

THE CONCEPT OF THE INJĪL IN ḤADĪTH LITERATURE¹ AN ANALYTICAL STUDY

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The Prophetic *Traditions* constitute very authoritative, normative source of Islam, second only to the Qur'ān. Therefore, it is significant to explore the treasures of *Ḥadīth* in order to explain Islamic view of the Injil, the book entrusted to prophet 'Isā (ﷺ), and its relation to the canonical gospels of the Christians. For this purpose, the article begins with a discussion about Waraqah b. Nawfal's manuscript of the Injil, referred to in one of the most authentic collections of *aḥādīth* (i.e., Bukhārī's collection). It then develops to survey the *aḥādīth*, which describe when and how the Injil was sent down, in order to highlight the nature of its revelation. The paper, afterwards, turns to the question of the corruption of the previous scriptures especially the Injil as addressed in the Prophetic *Traditions*. Finally, it discusses how the Prophetic narrations view the prophecies about the advent of Prophet Muḥammad (ﷺ) as foretold in the previous scriptures especially the Injil. The article ends with a critical appraisal and concludes that the Prophetic *Traditions*' concept of the Injil is largely an extension of that of the Qur'ān. They also provide specific insights into how the corruption crept into the Christian scriptures and whether the alteration was of both the text and meaning or of the meaning alone.

Introduction

For Muslims, the Prophetic *Traditions* have normative authority and constitute the Divine revelation, though the words are of Prophet Muḥammad (ﷺ) himself. Only the Qur'ān – the verbatim revelation of Allah – has precedence over them as a source of the Islamic law. Muslims' high regard for the Prophetic *Traditions*, therefore, makes them immensely crucial for the study of any religious concept in Islam. Islam does not proclaim to be an absolutely new religion.² Rather, it presents

itself as a continuation of the previous revelations entrusted to Ādam, Nūḥ, Ibrāhīm, Mūsā, Dā'wūd, and 'Īsā (عليه السلام), among many other prophets and messengers (عليهم السلام).³ The Injīl (Gospel) stands prominent among the previous revelations not only because it was sent to Prophet Muḥammad's (ﷺ) immediate predecessor prophet 'Īsā (عليه السلام), but also because it is associated with the largest religious community of the contemporary world.⁴ However, whereas the Christians see the gospels as a record of revelation not the revelation itself* (because for them it is Jesus Christ (عليه السلام) who is the revelation of God),⁵ the Injīl perceived by the Prophetic *Traditions* – in agreement with the view of the Qur'ān – seems to signify a direct revelation entrusted to 'Īsā (عليه السلام). Therefore, it is important to study the concept of the Injīl as perceived by the Prophetic *Traditions* and investigate what is the relation between the Christian gospels and the Injīl mentioned in the *ḥadīth* literature. The study might lead to significant implications for the dialogue between two major religious communities of the world.

Literature Review

Despite the importance of the topic, one hardly finds any significant study, specifically addressing the above-mentioned question. British missionary William Gairdner (d. 1928) wrote an article “Moḥammedan Tradition and Gospel Record: The Ḥadīth and the Injīl” in 1915.⁶ He, however, solely focuses on how the Christian gospels and Muslim *ḥadīth* literature were preserved and developed in the course of history. Drawing completely upon the late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century orientalist Ignaz Goldziher's (d. 1921) conclusions and opinions about the authenticity and historicity of *ḥadīth* literature,⁷ he proceeds to prove the superiority of the gospel record over Prophetic *Traditions* in terms of authenticity, reliability, and withstanding the onslaught of the Historical Critical Method.⁸ Although, the main thesis of this article does not directly relate to the present study, it did foreshadow Wilfred C. Smith's (d. 2000) later proposition that Christian gospels' more accurate equivalent in Islam is *ḥadīth* literature and not the Qur'ān.⁹

*The four versions of Injīl are in fact not the original Divine message to 'Īsā (عليه السلام) but rather versions of four of his apostles, Mathew, Mark, Luke and John.

