C] فإذا 8 أنا
C does not contain this [في || في] سورة الأعراف [C] قال || placed later in the next sentence.
المسير عندهم [C] من أمراض تلحقهم [C] تلتحقهم || emendation

made all of these sacrifices, and we gathered the blood and filth in that valley, in addition to these stones which we have thrown. If that stayed in one place, then throughout the years, what was gathered from it would fill up that valley. So if we come the next year and we don't find any of those things in that valley, then we would know for certain that that had been lifted up to Heaven and God accepted it from us."

[219] In this matter is the crux of your lies about which you boast. They deceive their opponents, who have not seen that place, into believing the impossible. The proof against their lies is that the rains in the Hijaz region are greater than the rains in other countries. When the rains and the floods come, it will take away these stones and filth even if there were more than that. When winter comes, it would even take boulders, which if I were to mention that, the minds of those who did not witness it, would not think it true. Another year the flood came, and they were in that place, and it washed them away and their belongings and their camels and what they had, and no further news about them was known. What is the proof of their statement – since they did not see those stones which they threw nor any of that blood – that that was accepted from them and raised up to Heaven? So they lied, and it is the floods that took it away and nothing of that remained.

Chapter 29⁴⁷⁵

[220] On verses contradicting others and the hadith.

[221] He said to them in sura "The Cow": "They ask you about alcohol and gambling. Say: 'In them is great sin, yet [some] benefits for the people.'"⁴⁷⁶ The word "gambling," in their view, [refers to] "betting." He said that alcohol is beneficial to people for diseases that afflict them, such as for treatments that they had no choice but to add wine to them. However, what is the point of gambling, that he gave you some license in it? How does gambling benefit bodies for medicine and treatments, such as alcohol's benefit? This is stupidity and lack of discernment in one who would make gambling's benefit equivalent to alcohol's benefit.

475 This chapter is about alcohol and gambling in the Qur'an and contends that Muslims apply inconsistent legal rulings regarding alcohol consumption. The fact that alcohol was being consumed by Muslims is assumed by Q 4:43 that forbids praying while drunk.

476 Q 2:219.

[٢٢٢] قال في سورة الأعراف: قُلْ إِنَّمَا حَرَّمَ رَبِّي الْفَوَاحِشَ مَا ظَهَرَ مِنْهَا وَمَا بَطَنَ وَالْإِثْمَ. وأعلمهم في قوله في الخمر والميسر أنه إثم والإثم هو حرام. وقال في سورة المائدة: وَإِنَّمَا الْخَمْرُ وَالْمَيْسِرُ وَالْأَنْصَابُ وَالْأَزْلَامُ رِجْسٌ مِّنْ عَمَلِ الشَّيْطَانِ فَاجْتَنِبُوهُ. فأعلمهم فيما تقدم أنه حرام وأمرهم باجتنابه في هذا السورة.

[٢٢٣] ثم قال لهم في سورة النحل ما ينقض هذا كله. وهو قوله: وَمِن ثَمَرَاتِ النَّخِيلِ وَالْأَعْنَابِ 5 تَتَّخِذُونَ مِنْهُ سَكَرًا وَرِزْقًا حَسَنًا. فمدح لهم في هذا السورة الخمرة وحسنها لهم. وأمرهم باستعمالها لأنه قال: تَتَّخِذُونَ، وهذا أمر. بعد أمرهم ثم قال: فَسَكَرًا وَرِزْقًا حَسَنًا. فنقض هذا ما تقدم من نهيه لهم عنها. وقال في سورة الأنعام ما دلهم على أنها ليست بحرام، حيث يقول: قُلْ لَا أَجِدُ فِي مَا أُوحِيَ إِلَيَّ مُحَرَّمًا عَلَى طَاعِمٍ يَطْعَمُهُ إِلَّا أَنْ يَكُونَ مَيْتَةً أَوْ دَمًا مَّسْفُوحًا أَوْ لَحْمَ خَنزِيرٍ فَإِنَّهُ رِجْسٌ أَوْ فِسْقًا أُهِلَّ لِغَيْرِ اللَّهِ بِهِ. فأعلمهم أن كلاهما طعمه أظهر للإنسان حلال غير الدم والميتة ولحم الخنزير وما ذبح لغير الله. 10 والطعم عندهم يدخل فيه الأكل والشرب. فخرمها عليهم في مواضع، وأحلها لهم في مواضع. وهذا تناقض واختلاف مع هذا.

[٢٢٤] روايتكم عن عبد الله ابن مسعود أنه قال: كنت مع محمد في بعض أسفاره وجاءت الصلاة. فأمرني أن آتيه بوضوء. فقلت: خمرًا؟ فقال: خمرة طيبة وماء طهور. فتوضأ منها للصلاة. فقلت له: ما تقول في شربها يا رسول الله؟ فقال: حلالاً جائزاً لا بأس به. لولا أنه يدعوا إلى التخليط والمكاره. 15

C [الخمرة 6 النحل] [النخيل] || تمرت C [ثمرات 5 أن C] في 2 يظن C [بطن] || حرام C [حرم 1
 فمدح لهم في هذا السورة margin C [حسناً 7 وحسناً] || مسفوحاً؛ wording unclear
 اخره مسفوحاً وحسناً لهم وامرهم ما سس؟ ال لنا لانه قال تتخذون وهذا امره بعد امرهم تمر قال، فسكرا
 فلان ماماديوس C [محمد 13 مسفوكاً] [مسفوحاً 9 جدد C [أجد] || 70^v C [قل 8 وززفا حسناً؟
 شرب C adds [شربها 15 فتوضى C] فتوضأ 14

[222] He said in sura “The Heights”: “Say: My Lord has indeed forbidden immoralities – what is apparent of them and what is concealed – and sin.”⁴⁷⁷ He taught them in his statement about alcohol and gambling that they are a sin and sin is forbidden. He said in sura “The Table”: “Rather, alcohol, gambling, [sacrificing on] stone altars, and divining arrows are defilement from Satan’s work, so avoid it.”⁴⁷⁸ So he taught them in what came prior in this sura that it is forbidden and he commanded them to avoid it.

[223] Then he said to them in sura “The Bees” what contradicts all of this. It is his statement: “And from the fruits of the palm trees and grapevines, you shall take an intoxicant and good provision.”⁴⁷⁹ So he praised alcohol to them in this sura and presented it as a good thing for them. He commanded them to make use of it because he said “you shall take” and this is a command. After he commanded them, then he said “an intoxicant and good provision.” But this contradicted what preceded about forbidding it for them. He said in sura “The Cattle” what proves to them that it is not forbidden, when he says: “Say: I do not find within that which was revealed to me [anything] forbidden to one who would eat it, unless it is carrion or blood or pork flesh – it is impure – or it is [slaughtered in] disobedience, without [invoking] God.”⁴⁸⁰ So he taught them that its taste was clearly permissible for the people, except for blood and carrion and pork flesh and whatever was sacrificed to something other than God [i.e., idol sacrifices]. [The term] “tasting,” in their view, includes eating and drinking. So he prohibited it for them in [some] places, and he permitted it for them in [other] places. This is a contradiction and a disagreement with that.

[224] You reported from ‘Abd Allāh ibn Mas‘ūd that he said: “I was with Muḥammad during some of his travels and the time of prayer came. He commanded me to bring him something to cleanse with. So I said: ‘Is alcohol [acceptable]?’ He replied: ‘Alcohol is good and water is pure’. So he used it to cleanse for prayer. Then I said to him: ‘What do you say about drinking it, God’s Messenger?’ He replied: ‘It is permitted and allowed; there is no problem with it, unless [drinking] leads you to mixing [with women] and reprehensible deeds.’”⁴⁸¹

477 Q 7:33.

478 Q 5:90.

479 Q 16:67.

480 Q 6:145.

481 The source of this account, except for the final statement of permissibility for wine, is found in Ibn Mājah, *Sunan Ibn Mājah*, 1:306–307 (Book 1, #384–385). There are other hadith accounts that wine can be mixed with water for ablutions prior to prayer. See for instance the examples in Abū Dāwūd, *Sunan Abu Dawud*, 1:71–72 (Book 1, Chapter 42 “Wuḍū’ using al-Nabīdh,” #84, 86).