Sidney Griffith (b. 1938), in his broader quest for the appearance of the earliest translations of the Christian gospels into Arabic, discusses three early Muslim sources, which refer to the Injil or its contents. The first is Ibn Ishāq's (d. ca. 767 C.E.) biography of Prophet Muḥammad (ﷺ). Ibn Ishāq quotes the Gospel of John (15:23-16:1) as a scriptural proof of the future coming of Prophet Muḥammad (ﷺ). Following earlier scholars (i.e., Anton Baumstark [d. 1948] and Alfred Guillaume¹⁰ [d. 1965]), Griffith holds that Ibn Ishāq's quotation certainly draws upon some version of the Palestinian Syriac Lectionary.¹¹ He also refers to certain "corrections and alterations,"¹² which the biographer introduced to the text in order to make it in harmony with Islamic doctrines, such as replacing the phrase "my Father" with "the Lord." Griffith concludes that Ibn Ishāq alone, or with assistance of some Arabic-speaking Christian, translated the Syriac text into Arabic in order to incorporate it into his biography. The second reference includes Muslim sources especially the report of Bukhārī, which narrate that Waraqah b. Nawfal, an older contemporary of Prophet Muḥammad (ﷺ) and cousin of his wife Khadījah (ؓ), used to write/read Injil *bi 'l-'Arabiyyah/bi 'l-'Ibrāniyyah*. Griffith, however, confines himself mainly to the question concerning the language in which the Gospel reached to Waraqah and the language in which he used to write/read it. He suggests that the Gospel in possession of Waraqah was most probably in Syriac and that he in all likelihood copied it in his native language, Arabic. The last Muslim source, which Griffith discusses in relation to Muslim references to the Injil, is Wahb b. Munabbih (ؓ) (d. 732 C.E.). He notes that Wahb ibn Munabbih (ؓ) presents his accounts of the Torah and the Injil in a manner that agrees with Qur'ānic teachings about their message.¹¹ Moreover, the sources of his reports, Griffith continues, "were in languages other than Arabic, most probably Syriac, and possibly some Greek."¹³ Griffith is obviously conscious of the difference between the Muslim perception of the Injil and Christian understanding of the gospels. That is why, he makes it clear from the outset that he aims to search for the earliest Arabic translations of the canonical gospels and not to study the image of the Injil as perceived by the Qur'ān, prophetic narrations, or broader Muslim tradition.

American historian of Islam David Cook (b. 1966) – largely agreeing with Griffith's conclusion that Arabic translations of the Christian gospels did not appear until the early 'Abbāsīd period and that citations predating

this period drew upon individual, perhaps oral translations, often paraphrases, and not upon a larger translated text – studies verbatim or paraphrased New Testament citations found in the *ḥadīth* literature in search for early Arabic translations of the gospels.¹⁴ Adding to the work of Tarif Khālidi,¹⁵ he collects fifty-nine *ḥadīth* selections, which in his view, are from the New Testament. As most of these alleged citations are from Matthew, Cook proposes, “there was a Muslim translation of the Gospel of Matthew into Arabic, or at least of those parts which were not objectionable to the early Muslims.”¹⁶ Although, Cook explores the vast corpus of *ḥadīth*,¹⁷ it is not his intention to elaborate the concept of the Injīl as imagined by the Prophetic *Traditions*. This brief review of the literature shows that the limitations of the previous studies leave sufficient research gape to be filled by further research.

The Injīl Possessed by Waraqah b. Nawfal

It is significant to survey *ḥadīth* literature in order to illuminate the concept of the Injīl preserved by Waraqah b. Nawfal. Waraqah b. Nawfal (d. ca. 611 C.E.) b. Asad b. ‘Abd al-‘Uzzā b. Quṣayy was the cousin of Khadījah (ﷺ), the wife of Prophet Muḥammad (ﷺ). His lineage meets with that of the Prophet (ﷺ) on Quṣayy, the third grandfather of Waraqah and Khadījah and the fourth one of the Prophet (ﷺ).¹⁸ In Muslim literature, Waraqah is remembered for his knowledge of the scriptures, both the Tawrāh (Torah) and the Injīl.¹⁹ He was one of the few Makkans who renounced paganism and became monotheists before the advent of Islam.²⁰ Muslim sources testify to his adoption of Christianity.²¹ The famous historian Muḥammad b. Ḥabīb (d. 245 A.H.) explains, why Waraqah leaned to Christianity. According to him, Waraqah composed an elegy, to mourn his Christian cousin ‘Uthmān b. al-Ḥuwayrith, who was allegedly killed by ‘Amr b. Abī Shamir, the Christian sovereign of Syria. When ‘Amr b. Abī Shamir came to know the elegy he swore to kill Warqah. On hearing this news, Waraqah left Makkah to take refuge in the territory of the Tayy’ tribe, where he remained for a long time.²² Tayy’ was one of the Arab tribes into which Christianity had penetrated before the advent of Islam.²³ Then Waraqah went to Bahrain.²⁴ Again, Bahrain was one of the Arabian cities where Christianity flourished prior to Islam.²⁵ A Bahraini Christian taught Waraqah how to seek pardon

from the king. He advised him to go to the king and seek the protection of Christ (عيسى) from the King. As Waraqah did what the Christian told him to do, the king not only forgave him but also gave protection to him and his people. All this touched him so much that he felt an inclination for Christianity.²⁶

A *Tradition* narrates that Waraqah also visited Negus, the king of Abyssinia, after the unsuccessful military expedition of Abrahah against Makkah.²⁷ Nevertheless, its detailed account seems to be mythological more functional than historical. Famous *hadīth* scholar Ibn Ḥajar (d. 1449) maintains that Waraqah left Makkah for Syria and other lands in search of true religion. He accepted Christianity and met those monks who followed the pure and intact religion of the prophet ‘Īsā (عيسى).²⁸ Probably, from such monks he learned about the expected advent of a prophet and subsequently attested his prophethood as did Salmān, the Persian (سالمان).

The *Traditions*, which describe the incident of the first revelation to the Prophet Muḥammad (ﷺ), relate that Waraqah used to write or read the Injīl. However, they do not agree on the language in which he used to write or read. Bukhārī relates twice that Waraqah “used to write *al-Kitāb al-‘Arabī* and write down from the Injīl *bi ‘l-‘Arabiyyah* whatever Allah wanted him to write.”²⁹ The version of this *hadīth*, related in the *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* is in accordance with this reading.³⁰ In another place, however, Bukhārī relates, “He used to write *al-Kitāb al-‘Ibrānī* and he would write down from the Injīl *bi ‘l-‘Ibrāniyyah*.”³¹ Elsewhere he narrates, “He used to read the Injīl *bi ‘l-‘Arabiyyah*.”³²

A survey of *hadīth* literature shows that most of the *Traditions*, including those of Bukhārī, maintain that Waraqah used to write or read the Injīl *bi ‘l-‘Arabiyyah*.³³ Only one version of one *Tradition* quoted in Bukhārī reads that he used to write *al-Kitāb al-‘Ibrānī*, and write down from the Injīl *bi ‘l-‘Ibrāniyyah*.³⁴

Muslim commentators of the *hadīth* do not see this variation of reading much problematic. They regard both readings as authentic, arguing that since Waraqah knew both languages he wrote the Injīl in Arabic as well as in Hebrew.³⁵ Even some commentators hold that Waraqah was a polyglot and supposedly knew three languages, Arabic, Hebrew and Syriac, arguing that the Injīl had originally been written in Syriac and that Waraqah used to copy it in Arabic and Hebrew simultaneously.³⁶ Ibn

Hishām, on the other hand, records, “Waraqah professed Christianity, read the scriptures, and heard from the people of the Tawrah and the Injīl.”³⁷ However, he leaves mention of the language in which Waraqah read or wrote the scriptures, perhaps to avoid creating confusion. It is important, however, to note that Muslim scholars unfortunately did not inquire how this mutli-lingual Injīl disappeared. Perhaps, one reason for not preservation of Waraqah’s Injīl was that he did not live long after Prophet Muḥammad (ﷺ) experienced the first revelation of the Qur’ān. Waraqah died circa 611 C.E. even before the Prophet (ﷺ) was directed to announce his prophetic mission publicly.

Muḥammad Ḥamīdullah (d. 2002) opines that the word *‘Ibrāniyyah*, mentioned in Bukhārī, denotes Syriac and not Hebrew. He attempts to reconcile the variant readings of Bukhārī’s report saying, “Both may be true; having learnt Syriac he could read in that language, and also translate in his mother tongue, Arabic.”³⁸ The inconsistency, however, has not been completely resolved, for Bukhārī’s report manifestly reads that he used to write in *‘Ibrāniyyah* as well.³⁹

The famous orientalist Aloys Sprenger (d. 1893) proposes that the “Hebrew” in question is actually the Aramaic script employed by Jews, and that in this narration it means that Waraqah wrote Arabic Injīl in the Aramaic script. Therefore, in his view there is no real conflict between the two versions of the narration.⁴⁰