[٢٢٥] فقد رويت عن نبيكم أنه توضأ وصلّى به. وجهالكم إذا وقع الخمر على ثوب أحدكم لم يجوز له الصلاة فيها، أو ينقعها بالماء. وأجهل منهم من لا يقنعه ظهور ذلك أو يقرضه بالمقراض. ولا بالقرآن عملوا ولا بفعل نبيهم في توضيئته به في الصلاة اقتدوا. وليس كل المسلمين يحرمون الخمر. غير أنّ أبا حنيفة - واسمه النعمان ابن ثابت - وهو فقيه أهل العراق، فإنه لم يحرم ذلك ما لم يسكر منه شاربه. وأما السكر فهو عنده حرام. وهذا قول مستحسن وأقرب إلى الصواب من قول مخالفه. 5

[٢٢٦] وتابعه على قوله محمد ابن الحسن، وأبو يوسف القاضي، وشربل ابن أبي يمن، وسفيان الثوري، وسفيان ابن عيينة، ويحيى ابن أكثم القاضي، وحماة ابن سليمان، والأعمش، وداود ابن أبي هند، وجماعة أهل العراق، ومن يقول بقولهم. وروي من غير طريق آخر أن عمر ابن الخطاب كان يشربه، وأحل من استحل شربه بالآية التي ذكرها في سورة النحل والآية الذي في سورة الأنعام.

C [الثوري]، 7 سفين C [وسفيان] || C 71^r [على] 6 بالمقراط C [بالمقراض] 2 توضى وصلا C [وصلّى] 1
العمر C [عمر] 8 عتبية C [عيينة] || سفين C [وسفيان] || التوزي

[225] You report from your prophet that he ablated and prayed with it. As for your ignorant ones, if one of them spills wine upon his clothing, it is not permitted for him to pray in it, until he would soak it with water.⁴⁸² The most ignorant among them are not convinced by that demonstration or examining it in detail. They did not act according to the Qur'an, nor in taking their prophet as an example in using [alcohol] to cleanse for prayer. Not all Muslims forbid alcohol. But Abū Ḥanīfa – and his name is al-Nu'mān ibn Thābit⁴⁸³ – and he is the jurist of the Iraqi people, he did not forbid that as long as its drinker did not become drunk from it.⁴⁸⁴ As for drunkenness, it is forbidden according to him. This ruling is considered trustworthy and closer to hitting the mark than his opponents' opinion.

[226] Following him about his ruling is Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥasan,⁴⁸⁵ and Abū Yūsuf al-Qādī,⁴⁸⁶ and Shurāḥbīl ibn Abī Yaman,⁴⁸⁷ and Sufyān al-Thawrī,⁴⁸⁸ and Sufyān ibn 'Uyayna,⁴⁸⁹ and Yaḥyā ibn Aktham al-Qādī,⁴⁹⁰ and Ḥammād ibn [Abī] Sulaymān,⁴⁹¹ and al-A'mash,⁴⁹² and Dāwūd ibn Abī Hind,⁴⁹³ and the rest of the Iraqi people, and whoever agrees with their rulings. It was reported from another source that 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb used to drink [alcohol] and he condoned whoever permitted its drinking using the verse which was mentioned in sura "The Bee"⁴⁹⁴ and the verse which is in sura "The Cat-

482 The rule that a Muslim should not pray in clothing that has been dirtied comes from a number of hadith accounts.

483 On Abū Ḥanīfa al-Nu'mān ibn Thābit (d. 767), the founder of the Ḥanafī school, see Sezgin, *GAS*, 409–419; *EI*², 1:123.

484 According to the Ḥanafī school, alcohol derived from grapes or dates was forbidden. However, alcohol from other sources such as honey, barley, wheat, or millet would be acceptable since they are not *khamr* or *nabīdh*. Even wine (*nabīdh*) was permitted for medical necessity. Clearly this understanding was exercised at the time at which Ibn Rajā' was writing and continues to be a point of dispute even today among Muslims. See "Khamr," *EI*² 4:994–996.

485 Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥasan al-Shaybānī (d. 805); Sezgin, *GAS*, 421–433.

486 Abū Yūsuf al-Qādī (d. 798); Sezgin, *GAS*, 419–421.

487 Shurāḥbīl ibn Abī Yaman (d. 741); Sezgin, *GAS*, 279.

488 On Sufyān al-Thawrī, see Sezgin, *GAS*, 518–519; *EI*², 9:770.

489 On Sufyān ibn 'Uyayna, see Sezgin, *GAS*, 96; *EI*², 9:772.

490 On Yaḥyā ibn Aktham al-Qādī (d. 857), see Wafik Nasry, "Abū Qurrah, al-Ma'mūn and Yaḥyā ibn al-Aktham," *Parole de l'Orient* 32 (2007): 285–290.

491 Ḥammād ibn Abī Sulaymān (d. 738); Sezgin, *GAS*, 404–405.

492 Sulaymān ibn Mihrān al-Asadī al-A'mash (d. 765); *EI*², 1:431.

493 Dāwūd ibn Abī Hind (d. 754/5 or 756/7); *EI*², 1:104.

494 Q 16:67.

والحديث والآيات المقدم ذكرها قد نقضها ما بعدها وهو قوله: لَا تَقْرَبُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَأَنْتُمْ سُكَارَى حَتَّى تَعْلَمُوا مَا تَقُولُونَ. وهذا تناقض واختلاف، آية ينقضها القياس.

الفصل الثلاثون

[٢٢٧] أمرهم في سورة البقرة إذا طلق الرجل زوجته ثلاثة طلاقات لا يرجعها حتى تنكح رجل غيره. فإذا طلقها وأوفت عدتها رجعت إلى الأول إن اختار ذلك. فإن وطئها الزوج الثاني وهي حائض، لم 5 تحل للأول حتى يطأها وهي طاهرة. وإن وطئها وأحليله غير قائم، لم تحل للأول حتى يطأها وأحليله قائم. وأخذوا في ذلك بحديث الامرأة التي جاءت إلى علي ابن أبي طالب فقالت له: يا أمير المؤمنين، إن زوجي طلقني البتة. وتزوجت رجلاً غيره لأستحل به وأرجع إلى زوجي الأول. فوطئني ولم يكن 10 أحليله قائم. فهل أحل للأول؟ فقال: لا والله أو هزك به هزاً، أو يهوك به هواً. وأوماً إليها بذراعه.

[٢٢٨] نقول لهم اخبرونا عن صاحبكم، ما أراد بهذا؟ يضع هذا السنة القبيحة الشنعة التي قد 10 جعلتكم عند سائر الأمم فضيحة ونكلاً. فإن قالوا لنا: جعل ذلك أدباً يؤدبنا به إذا اطلقنا ثلاثة البتة. فجعل لنا الفسحة في الطلقة الأولى والثانية، فن تعدى الثالثة جعل عقوبته أن لا يرجع إليها ولا تحل له حتى تنكح زوجاً غيره. ليزدجر ويتعظ ولا يعود.

[أمير 7 فإن C إن] || أفيت C وأوفت 5 التلتون C [الثلاثون 3 تقولوا C [تقولون 2 قولوا C] قوله 1
تعدا C [تعدى 12 عنا C لنا] || نكلاً C [ونكلاً 11 يوضع C [يضع 10 71^v C] هزاً 9 مير C

tle.”⁴⁹⁵ The hadith and the previously mentioned [examples] were contradicted by what came after it, which was his statement: “Do not come to prayer when you are drunk until you know what you are saying.”⁴⁹⁶ This is a contradiction and an inconsistency, a verse is contradicted by logical analogy.