This view has further been elaborated with some modifications by the Lebanese historian Kamāl Salibi (d. 2011) who holds that Hebrew in this context “could have meant either Biblical Hebrew or Aramaic. For the term often indicated the common script in which the two related languages could be written, rather than the language itself.”⁴¹ He argues that in post-exilic times, Aramaic rapidly replaced Hebrew as the common Israelite language, and the Hebrew script was maintained for it.⁴² He concludes that “The Gospel which still existed in Arabia in the seventh century A.D. – the one used by Waraqah Ibn Nawfal – was most probably written in Aramaic, not Hebrew.”⁴³ This implies that that Injīl was written in Aramaic, but using the Hebrew script. However, Griffith, criticizing Sprenger’s view, says,

Historically there is not only the example of Arabic speaking Jews writing Arabic in “Hebrew” characters. Syriac speakers also

employed their own alphabets to write Arabic, a writing called *Garšuni* in Syriac. But Waraqah, a Meccan and a native Arabic speaker, and not a Jew but an alleged Christian, would hardly have had any need to borrow the “Hebrew” script. By this time the north Arabic script, albeit with an obvious debt to the Syriac script in its origins, would certainly have been available to Waraqah.⁴⁴

Griffith inclines to hold that in all likelihood the Christians of Ḥijāz had their Injīl in Syriac during the Prophet Muḥammad’s (ﷺ) time, and that Waraqah b. Nawfal copied from the Injīl in his native, Arabic language. He argues that the Arabic speaking Christians had strong ties with and were influenced by the Syriac speaking Christians and that the language of the vernacular scriptures in much of Syria and Palestine before the rise of Islam was the Aramaic dialect known as Palestinian Syriac.⁴⁵ He does not clearly mention the language of the Injīl from which Waraqah copied in Arabic. However, one may safely assume, after analyzing his arguments, that it was Syriac.

He explains the variant of the narrative which reads, “He [Waraqah] used to write *al-Kitāb al-‘Ibrānī*, and he would write down from the Injīl *bi ‘l-‘Ibrāniyyah*” as a later correction of the narrative, interpolated by someone who thought that the language of the original Injīl was Hebrew.⁴⁶ However, this explanation may not be correct, for it is based on a disputed hypothesis, that is, *ḥadīth* literature was produced to meet the requirements of Islamic apologetics.

A book entitled the *Qass wa Nabī* suggests that Waraqah was associated with the Ebonite heresy and the Injīl he possessed the Hebrew Gospel of Matthew which is also known as Gospel according to the Hebrews.⁴⁷ This view, however, is not correct either. Because there is no evidence that this sect – which flourished in Transjordan in the early centuries of the Christian era – survived until the seventh and, what is more, in Makkah.⁴⁸

Quite interestingly, Ibn Taymiyyah (d. 728 A.H.) proclaims – in the context of refuting the Christian claim that the disciples translated the Tawrah and the Injīl into every language – that Arabs never possessed any Arabic version of the Tawrah or Injīl since the time of the Messiah. Even there had not been any manuscript of Tawrah or Injīl at all in

Makkah, neither in Arabic nor in non-Arabic. His argument rests on the unavailability of the ancient Arabic manuscripts of the scriptures as well as on the Qur’ānic verse (XXVIII:46), which implies that no messenger came to Makkans before Prophet Muḥammad (ﷺ).⁴⁹ However, his argument seems to be fallacious partially because authentic sources indicate that the Injīl in some form was found in Makkah during the seventh century C.E.⁵⁰ and partially because the above-quoted verse does not necessarily imply that there had not been any kind of scripture in Makkah before the advent of Islam.

After analyzing the available data, it seems that the Injīl possessed by Waraqah – regardless of whether it was a complete manuscript of the Injīl or only a fragment – was most probably written in Syriac, not because Bukhārī’s report may be interpreted as implying this. Instead, because the historical evidences indicate that the language of the vernacular scriptures in much of Syria and Palestine – whence Christianity came to Arabia – before the rise of Islam was Syriac. This Syriac known as Palestinian Syriac was, in fact, a dialect of Aramaic.⁵¹ Since Hebrew and Aramaic (Palestinian Syriac) used to be written in a common script – as Salibi proposes – it is possible that Muslim literature sometimes has confusingly named Syriac as Hebrew. Therefore, it seems that when Muslim literature reads, “He [Waraqah] used to write *al-Kitāb al-‘Ibrānī*, and he would write down from the Injīl *bi ‘l-‘Ibrāniyyah*” it may mean that he used to write in Syriac. On the other hand, those who hold that it was written in Aramaic perhaps they mean by it Palestinian Syriac that was a specific dialect of Aramaic.

How and When Was the Injīl Revealed?

Muslims believe that many Divine books descended on the respective prophets (ﷺ) prior to the Qur’ān. Some Prophetic *Traditions* clearly describe when and how these Divine books or sheets (*ṣuḥūf*) were revealed. Therefore, an analysis of such narrations may help to understand the concept of the Injīl as perceived by the *ḥadīth* literature.

Muslim *muḥaddīth* Sulaymān b. Aḥmad al-Ṭabarānī (d. 360 H./ 917 C.E.) narrates on the authority of the *Companion* Wāthilah b. Asqa‘ (د) who narrates from Prophet Muḥammad (ﷺ) the following: “The sheets of Ibrāhīm descended on the first night of

Ramaḍān; the Tawrah descended on the sixth night of *Ramaḍān*; the Injīl descended on the thirteenth night of *Ramaḍān*; the Zabūr descended on the eighteenth night of *Ramaḍān*; and the Qur’ān descended on the twenty-fourth night of *Ramaḍān*.⁵² This *Tradition* refers to the sheets of Ibrāhīm (عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام) along with the four famous Divine books. The Qur’ān also makes brief references to them (LIII:36-37; LXXXVII:18-19). It is interesting to note that this Prophetic *Tradition* describes all of these books revealed on the nights of *Ramaḍān* with an interval of about six days (i.e., 1st, 6th, 13th, 18th, and 24th of *Ramaḍān*). The Zabūr has been mentioned after the Injīl, which is against the chronological order of their revelation, for the latter was revealed after the former. Moreover, all of these scriptures have been described to descend in an identical pattern, which implies that the nature of the previous revelations, including that of the Injīl, was the same as of the Qur’ān itself.

However, there are some other versions of this *ḥadīth*, which differ from the above in some details. For instance, Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal (R.A.) mentions the same *Tradition* on the authority of same Wāthilah b. Asqa‘ (ع) from the Messenger of God (ﷺ). However, he omits the mention of the Zabūr.⁵³ On the other hand, Ismā‘il b. Kathīr mentions that Ibn Mardawayh narrates the same *ḥadīth* on the authority of Jābir b. ‘Abd Allah (ع). However, he reverses the order of Zabūr and Injīl as he makes the revelation of the Zabūr on the twelfth of *Ramaḍān* and of the Injīl on the eighteenth of *Ramaḍān*.⁵⁴

In spite of all these variations, these *Traditions* indicate that each of these Divine books, including the Injīl, descended on its respective prophet on a specific night of *Ramaḍān*. Perhaps for this reason, majority of Muslim scholars hold that the previous Divine books (i.e., *Ṣaḥīfah*, Sheets, Tawrah, Zabūr, and Injīl) were sent down all at once and the Qur’ān was sent down to *Bayt al-‘Izzah* in the first heaven in the same way and then whence it descended on the Prophet (ﷺ) step by step.⁵⁵ These narrations also signify the importance of *Ramaḍān* in relation to all revelations, especially the Qur’ān, which claims about itself that it has been sent down in *Ramaḍān* (II:185), specifically on *laylat al-qadr* (XCVII:1). Later Muslim scholars provide specific details in this regard, perhaps using such *Traditions* along with some Biblical material. For instance, Ibn Kathīr narrates on the authority of Abū Zūr‘ah al-Dimashqī

(d. 281 A.H.) that the Tawrah descended on Mūsā (ﷺ) on the sixth night of *Ramaḍān*; the Zabūr descended on the twelfth night of *Ramaḍān* after 482 years from the Tawrah; the Injīl descended on ‘Īsā b. Maryam (ﷺ) on the eighteenth night of *Ramaḍān* after 1050 years from Zabūr; and the Qur’ān descended on the twenty-fourth night of *Ramaḍān*.⁵⁶ It should also be noted that such Prophetic *Traditions* are in agreement with the Qur’ān, which maintains that the Injīl was a Divine book revealed to prophet ‘Īsā (ﷺ) by Allah. They do not support the Christian view of the Gospels, which denies that God revealed to Jesus (ﷺ) any specific book known as the Gospel and maintains that the evangelists composed gospels after Jesus (ﷺ) as a historical record of his life and works.