Chapter 30

[227] He commanded them in sura “The Cow” that if a man divorced his wife three times, he cannot return to her until she marries another man.⁴⁹⁷ If [the other man] divorces her and she completes her number of days,⁴⁹⁸ she can return to the first one if he agrees to that. If her second husband had sex with her while she was menstruating, she is not permitted [to return] to the first one until he has sex with her while she is clean. If he has sex with her while his penis was not erect, she will not be permitted [to return] to the first one until he has sex with her while his penis is erect. In that case, they depended upon a hadith of the woman who came to ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib and said to him: “Commander of the Believers, my husband divorced me permanently. I married another man in order to get permission and return to my first husband. He had sex with me while his penis was not erect. So will I be permitted [to return] to the first one?” He replied: “No, by God, unless he shakes you to and fro with it, or he falls down upon you with it.” And he made a gesture to her with his hand.⁴⁹⁹

[228] We say to them: Tell us about your companion, what did he mean by this? He instituted this shameful and despicable tradition which has made you disgraced and contemptible among all peoples. Suppose they answer us: “He made that a punishment to penalize us with it if we made three divorces permanently. So he gave us freedom in the first and second divorces, and whoever gets the third one, he made his punishment that he cannot return to her and she is not permitted for him until she has married another man. So he would refrain [from divorce] and take it as a lesson and never go back to it.”

495 Q 6:145.

496 Q 4:43.

497 Q 2:230.

498 Islamic law requires a waiting period of three months, in order that if a woman became pregnant the father of the child would be clear.

499 This narrative is attributed to ‘Alī ibn Ṭālib and therefore is most likely a Shī‘ī hadith.

[٢٢٩] فنقول لهذا القائل: رأيت إذا استحلّت برجل غيره ورجعت إلى زوجها الأول ولم يزدجر ولم يتعظ. ولم ينفع فيه ذلك الأدب الذي أدبتموه به وعاد فطلقها الرابعة. هل تأمروه ألا يرجعها ولا تستحل؟ وهم على هذا مجمعون.

[٢٣٠] فنقول لهم: قد أخطأتم القياس، ونقصتم من أدبه. فينبغي لكم أن تأمروه لا يرجعها أو يطأها له رجلان مسلمان جليدين. وإن طلقها الخامسة لا يراجعها أو يطأها له أربعة رجال. وكلما زاد في طلاقها، زدتم في أدبه وحاسبتموه بهذا الحساب. لأنّ الجاهل إذا عمل ما لا يجوز، فوجدوه وأدبوه. فلم ينفع ذلك فيه، وعاده ثانياً زيد في أدبه على هذا المعنى. وهذا جهل من القول وحمق. ونحن نرغب أنفسنا عن ذكر ذلك. ونرغب لمن انتهى إليه كتابنا هذا من أخوتنا المسيحيين عن سماع ذلك. وإثماً بيناً عوارهم وجهلهم، وبالله نستعين على ذلك.

[٢٣١] وأعجب من هذا قوله في سورة النساء: يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ لِيُبَيِّنَ لَكُمْ وَيَهْدِيَكُمْ سُنَنَ الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ. فأعلمهم أنّ جميع هذا السنن التي وضعها لهم كانت سنن من كان قبلهم من النصارى واليهود. وحاشا الله من أن يكون ذكر ذلك في سنننا أو في التوراة. وإنّ هذا كذب ومحال.

[فصل]

[٢٣٢] ذكر المعراج.

[٢٣٣] قال لهم في سورة بني إسرائيل: سُبْحَانَ الَّذِي أَسْرَى بِعَبْدِهِ لَيْلًا مِنَ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ إِلَى الْمَسْجِدِ الْأَقْصَى - يعني بيت المقدس - الَّذِي بَارَكْنَا حَوْلَهُ. وتفيد هذا الآية أنّه صلّى ذات يوم بالناس

C [لِيُبَيِّنَ] 10 و C adds [المسيحيين] 8 C 72^f [من || عادوا] C [وعاده] 7 من C adds [وحاسبتموه] 6

صلا C [صلّى] || نارما C [بَارَكْنَا] 16 من C [الَّذِي] 15 كانوا C adds [من || يبين

[229] So we say to this speaker: “You see, suppose she used another man to become permissible and she returned to her first husband and he did not refrain or take it as a lesson. That punishment by which you penalized him was not useful and he divorced her a fourth time. Would you command him not to return to her unless she be made permissible?” They all agree about it.

[230] So we say to them: “Your logical analogy is mistaken, and you have reduced his chastisement. It makes sense for you to command him not to return her until two steadfast Muslims have sex with her. If he divorced her for a fifth time, she should not be able to return [to him] until four men have sex with her. Every time he increased the number of divorces, you should have increased his punishment and make him render an account for this. Because when an ignorant one does what is not allowed, they find him and punish him. That did not work with him, and he did it again, his chastisement should be increased according to this way. This is ignorance of speech and foolishness.” As for ourselves, we loathe any mention of that. Whoever among our Christian brothers which my book might reach, I loathe [for them] to hear that. Rather I clarified [the Muslims’] ignorance and blindness, and I ask for God’s help in that.

[231] What is even more strange than this is his statement in sura “The Women”: “God wants to make it clear for you and guide you to the practices of those who were before you.”⁵⁰⁰ So he taught them that all of these traditions which he instituted for them were practices of those that came before them among the Christians and the Jews. Far be it from God to mention that in our laws or in the Torah. This is a lie and impossible.

[Section 1]

[232] On [Muḥammad’s] Night Journey.⁵⁰¹

[233] He said to them in sura “The People of Israel”: “Exalted is he who took his servant by night from the holy mosque to the furthest mosque” – meaning Jerusalem – “whose surroundings we have blessed.”⁵⁰² This verse indicates

500 Q 4:26.

501 This section is devoted to Muḥammad’s Night Journey from Mecca to Jerusalem and then into the seven heavens. The *isrā’* refers to the night journey, while the *mi’rāj* refers to the ascension, but this section is on the entire night journey event. Ibn Rajā’ faithfully follows the same account of events as they are told in the canonical hadith collections and commentaries on Q 17:1. See “Mi’rāj,” *EI²*, 7:97–100. For some hadith versions, see al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, 4:272–276 (Book 59, #3207), 5:132–136 (Book 63, #3887); and Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, 1:259–263 (Book 1, #411). See also al-Ṭabarī, *The History of al-Ṭabarī: Muḥammad at Mecca*, transl. W. Montgomery Watt and M.V. McDonald (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1988), 6:78–80; and al-Ṭabarī, *Tafsīr al-Ṭabarī*, 14:411–448.

502 Q 17:1.

صلاة الصبح. فلما فرغ من صلاته قال لهم: أيها الناس، أتاني البارحة جبرائيل بعد فراقكم من بعد صلاة العشاء الآخرة. فقال: يا محمد، الله يأمرك أن تزوره. فقلت: وأين أزوره؟ فقال لي: حيث هو. ثم قدم على دابة أكبر من الحمار وأصغر من البغل، إسمها البراق. فقال لي: أركب هذا إلى بيت المقدس. فلما هممت بركوبها نفرت. فقال لها جبرائيل: إثيتي فإن محمد يريد أن يركبك. فقالت له: وقد بعث محمد؟ قال لها: نعم. فقالت: لا أدعه يركبني لما يشفع في (لي) عند ربي. فشفت لها عند ربها ثم ركبها. فمشت بي مشياً رقيقاً، وكانت تضع حافرهما عند منتهى بصرها. فجئت إلى بيت المقدس في أسرع من اللخط وجبرائيل معي. فجاء بي إلى الصخرة وقال لي: أنزل يا محمد فإنك تطلع من هذا الصخرة إلى السماء. فنزل وطرق حلقة وررّه في الصخرة، فأوثق البراق فيها وحملني على منكبها إلى السماء.

[٢٣٤] وهذا الكلام متناقض، وأي عقل يقبل هذا ولا يميز ما فيه من النقص؟ وما الدليل على

أنه جاء من مكة إلى بيت المقدس وصعد من بيت المقدس إلى السماء، ولم يطلع إلى السماء من مكة، ومكة على زعمه أفضل من بيت المقدس؟ وهو أيضاً يقول أنها أقرب البقاع إلى السماء، اللهم أنه يزعم أن الله تعالى جالس على بيت المقدس وليس على مكة. فإن قال ذلك فقد كفر، وإلا فكان ينبغي أن يطلع من أقرب الأماكن وأشرفها.