Certain Prophetic *Traditions* depict the previous scriptures as containing *sūrahs* (chapters) in the same way as does the Qur’ān. They also compare some specific *sūrahs* of the Qur’ān with previous revealed books, along with the Injīl. Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal (R.A.), for instance, mentions on the authority of Wāthilah b. Asqa’ (رضي الله عنه) from the Prophet (ﷺ), “I have been given *al-Sab’* instead of the Tawrah, *al-Mi’in* instead of the Zabūr, and *al-Mathānī* instead of the Injīl, as well as I have been given superiority by *al-Mufaṣṣal*.”⁵⁷

It is generally held that the term *al-Sab’* or *al-Sab’ al-Ṭiwāl* signifies first seven *sūrahs* of the Qur’ān, excluding *al-Fātiḥah*, *al-Anfāl* and *al-Tawbah*, (i.e., *al-Baqarah*, *Āl-‘Imrān*, *al-Nisā’*, *al-Mā’idah*, *al-An‘ām*, *al-A‘rāf*, and *Yūnus*).⁵⁸ Some scholars replace *Yūnus* with *al-Anfāl* and *al-Tawbah*, considering them one *sūrah*.⁵⁹ *Al-Mi’in* are those *sūrahs*, which contain hundred and above verses. The term *al-Mathānī*, on the other hand, is interpreted either as *sūrah al-Fātiḥah* or as those *sūrahs*, which are longer than *al-Mufaṣṣal* but shorter than *al-Mi’in*.⁶⁰ Perhaps in the present context, it is better to adopt the second interpretation, for in another Prophetic *Tradition*, *sūrah al-Fātiḥah* has been declared a unique *sūrah*, which has no equivalent *sūrah* in any previous revealed book.⁶¹

In some other versions of the above-mentioned Prophetic *Tradition*, *al-Mathānī* were made substitute for the Zabūr instead of the Injīl.⁶² Elsewhere, *al-Mā’idah* was made substitute for the Injīl and *al-Ḥāmīm* for the Zabūr as well as the Tawrah was described to be replaced by *al-Mathānī*.⁶³ It has also been reported that *Ṭāha*, *Ṭāsīn*, and *Ḥāmīm*

were revealed to Prophet Muḥammad (ﷺ) from the tablets (*alwāḥ*) of Mūsā (عليه السلام) and *Sūrat al-Baqarah* from *al-dhikr al-awwal*.⁶⁴ Moreover, some less-authentic *Traditions* state that the Prophet was given *al-Sab'* in place of the Tawrāt, *al-Rā'āt* in place of the Injīl, and *sūrahs* between *al-Ṭāsīn* and *al-Hāmīm* in place of the Zabūr as well as he was exclusively honored by *al-Ḥāmīm* and *al-Mufaṣṣal*, as none of the prophets (عليهم السلام) ever recited them before him.⁶⁵

It is obvious that these *Traditions* differ markedly and it seems difficult to reconcile them. However, all of them do agree on that some parts of the Qur'ān – whatever they are – correspond to some previous revealed books. This view is further strengthened by the following saying of 'Abd Allah b. [Mas'ūd] (رضي الله عنه) which reads, “*Al-Sab' al-Ṭuwāl* are like Tawrāh, *al-Mi'in* like Injīl, *al-Mathānī* like Zabūr and the rest of the Qur'ān is surplus (which has no match in the previous revelations).”⁶⁶ On the other hand, it has also been reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) described some of the Qur'ānic *sūrahs* viz. *al-Fātiḥah*, *al-Ikhlāṣ*, *al-Falaq*, and *an-Nās*, as the best *sūrahs*, which had no similitude in the Tawrāh, the Zabūr, the Injīl or even in the Qur'ān itself.⁶⁷

It seems that the main thrust of such *Traditions* is to establish the merits (*faḍā'il*) of the Qur'ānic *sūrahs* as well as to demonstrate the supremacy of the Qur'ān over the previous scriptures. However, they do imply that the authentic previous revelations – including the Injīl – have been considered, in the *ḥadīth* literature, verbatim word of God as are certain *sūrahs* of the Qur'ān and not as historical or biographical records compiled by the followers of the prophets (عليهم السلام).

Some other *Traditions* inform about the number of previous revealed books. However, such narrations too, have the problem of variations as they differ in their accounts.