[٢٣٥] وأما قوله لما أراد أن يركب البراق: امتنعت حتى قال لها جبرائيل هو محمد، فلما عرفت

سألته أن يشفع لها عند الله ربها. فنقول لهم: فهذا دليل على أن الله أخبر سائر البهائم كلهم أمره وحاله ووقت خروجه. فلما قال لها جبرائيل هو محمد، اطمأنت لذلك لما عندها من العلم فيه قبل ذلك الوقت. فلم تتلكأ ولم تحتاج أن تستفهم لذلك لما سبق من علمها له. فلم يتخالجهما في ذلك شك. فقد كان ينبغي أن يبين الله حاله للناس بياناً شافياً كما بينه للدواب. ويتقن ذلك في قلوبهم إتقاناً لا يتخالجهم فيه شك، كما أتقنه في قلوب البهائم حتى لا يشك فيه أحداً من بني آدم. وإلا فما الفائدة أن يعرف ذلك الدواب حتى لا يشكون فيه ولا يعرف ذلك بني آدم حتى لا يشكون فيه؟

C [تضع] 6 72^v C [قال] 5 فلان C [محمد] || فلان C [محمد] 4 فلان C [محمد] 2 البار C [البارحة] 1
البراق فيها وحملني على منببه لي السماء وهذا C margin [متناقض] 9 فلان C [محمد] || لجابني C [بي] 7 تدع
اطمننت C [اطمأنت] || فلان C [محمد] 16 فلان C [محمد] 14 له C adds [وليس] 12 الكلام متناقض
لا C adds [لا] 18 73^r C [فقد] || تنكاكا C [تلكأ] 17

that one day he prayed the morning prayer with the people. When he finished his prayer he said to them: "People, yesterday Gabriel came to me after leaving you, after the night prayers. [Gabriel] said: 'Muḥammad, God commands you to visit Him'. So I said: 'Where may I visit Him?' He replied to me: 'Where He is'. Then he brought an animal greater than a donkey and smaller than a mule whose name was al-Burāq. So he said to me: 'Ride this to the Holy House [in Jerusalem]'. When I began to mount it, it bolted. So Gabriel said to it: 'Stay there, Muḥammad wants to mount you'. So it said to him: 'Has Muḥammad been commissioned?' He replied to it: 'Yes'. Then it said: 'I will not let him mount me until he pleads [on my behalf] with my Lord'. So I interceded for it with its Lord; then I mounted. It carried me with soft steps, and it would put its hooves as far as it could see. So I reached Jerusalem in the blink of an eye and Gabriel was with me. He brought me to the Rock [on the Temple Mount] and he said to me: 'Get down, Muḥammad so that you may ascend to Heaven from this Rock'. So [Gabriel] came down and he struck a ring and he screwed it into the Rock, and he tied al-Burāq into it and he carried me upon his shoulders to Heaven."

[234] This story is contradictory, and what mind could accept this and could not recognize the flaws in it? What is the proof that he went from Mecca to Jerusalem and ascended from Jerusalem to Heaven, and did not go up to Heaven from Mecca, while Mecca, according to his claim, is better than Jerusalem? In addition, he says that [Mecca] is the closest spot to Heaven, unless he alleges that God sits at Jerusalem and He is not at Mecca. If he said that, then he entered unbelief, since he should have ascended from the closest of places and the most honorable of them.

[235] Now for his statement that when he wanted to mount al-Burāq "it bolted until Gabriel told it he was Muḥammad, so when it understood, it asked him to intercede for it before God its Lord." We reply to them: "This is a proof that God informed all of the creatures of [Muḥammad's] affair, and his situation and the time of his commission. So when Gabriel told [al-Burāq] it was Muḥammad, that reassured it, since it had some knowledge about him prior to that time. So it did not hesitate and did not need to question because of its previous knowledge about him. There was no doubt about that to trouble it. So it makes sense that God would explain his situation to the people with a complete explanation, just as he clarified it to the animals. He should set that in their hearts perfectly so that doubt about him would not trouble them, just as he perfected it in the animals' hearts, so that not one of the children of Adam would doubt him. Nevertheless, what is the point of the animals knowing that in order not to doubt him, while the children of Adam would not know that, so that they don't doubt him?"

[٢٣٦] وَإِنَّمَا أَنهَا أَكْبَرَ مِنَ الْحَمَارِ وَأَصْغَرَ مِنَ الْبَعْلِ، وَأَنهَا مَشَتْ بِهِ مَشْيًا رَقِيقًا، وَكَانَتْ تَدَعُ حَافِرَهَا عِنْدَ مَتْنِي بَصْرَهَا، فَهَذَا مَا لَا يَقْبَلُهُ الْعَقْلُ وَلَا يَلِيْقُ بِهِ. وَلِعَمْرِي إِنَّ فِي قَدْرَةِ اللَّهِ أَعْظَمَ مِنْ هَذَا. وَلَكِنَّهُ لَمَّا جَاءَ بِهَذَا الْكَلَامِ - كُلُّهُ فَاسِدٌ لَا يَقْبَلُهُ الْعَقْلُ وَلَا الْقِيَاسُ - تَكَلَّمْنَا عَلَى كُلِّ فَصْلٍ مِنْهُ بِمَا يَشَاكُهُ. وَلَوْ قَالَ أَنَّ: جِبْرَائِيلَ أَصْعَدَنِي السَّمَاءَ مِنْ مَكَّةَ، لَكَانَ انْطِبَاعٌ ذَلِكَ فِي الْعَقُولِ أَقْرَبَ مِنْ انْطِبَاعِ هَذَا الْحَالِ. وَاحْضُرْ لَهُ فِي الْقَوْلِ.

5

[٢٣٧] وَأَمَّا قَوْلُهُ: ضَرَبَ حَلْقَةَ وَرِزْهَا لَثْلًا تَفَلَّتْ، فَكَيْفَ يَنْبَغِي هَذَا أَنْ يَكُونَ لَهَا مِنَ الْعَقْلِ مَا عَلِمْتَ بِهِ أَنَّهُ نَبِيٌّ وَانْبَعَثَ، وَسَأَلْتَهُ أَنْ يَشْفَعَ فِيهَا عِنْدَ رَبِّهَا؟ مِنْ كَانَ يَعْقِلُ لِهَذَا كُلِّهِ؟ مَا كَانَ يَنْبَغِي لِجِبْرَائِيلَ أَنْ يَأْمُرَهَا بِأَنْ تَقِفَ - لِهَذَا الَّذِي شَفَعَ فِيهَا عِنْدَ اللَّهِ - إِلَى أَنْ يَنْزَلَ فِي رِكَبِهَا. وَإِنَّمَا شَدَّهَا جِبْرَائِيلُ لَثْلًا تَفَلَّتْ. وَهَذَا دَلِيلٌ عَلَى أَنَّهَا لَوْ أَفَلَّتْ بَعَثَ جِبْرَائِيلَ فِي طَلَبِهَا أَوْ لَعَلَّهُ لَا يَجِدُهَا أَصْلًا.

10

[٢٣٨] وَأَمَّا قَوْلُهُ أَنَّهَا لَمْ تَمَكَّنْهُ مِنْ رُكُوبِهَا حَتَّى سَأَلْتَهُ أَنْ يَشْفَعَ لَهَا عِنْدَ رَبِّهَا، فَهَذَا دَلِيلٌ عَلَى أَنَّ الدُّوَابَّ يَحَاسِبُونَ وَيَدْخُلُونَ النَّارَ وَيَحْتَاجُونَ إِلَى الشَّفَاعَةِ. وَهَذَا اخْتِلَافٌ فِي الْقَوْلِ وَالْجَهْلِ.

[٢٣٩] ثُمَّ رَجَعْنَا إِلَى الْحَدِيثِ: فَلَمَّا انْتَهَيْنَا إِلَى سَمَاءِ الدُّنْيَا قَرَعَ جِبْرَائِيلُ الْبَابَ، فَقِيلَ لَهُ: مَنْ هَذَا؟ فَقَالَ: أَنَا جِبْرَائِيلُ. قِيلَ لَهُ: وَمَنْ مَعَكَ؟ قَالَ: مُحَمَّدٌ. قَالَ: وَقَدْ بَعَثَ؟ قَالَ: نَعَمْ. - وَهَذَا دَلِيلٌ عَلَى أَنَّ الْمَلَائِكَةَ لَا يَسْتَطِيعُونَ أَنْ يَلْجُوا السَّمَاءَ وَيَقْرَعُونَ الْبَابَ، وَلَا يَنْبَغِي لِحَفِظَةِ الْبَابِ أَنْ يَفْتَحُوا لِأَحَدٍ مِنَ الْمَلَائِكَةِ حَتَّى يَقُولُونَ لَهُ مِنْ مَعَكَ، فَإِنْ كَانَ مَعَهُ مَنْ يَكْرَهُونَهُ لَمْ يَفْتَحُوا لَهُ وَلَا الْمَلَائِكَةُ - قَالَ: تَفْتَحُوا لَنَا الْبَابَ.

15

[٢٤٠] قَالَ: قَرَأْتِ مِنَ الْمَلَائِكَةِ قَوْمًا - وَصَفَهُمْ لَوْ أَتَيْنَاهُ عَلَى آخِرِهِ لَطَالَ الشَّرْحَ بِغَيْرِ فَائِدَةٍ - قَالَ: فَصَلِّتِ بِهِمْ رَكَعَتَيْنِ وَدَعَوْتِ لَهُمْ. ثُمَّ انْطَلَقَ بِي جِبْرَائِيلُ إِلَى السَّمَاءِ الثَّانِيَةِ وَبَيْنَهَا وَبَيْنَ سَمَاءِ الدُّنْيَا مَسِيرَةٌ خَمْسَمِائَةِ عَامٍ. فَدُقَ الْبَابُ فَقِيلَ لَهُ: مَنْ هَذَا؟ فَقَالَ: جِبْرَائِيلُ. قِيلَ: وَمَنْ مَعَكَ؟ فَقَالَ: مُحَمَّدٌ. قِيلَ: وَقَدْ بَعَثَ؟ قَالَ: نَعَمْ. فَفَتَحَ لَنَا الْبَابَ وَدَخَلْنَا إِلَى السَّمَاءِ الثَّلَاثَةِ. فَارَيْتِ مِنَ الْمَلَائِكَةِ مَا هُوَ أَعْظَمُ مِنَ الْأَوَّلِ.

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[236] Regarding that [al-Burāq] was bigger than a donkey and smaller than a mule, and that it carried him with soft steps, and it would put its hooves as far as it could see, this is something the mind cannot accept and it is not worthy of [God]. By my life, the power of God is stronger than this. But when he came up with this story – all of which is corrupt; mind and logical analogy could not accept it – we refuted each section of it with what makes it problematic. If he said that: “Gabriel brought me up to Heaven from Mecca,” then the minds’ impression of that would be more appealing [to accept] than the impression of this impossibility. It would be more reassuring for him in the story.

[237] As for his statement: “he struck a ring and he screwed it so that it would not escape,” how could [al-Burāq] have enough sense to recognize the fact that he was a prophet and he was sent [by God], and it asked him to intercede for it with its Lord? Who can reasonably accept all of this? Gabriel should not have needed to command [al-Burāq] to stay [tied up] – for [Muḥammad] is the one who interceded for it with God – until [they] came back down [from Heaven] so [Muḥammad] could mount it. Rather, Gabriel tied it up so that it would not escape. This is a proof that if [al-Burāq] escaped, Gabriel would need to search for it or perhaps he would not be able to find it in the first place.

[238] As for his statement that [al-Burāq] would not allow him to mount it until it asked him to intercede for it with its Lord, then this is a proof that animals will be held responsible and will enter Hell and they need intercession. There is inconsistency and ignorance in the story.

[239] Now we return to the hadith: “When we reached the first Heaven, Gabriel knocked at the door, then it was said to him: ‘Who is this?’ He replied: ‘I am Gabriel’. It was said to him: ‘Who is with you?’ He said: ‘Muḥammad’. He said: ‘Has he been commissioned?’ He replied: ‘Yes’ – this is a proof that the angels may not enter into Heaven without knocking at the door, and the doorkeepers should not open for any one of the angels until they say to him who is with you. If he had with him someone whom they hated, they would not open for him or for the angel – he said: ‘Open the door for us.’”

[240] [Muḥammad] said: “I saw among the angels a group ...” – their description, if I were to go over the rest of it would take a long time without any point – he continued: “I prayed with them through two prostrations and I appealed [to God] for them. Then Gabriel rushed me to the second Heaven and [the distance] between it and the first Heaven was a five-hundred-year journey. He knocked at the door so it was said to him: ‘Who is this?’ He replied: ‘Gabriel’. It was said: ‘Who is with you?’ He said: ‘Muḥammad’. It was said: ‘Has he been commissioned?’ He replied: ‘Yes’. So he opened the door for us and we entered the third Heaven. I saw among the angels those who were even greater than the first.”

[٢٤١] ثم لم يزل يصف على هذا المعنى من كلام كثير يطول شرحه ووصفه. وإنما اختصرنا إلى أن انتهى إلى السماء السابعة. فوصف خلقاً من الملائكة طول كل واحد منهم بقدر الدنيا كذا وكذا ألف مرة. لأحدهم سبعمائة ألف الف عين، وسبعمائة ألف ألف رأس، وسبعمائة ألف ألف فم، يسبح الله سبعمائة ألف ألف لغة.

- 5 [٢٤٢] وأراني واحد منهم يبكي، فسألته عن بكائه. فقال: لي ذنوب كثيرة فادع الله لي. فشفعت له. ثم سلمني جبرائيل إلى ملاك آخر، وسلمني ذلك إلى آخر، حتى وقفت بين يدي العرش والكرسي. ثم ذكر أن الله جعل يده بين يديه - يعني كتفيه - حتى وجد لها برودة. فقال له: قد فرضت عليك وعلى أمتك خمسين صلاة. ثم نزلنا إلى السماء الرابعة فلقيني موسى، فقال لي: ماذا فرض عليك ربك وعلى أمتك؟ فقلت له: فرض علي وعلى أمتي خمسين صلاة. فقال: إنهم لا يطيقون ذلك فارجع إلى ربك، واسأله التخفيف. فرجعت إلى السماء السابعة من وقتي، ومضيت من وقتي حتى وقفت بين يدي الله في مكاني الأول. فقلت: يا رب، إن أمتي ضعفاء لا يطيقون ذلك. فنقصني عشرة صلوات وجعلها أربعين. فرجعت إلى موسى في السماء الرابعة، فقال: ما كان؟ فقلت: نقصني عشرة. فقال: إنهم لا يطيقون، ارجع إليه. قال: فرجعت إليه ثانية، فنقصني عشرة. ثم رجعت إلى موسى فقال: إنهم لا يطيقون. فلم أزال أرجع إلى الله وموسى يردني إلى أن جعلها خمسة صلوات. فقال لي موسى: لا يطيقون ذلك. فقلت: إني لأستحي من الله لكثرة الطلوع والنزول. فلو أنه قال لربه من السماء الرابعة وهو مع موسى أن أمته لم تطيق ذلك، إنما كان عز وجل يسمعه حتى (لا) يرجع هذا الدفاعات كلها. ثم قال: نزلت إلى بيت المقدس فركبت من بيت المقدس إلى مكة.

- [٢٤٣] كل ذلك والذي مضى (من) الليل أقل من شعيرة. فهل يقبل ذلك المعقول والقياس! ولا خلاف أن الأسماء الذي توصفها الناس من الحال، يزخرونها فتنطبع في العقول أكثر من هذا الحديث. وإن الذي بقي من الحديث أكثر من هذا الذي أتينا به أضعافاً. فلها خبر الناس بذلك ارتد في

بروه C [برودة || تدرته C [ثدييه 7 فشفعت || أوراني C [أوراني 5 C 74^r [طول 2

لا استحي C [لأستحي 15 C 74^v [لا 14 صلوات C [صلوات 11

[241] Then he continued describing this train of thought with many words whose explanation and description would take a long time. But I will abbreviate [the story] until he reached the seventh Heaven. He described one kind of angels, the length of every one of them being equal to the world such-and-such thousand times over. One of them had seven hundred million eyes, and seven hundred billion heads, and seven hundred million mouths, praising God with seven hundred million languages.