Ibn Ḥabbān narrates – on the authority of Abū Dharr (رضي الله عنه) – from Prophet Muḥammad (ﷺ) that Allah revealed one hundred and four books. Fifty sheets descended on Shīth (عليه السلام), thirty sheets on Idrīs (عليه السلام), ten sheets on Ibrāhīm (عليه السلام), and ten sheets on Mūsā (عليه السلام) before the Tawrāh. Moreover, the Tawrāh, the Injīl, the Zabūr, and the Qur'ān descended (on their respective prophets [عليهم السلام]).⁶⁸ This *Tradition* mentions some details about the contents of the sheets of Ibrāhīm and Mūsā (عليهم السلام) as well. One also observes that it informs about the number of

Divine scriptures and about the prophets (عليهم السلام) to whom they were revealed. However, historical and *Sīrah* literature provides some different information in this regard. Muḥammad b. Yūsuf al-Ṣāliḥī (d. 942 A.H.) mentions that sheets of Ādam (عليه السلام) were fifty one, of Shīth (عليه السلام) were twenty, and of Idrīs (عليه السلام) were thirty.⁶⁹ On the other hand, Ibn Iyās al-Ḥanafī (d. ca. 930/1524) relates on the authority of al-Tha‘labī that the books descended on the Envoys are four: the Tawrāh, the Injīl, the Zabūr, and the Furqān. As far as the revealed sheets are concerned, they are 110:sixty sheets descended on Shīth b. Ādam (عليه السلام), thirty sheets on Idrīs (عليه السلام), and twenty sheets on Ibrāhīm (عليه السلام).⁷⁰

It is obvious that above-mentioned *Traditions*, too, place the Injīl and the Qur’ān in the line of all previous revealed books and do not indicate to any substantial difference between the natures of these revelations. This notion is corroborated by the Qur’ānic verse, “We have sent thee inspiration, as We sent it to Noah and the Messengers after him: we sent inspiration to Abraham, Ismā‘īl, Isāc, Jacob and the descendants, to Jesus, Job, Jonah, Āaron, and Solomon, and to David We gave the Psalms” (IV:163).⁷¹ However, this understanding leads one to the following question: If the Prophetic *Traditions* perceived the Injīl as having the same revelatory nature as that of the Qur’ān, then what was their approach to the scriptures possessed by the Christians of the Prophetic era?

The Question of Corruption

The *ḥadīth* literature not only provides information about the history of the alteration of the previous revealed books, but it also informs about the nature of Jewish-Christian scriptural corruption, during the early Islamic period. There are certain *Traditions*, which explain how distortion crept into the previous scriptures of the people of the book, especially the Injīl. They also shed light on motives behind the falsification of scriptures.

The *ḥadīth* literature blames the rulers for corrupting the Christian scriptures. A *Tradition* – reported from Ibn ‘Abbās (رضي الله عنه) – charges those rulers who came after the era of prophet ‘Īsā (عليه السلام) of altering the Tawrāh and the Injīl.⁷² Such alteration, however, did not gain the acceptance of all Christians as a minority of them continued to read the Tawrāh and the Injīl in their intact forms. Nevertheless, those who altered

their scriptures complained to the rulers that some of their coreligionists had annoyed them by reading intact scriptures and charging them with blasphemy for not judging by what Allah had revealed. Moreover, they asked the rulers to force the believers to read and believe as they themselves read and believed. Consequently, the rulers called the true believers and gave them a choice between the death and reading the intact Tawrah and the Injil. The believers, however, sought to strike a deal and accepted to live in exile.⁷³

Various forms of this self-exile correspond to three kinds of monastic life. One group said, “Build for us a column (*uṣṭuwānah*), then raise us up to it and give us something so that we could lift up our food and drink. Thus we would not be able to mix with you.”⁷⁴ Another group chose a different path, saying, “Let us roam about the land and wander, drinking what the beasts drink. If you find us in your territories, kill us.”⁷⁵ Yet a third group demanded, “Build for us a dwelling in the desert and we will dig wells and cultivate herbs, so we would neither come to you nor pass by you.”⁷⁶ Since all tribes had friends among the believers, they let them choose self-exile.⁷⁷ This *Tradition* illuminates the beginning of monasticism in Christianity on the one hand and explains the starting point of the scriptural alteration in Christianity, on the other.