[242] [Muḥammad said:] “He showed me one of them who was crying, so I asked him about his crying. So he replied: ‘I have many sins so call upon God for me’. So I interceded for him. Then Gabriel handed me over to another angel, and that one handed me over to another, until I stood in the presence of the throne and the chair.” Then he mentioned that God put His hand between his breasts – meaning shoulder – until he found it cold. Then He said to him: “I have assigned for you and your community fifty [daily] prayers.” “Then we descended to the fourth Heaven and we met Moses, and he said to me: ‘What did your Lord assign for you and your community?’ So I replied to him: ‘He assigned fifty prayers for me and my community’. He said: ‘They cannot bear that, so return to your Lord, and ask Him for a decrease’. So I returned to the seventh Heaven at that time, and I continued immediately until I stood in God’s presence in my former place. Then I said: ‘Lord, my community is weak, they cannot bear that’. So He deducted ten prayers for me and brought them to forty. Then I returned to Moses in the fourth Heaven, and he said: ‘What happened?’ I replied: ‘He reduced it by ten for me’. He said: ‘They cannot bear [that], return to him!’” [Muḥammad] said: “So I returned to Him a second time, and He reduced it by ten. Then I returned to Moses and he said: ‘They cannot bear [that]’. So I continued to return to God and Moses sending me back until He prescribed five prayers. Then Moses said to me: ‘They cannot bear that’. But I said: ‘I am embarrassed to face God for the many times of going up and down.’” If he said to his Lord from the fourth Heaven while he was with Moses that his community could not bear that, then the Almighty and Exalted would have heard him so that he would [not] need to return in all of these instances. Then he said: “I went back to Jerusalem and rode from Jerusalem to Mecca.”

[243] All of that [happened] and what passed of the night was less than a hair length. How could reason and logic accept that! There is no disputing that the accounts which people describe are impossible, they embellish them to make an impression upon minds more than this hadith. What is left from [this] hadith is more than double what we have narrated about it.⁵⁰³ When he told

503 Ibn Rajā’ is referencing the fact that he did not describe the details that occurred in each of the seven heavens leading up to the etiological story of why Muslims pray five times each day.

ذلك اليوم أربعين ألف من كان أسلم. وفي مرة أخرى ستون ألفاً. ففهم من رجع عن جاهليته، ومنهم من خشي من السيف فلاحق بلاد الفرس والروم. ووجدوا النصرارى واليهود الطريق إلى تكذيبه في وجهه وانحل عليه ناموسه في ذلك اليوم.

[٢٤٤] فجاء إليه أبو جهل ابن هشام، فقال له: يا محمد، أنت قلت للناس كما ذكر عنك؟ قال: نعم.

- 5 قال له: أذكره لي بفيك لأسمعه منك. فذكر ذلك، فقال: لم لا كان صعودك نهار لتراك الناس كلهم فيؤمنوا بك ولا يختلف عليك أحداً، ويكون ذلك لك آية عظيمة؟ فقال: فعل الله ما شاء. قال: صدقت، إن الله يفعل ما يشاء. ثم قال له: ولكني أسالك شيء حقيراً غير كبيراً. إن جئت به آمنت بك من وقتي وأهلي وعشيرتي، وجردت سيفي هذا وقتلت به كل مخالفيك، واقتل بين يديك. فقال: وما ذلك يا أبا جهل؟ قال له: أليس أقول لك إصعد إلى السماء الثانية نهاراً لنشاهد ذلك، ولكن ارتفع عن الأرض شبراً واحداً لا غير وهذه السيف من تحتك. فإذا رأيت ذلك آمنت بك. فسقط
- 10 في يديه وبقي حائراً لا يدري ما يصنع. فقال له: يا محمد من طلع إلى سبع سموات بين كل سماء إلى سماء مسيرة خمسمائة عام ورأى ما رأيت، لا يرتفع من الأرض شبراً واحداً لا تجاورنا ... هذا محمد. فقام عليه قريش بأجمعهم فوثبوا عليه، واكسروا رباعيته وسخموا وجهه وخرج من بينهم مطروداً إلى مدينة أخرى. فتلقوه بأحسن لقاء، ولا زال بينهم إلى أن أسلموه عن آخرهم. فلما قوي أمره سار إلى مكة وفتحها.
- 15

2 ...] C فلان C محمد 11 C 75² و 6 لي C له 5 قال C adds C قال 4 النصاره C [النصارى 2
رباعته C [رباعيته 13 فلان محمد C محمد || adds a lacuna here

the people that [story], forty thousand of those who entered Islam apostatized on that day. At another time, sixty thousand [apostatized]. Some of them returned to their pre-Islamic religion, and some of them feared the sword, so they traveled to Persian and Roman lands. Christians and Jews found the way to refute him to his face, and his proclamations came apart on that day.

[244] Abū Jahl ibn Hishām⁵⁰⁴ came to him, and he said to him: “Muḥammad, did you tell people what was mentioned about you?” He said: “Yes.” He said to him: “State it for me from your own mouth so I can hear it from you.” So he mentioned that, and [Abū Jahl] said: “Why wasn’t your ascension during the day so all of the people could see you, in order to believe in you and no one would disagree about you, and that would be a great sign for you.” So he replied: “God did what He wanted.” He said: “You are right, God does what He wants.” Then [Abū Jahl] said to him: “But I would ask you for something insignificant, not large. If you do it, I will believe in you immediately as well as my family and my tribe, and I will take out my sword and I will kill all of your opponents with it, and I will kill [them] in your presence.” So he said: “What is that [request], Abū Jahl?” He said to him: “I am not going to tell you to ascend up to the second Heaven during the day so we could witness that, but rise up from the ground one hand-length, and nothing more, while this sword is beneath you. If I see that, I will believe in you.” [Muḥammad] was bewildered and he remained confused, not knowing what to do. Then [Abū Jahl] said to him: “Muḥammad, he who ascended to the seven Heavens, between each Heaven to the other Heaven being a five-hundred-year journey, and saw what you saw, cannot rise up from the earth one hand-length, do not be our neighbor this is Muḥammad.” Then all of the Quraysh rose up against him and jumped upon him, and they broke his teeth and they blackened his face with soot and he was exiled from them to another city.⁵⁰⁵ Then [the citizens of Yathrib] received him with a great meeting, and he remained among them until they submitted to him,⁵⁰⁶ unto the last one. When he became strong, he traveled to Mecca and he conquered it.

504 Abū Jahl ‘Amr ibn Hishām (d. 624) was said to be a polytheist leader of the Quraysh tribe in Mecca and a virulent opponent of Muḥammad, who eventually died at the battle of Badr. See “Abū Jahl ‘Amr ibn Hishām ibn al-Mughīra,” *EI*² 1:115.

505 This account of the Night Journey challenge is not found in al-Ṭabarī’s historical work, but the story is consistent with other narratives about them. For instance, Abū Jahl was known to verbally berate and challenge Muḥammad. The latter part of the story is reversed: Abū Jahl came up with the idea to have Muḥammad assassinated, but as they rose up to kill him, Muḥammad blackened their faces with soot and escaped into exile. Therefore, the story appears somewhat edited and rewritten. See al-Ṭabarī, *The History of al-Ṭabarī*, 6:142–143.

506 In other words, they converted to Islam.

[٢٤٥] فانظريا أخي - رحمك الله - إلى هذا الرجل وإلى ما جاء به من المحالات وإشهار السيف. ولقد سألته العرب أن يرهم آية واحدة ليتبعونها عن آخرهم. فلم يجدوا ذلك عنده. والدليل في القرآن، حيث يقول في بني إسرائيل: وَقَالُوا لَنْ نُؤْمِنَ لَكَ حَتَّى تَفْجُرَ لَنَا مِنَ الْأَرْضِ يَنْبُوعًا أَوْ تَكُونَ لَكَ جَنَّةٌ مِنْ نَخِيلٍ وَعِنَبٍ فَتُفَجِّرَ الْأَنْهَارَ خِلَالَهَا تَفْجِيرًا أَوْ تُسْقِطَ السَّمَاءَ كَمَا زَعَمْتُمْ عَلَيْنَا كِسْفًا أَوْ تَأْتِيَنَا بِاللَّهِ وَالْمَلَائِكَةِ قَبِيلًا أَوْ يَكُونَ لَكَ بَيْتٌ مِنْ زُخْرِفٍ أَوْ تَرْقَى فِي السَّمَاءِ. ونحن ننظر إليك وأنت طالع، لا كما زعمت أنك طلعت السماء في الليل. فقال لهم: سبحان ربي هل كنت إلا بشراً رسولاً. لأنهم يؤمنون، كيف ينبغي ذلك أن يطالبوه بالآيات؟ يقول أنهم يؤمنون ومن سأل ذلك السؤال لم ينبغي أن يجاب عنه بهذا الجواب إلا مغالطة وإحادة (عن) الحق. وأكثر القرآن يشهد أنه قد طولب بالآيات. فكيف ينبغي ذلك أن يطالبوه بالآيات، فكان جوابه لهم مثل هذا!

[٢٤٦] وقال أيضاً في سورة الأنبياء عن قوم طالبيه بالآيات، فأخبر عنهم بهذا: بَلْ قَالُوا أَضْغَاثُ أَحْلَامٍ بَلِ افْتَرَاهُ بَلْ هُوَ شَاعِرٌ فَلْيَأْتِنَا بِآيَةٍ كَمَا أُرْسِلَ الْأَوْلُونَ. فقال: جوابنا لهم: مَا آمَنَتْ قَبْلَهُمْ مِنْ قَرِيَةٍ أَهْلَكْنَاهَا. فكيف ينبغي ذلك أن يطالبوه بالآيات؟ فيقول لهم: إن من مضى قبلكم لم يؤمنوا بالآيات، ولا تؤمنون إلا بهذا السيف! وهذا في القرآن كثيراً يخبر أنه طولب بالآيات فلم يجدوها عنده.

[٢٤٧] وأقررت أنه كانت له آية، فقد كذبتهم القرآن. وإن صدقتهم القرآن فهذا القرآن يخبر أنه ما كانت له آية. وكان أكثر الناس في وقته لم تصبوا عقولهم إلى هذا المحالات فرأوا أنهم لا يقبلون ولا يخدحون عنهم بلغة. ومنهم من أجابه على ضعف يقينه خوف السيف. وفيهم من أجابه بيقين صادق. تمييز انه طولب بالآيات لم تجدوها عنده. فان اقررت انها كانت له آية فقد اكدت القرآن وإن صدقتهم

[تَكُونُ] تفتح C [تَفْجُرَ] لك C omits [لَكَ] 75^v C [بني] 3 لتبعونها C [ليتبعنوها] || يورهم C [يرهم] 2
 و C omits [و] ياتي C [تَأْتِي] || شعلاً C [كِسْفًا] || قلت C [زَعَمْتُمْ] || انهاراً C [الْأَنْهَارَ] 4 يكون C
 سايل C [بشراً] 6 الى C [في] || ترقا C [ترقى] || مزخرف C [زُخْرِفٍ] || من C omits [من] || بيتاً C [بَيْتٌ] 5
 [آمَنَتْ] || شاعراً C [شَاعِرٌ] || هل C adds: به C [بَلْ] 11 اضعاف اطغات C [أَضْغَاثُ] 10 كثراً C [وأكثر] 8
 جابه C [أجابه] 16 ينصبوا C [تصبوا] || كانت C [وكان] 15 ات C

[245] So look, my brother – may God have mercy upon you – at this man and to what he brought, including impossibilities and the proclamations of the sword. The Arabs asked him to show them one sign so that they could follow it, unto the last one. But they did not find that [miracle] with him. The proof is in the Qur'an, since he says in "The Children of Israel": "They say: We will not believe you until you break open a spring for us from the ground, or you have a garden of palm trees and grapes and make rivers pour forth within them in force, or you make the Heaven fall upon us in fragments, as you have claimed, or you bring God and the angels as confirmation, or you have an ornamented house, or you ascend into Heaven."⁵⁰⁷ And we look at you just as you are appearing, not as you claimed that you rose up to Heaven at night. So he said to them: "Praise be to my Lord! I am only a human messenger."⁵⁰⁸ Since they believe, why would they require signs from him? He says that they believe and whoever asks that question should not receive this answer about it, in case it is a deception and a deviation [from] the truth. Most of the Qur'an testifies that he was asked for signs. How can they ask him for signs and his answer to them was like this!

[246] He also said in sura "The Prophets" about the people who asked him for signs, he reported this about them: "But they say: 'It is a mixture of false dreams; rather, he has invented it; rather, he is a poet. So let him bring us a sign just as the previous [messengers] were sent.'⁵⁰⁹ So he said: Our answer to them is: "Not one city which we destroyed believed before them."⁵¹⁰ How can they ask him for signs? He would say to them: "Whoever came before you did not believe in signs, and you will only believe on account of this sword!" There is a lot of this in the Qur'an reporting that he was asked for signs, but they did not find [miracles] with him.

[247] You admit that he had a sign, [and therefore] you have made the Qur'an untruthful. If you believed the Qur'an, then this Qur'an reports that he did not have a sign. Most of the people in his time did not consider these impossibilities in their minds, for they saw that they did not accept or deviate from them in language. Some of them answered to him despite the weakness of their belief for fear of the sword. Some of them answered to him with a sincere conviction. The distinction is that he was asked for signs that you did not find with him. If you decide that he had a sign, then you have denied the Qur'an, and if you

507 Q 17:90–93.

508 Q 17:93.

509 Q 21:5.

510 Q 21:6.

القرآن فهذا القرآن يخبرانه لم يكن له آية. فكان أكثر الناس في وقته لم تصبوا الى هذا المحالات، فرؤوا أن يقتلون ولا يتحدث عنهم بنقص العقل منهم من يجيبه بيقين صادق. غير أن الذي أبادهم بالسيف أكثر ممن اتبعه.

[خاتمة]

[٢٤٨] ولم يزل ممن تقدمه من الفراعنة وكفار الملوك وأولياء القوة والسيف يدخلون الناس في 5 كفرهم. والله عز وجل المرصاد، لا يخفي عليه خافية. ونحن نسأل ونرغب إليه أن يثبتنا على دينه الذي ارتضاه لنفسه وملائكته وأصفياءه. وسلم لنا ذلك وينفعنا به وبكابه المنزل على حواريه الأطهار. ويجعلنا من الداكرين له والعالمين به، ومن يتلوه وعمل به.

[٢٤٩] فقد قال لنا ربنا يسوع المسيح - تعالى وجل - في إنجيله المقدس المنزل على وليه الطاهر متى: إن كهن يسمع كلامي ويعمل به، أشبه برجل حكيم بنى بيته على الصخرة. فنزلت الأمطار 10 وجرت الأنهار وهبت الرياح وصدعت ذلك البيت. فلم يسقط لأن أساسه على الصخرة. وكهن يسمع كلامي ولا يعمل به، كرجل جاهل بنى بيته على الرمل. فنزلت الأمطار وأقربت الأنهار وهبت الرياح وضربت ذلك البيت فسقط، وكان سقوطه عظيماً.

[٢٥٠] ونحن نتشفع إليه بحواريه الأطهار ووالدته العذرى - والدة الخلاص - أن يقوينا برحمته ويوقينا من فضله بالإيمان، وبما سبق من سوء عملي خاصة. فقد قال يوحنا في الإنجيل الطاهر: إن من 15 يؤمن بي وبمن ارسلني، فإني في أبي وأبي في. ومن آمن بي كنت فيه وهو في. أنا وأبي واحد، فمن رآني وأقربني فقد رأى أبي وآمن به. يتوفانا ونحن متمسكون بهذا الدين راغبين فيه لا عن غيره. فأما ما تقدم برحمته وفضله بالإيمان به، لا بما سبق من علمي بما فيه. فقد قال في الإنجيل الطاهر: ومن يؤمن

C [ب] 16 بنا C [بني || برجل C [كرجل 12 وثيق C adds [أساسه 11 بنا C [بني || C 76^v [كلامي 10
الا C [لا 18 يتوفانا C [يتوفانا 17 وبمن ارسلني، فإني في ابي وابي في ومن امن بي margin

believe the Qur'an, this Qur'an reports that he had no sign. Most of the people in his time did not consider these impossibilities, and they thought it more appropriate to be killed, than to be claimed to possess a lack of reason, answering it with sincere truth. However, those whom he annihilated with the sword were more than those who followed him.

[Conclusion]

[248] Those who came before [Muḥammad], including the Pharaohs and the unbelieving kings and those who possessed power and the sword, made people enter into their unbelief. God lies in wait, nothing secret can be hidden from Him. We ask and desire Him to make us stand firm in His religion, which He approved for Himself and His angels and His chosen friends. May He preserve that for us, and make us benefit from it, and from His Scripture, which was revealed through His pure disciples. May He make us among those who remember it, and those who are working with it, and among whoever reads it and works with it.

[249] Our Lord Jesus Christ said to us in his Holy Gospel that he revealed to his pure friend Matthew: "Truly, everyone who hears these words of mine and does them will be like a wise man who built his house upon the rock. Then the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat upon that house. But it did not fall, because it had been founded on the rock. Everyone who hears these words of mine and does not do them will be like a foolish man who built his house upon the sand. The rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and great was the fall of it."⁵¹¹

[250] We ask for the intercessions of his pure disciples and his Virgin Mother – the Mother of Salvation – that he would strengthen us through his mercy, and protect us with faith out of his grace, especially on account of the iniquity of my earlier works. John said in the pure Gospel: "Truly, whoever believes in me and the one who sent me, I am indeed in my Father and my Father is in me. Whoever believes in me, I am in him and he is in me. I and my Father are one, so whoever saw me and was near me has seen my Father and believed in him."⁵¹² May [God] receive us in full while we embrace this religion, desiring [Christianity] and nothing other than it. What preceded in [this book] came through His mercy and His grace through faith, not through what came from my earlier knowledge about it. For he said in the pure Gospel: "Whoever

⁵¹¹ Matthew 7:24–27.

⁵¹² John 12:44, 14:10, 20; 10:30.

بي فإن له حياة الأبد. وهو حسنا واليه غربتنا وبه استعنا وعليه توكلنا، وهو أرحم الراحمين. والسيح لله دائماً أديباً، آمين. مباركاً هو اسم الرب، ومسبح اسمه إلى الأبد.

[فصل]

[٢٥١] وجد في آخر بعد ذلك آيات تنقضها آيات.

[٢٥٢] قال في سورة مريم - وهي كهيعص - إِذَا قَضَىٰ أَمْرًا فَإِنَّمَا يَقُولُ لَهُ كُنْ فَيَكُونُ. ثم جاؤوا بضده، قالوا: ختم الله على قلوبهم. وأيضاً: جعلنا على قلوبهم أكنةً أن يفقهوه. قولهم أنه لا يعبدوا إياه وبين ختمه على قلوبهم اختلاف بعيد. وأيضاً: قالوا اتخذ الله ولداً سبحانه بل له ما في السموات والأرض كلُّ له قانتون. ثم جاؤوا بنقض ذلك بأن قالوا ضلوا عن سبيلهم: قُتِلَ الْإِنْسَانُ مَا أَكْفَرَهُ. فن أين الضلالة والكفر إذا كانوا أجمعون له قانتون؟ آيات ينقضها آيات.

[٢٥٣] قالوا: ونفس وما سواها فألهمها فجورها وتقواها، في سورة الشمس. وأيضاً: من يهد الله فهو المهتدي ومن يضلل فأولئك هم الخاسرون. وأيضاً: من يضلل الله فلا هادي له ويذرهم في طغيانهم يعمهون. وأيضاً: يهدي من يشاء ويضل من يشاء. وأيضاً: ولو شئنا لآتينا كل نفس هداها

C adds 7 قَالُوا 77^r C قُلُوبِهِمْ || الله C omits 6 الله 6 فيكن C [فَيَكُونُ] || انما قوله C [له] 5 وهل الانسان C [أَكْفَرَهُ] || ما C omits [مَا] || واما في C adds [وَالْأَرْضِ] 8 السموات C [السَّمَاوَاتِ] || ما C [هُم] || يضل C [يُضِلُّ] 11 يهدي C [يَهْدِي] 10 الظلالة C [الضلالة] 9 أكفره C لا [وَلَوْ] || يعمون C [يَعْمَهُونَ] 12 ردهم C [وَيَذَرُهُمْ] || يضل C [يُضِلُّ] || الخاسرين

believes in me shall have eternal life.”⁵¹³ He is our master and we are exiled to Him and we ask Him for help, and we put our trust in Him, and He is the Most Merciful. Praise is due God forever and ever, Amen. Blessed is the name of the Lord, and His name is praised forever.

[An Addition]

[251] “Verses contradicted by other verses” was found at the end of that [work].

[252] He said in sura “Mary” – and it [begins] “kāf, ha’, yā’, ‘ayn, šād” – “When He decrees a matter, He only says to it, ‘Be’, and it is.”⁵¹⁴ Then they came up with its opposite; they said: “God has set a seal upon their hearts.”⁵¹⁵ In addition: “We have placed over their hearts coverings, lest they understand it.”⁵¹⁶ Their claim is that they only worship him and between [this statement and] his setting a seal upon their hearts, there is a great inconsistency. In addition, “They say: God has taken a son. Exalted is He! Rather, to Him belongs whatever is in the Heavens and the earth. All are devoutly obedient to Him.”⁵¹⁷ Then they came up with what contradicted that, since they said they strayed from their way: “Perish the man; how unbelieving is he.”⁵¹⁸ So where did the straying and the unbelief come from, if all of them were devoutly obedient to Him? Verses are contradicted by other verses.

[253] They said: “And the soul and He who proportioned it, and inspired it to its wickedness and its righteousness,” in sura “The Sun.”⁵¹⁹ In addition: “Whoever God guides – he is the guided; and whoever He sends astray – it is those who are the losers.”⁵²⁰ In addition: “Whoever God sends astray – there is no guide for him. And He leaves them in their transgression, wandering blindly.”⁵²¹ In addition: “He guides whoever He wills and He leads astray whoever He wills.”⁵²² In addition: “And if We had willed, We could have given every

513 John 6:47; the text adds “in me” which is not found in the passage.

514 Q 19:35.

515 Q 2:7.

516 Q 18:57.

517 Q 2:116.

518 Q 80:17.

519 Q 91:7–8.

520 Q 7:178.

521 Q 7:186.

522 Q 35:8; however, this citation reverses the phrasing of Q 35:8.

وَلَكِنْ حَقَّ الْقَوْلُ مِنِّي لَأَمْلَأَنَّ جَهَنَّمَ مِنَ الْجِنَّةِ وَالنَّاسِ أَجْمَعِينَ. فهذا خبر أن الذي يلهمهم الفجور والتقوى، وهو الذي يضل وهو الذي يهدي وأنه لو شاء لهدى.
[٢٥٤] سبحانه له المجد إلى الأبد آمين.

تمّ وكل كتاب الواضح بالحق وشاهده. والحمد لله كثيراً صاحب العزّ والقدرة، إلى أبد الآبدين ودهر الداهرين. آمين آمين آمين.

soul its guidance, but the word from Me will come into effect, [that] I will surely fill Gehenna with jinn and people all together.”⁵²³ So this tells that He is the one who inspired them to wickedness and righteousness, and He is the one who leads them astray and He is the one who guides and that if He [only] wants, then He guides.

[254] Praise is due to Him, glory forever, Amen.

The Exposer's Book in Truth and its testimony is finished and completed. Many thanks be to God, the possessor of might and power, forever and ever unto the ages of ages. Amen, Amen, Amen.

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