It seems that the believers who made a deal with those who corrupted the scriptures correspond to the third category of those three Christian groups, whose mention one finds in another Prophetic *Tradition* reported on the authority of ‘Abd Allah b. Mas‘ūd (رضي الله عنه). It begins with a quotation from Prophet Muḥammad (ﷺ) that those who preceded him subdivided into seventy-two groups of which only three were saved while the rest perished. The first of these actively opposed the unjust rulers. However, they were slain, defending the religion of God and that of ‘Īsā b. Maryam (عليه السلام). The second group lacking the courage of opposing the rulers, stayed among their people, preaching them about the religion of God and that of ‘Īsā b. Maryam (عليه السلام). However, the rulers also killed them, sawing them up into pieces. The third group lacking the courage of opposing the rulers and living among their people in order to preach them about Allah and the religion of ‘Īsā b. Maryam (عليه السلام), wandered around the mountains, living as monks and hermits.⁷⁸

On the base of the above mentioned, one may argue that the

attempts were made to corrupt the Tawrāh and the Injīl by the rulers as early as after the ascension of prophet ‘Īsā (عليه السلام). However, some faithful believers resisted such attempts. Nevertheless, the powerful rulers overwhelmed and slew them. Others changed the strategy and did not involve in direct opposition to the rulers. Instead, they lived peacefully and preached to the masses. However, the rulers did not tolerate them either and killed them mercilessly. Realizing their helplessness, the remaining true believers preferred to flee into the deserts and mountains to save their faith. As a result, the official Christianity became corrupted having changed its scriptures while the true followers of prophet ‘Īsā (عليه السلام) scattered into remote areas beyond the jurisdiction of the Christian authorities in order to escape the persecution, probably preserving with them fragments of the original Injīl of prophet ‘Īsā (عليه السلام). The official Christianity excommunicated them, declaring them heretic and their scriptures apocryphal and extra-canonical.

One should not surmise, however, that the doctrines of the third group completely remained intact. It was hardly possible in such circumstances. In fact, the Qur’ān and the *ḥadīth* literature indicate that the doctrines of the third group also could not remain pure and that polytheism (*shirk*) crept into the beliefs of their subsequent adherents.⁷⁹ However, they were the people, as the *Traditions* say, among whom a few survived until the advent of Islam. So “a man descended from his cell (*ṣawma‘ah*), a wanderer came forth from his wanderings, the one who had a constructed dwelling (*ṣāhib al-dayr*) came from his abode and they all believed in and confirmed the Prophethood of Muḥammad (ﷺ).”⁸⁰

Besides providing information about the history of the corruption of the previous scriptures, the *ḥadīth* literature sheds light on the perspective of the Prophet (ﷺ) and his *Companions* to the scriptures available in the seventh century C.E. Some *Traditions* apparently indicate that the texts of the Tawrāh and the Injīl were not distorted. Instead, they were misinterpreted. Bukhārī narrates on the authority of Ibn ‘Abbās (رضي الله عنه) that the word *Yuharrifūn* means that they displace (*yuzīlūn*).⁸¹ Then he further elaborates it by saying, “No one displaces the text of any book of God – the Exalted and Glorious – rather they commit *tahrīf*, which means that they wrongly interpret it.”⁸²

Muslim scholars have differed, however, whether this further

elaboration is of Ibn ‘Abbās (رضي الله عنه) or Bukhārī’s explanation of Ibn ‘Abbās’s statement. Shāh Walī Allah of Delhi associates the literal distortion committed by Jews with the translation of the Tawrāh and not with its original text and ascribes this view to Ibn ‘Abbās (رضي الله عنه).⁸³ However, other scholars ascribe this explanation to Bukhārī himself. A *ḥadīth* scholar Ibn al-Mulaqqin (d. 1401 C.E.) is one of them.⁸⁴ Ibn Ḥajar opines that both interpretations are possible. However, he prefers the second one as he writes, “Bukhārī implies by *yata’awwalūnahū* that they tamper with the intended meaning with some kind of interpretation (*tā’wīl*), as if a Hebrew word contained two meanings; one was clear and intended one and the other was farfetched, they would interpret it with the farfetched one.”⁸⁵ It seems more plausible to ascribe this explanation to Bukhārī rather than to Ibn ‘Abbās (رضي الله عنه), for elsewhere Ibn ‘Abbās (رضي الله عنه) has been said to have a different view. He says,

Why do you ask the people of the scripture about anything while your Book (the Qur’ān) which has been revealed to Allah’s Apostle (ﷺ) is newer? You read it pure, undistorted and unchanged, and Allah has told you that the people of the scripture (Jews and Christians) changed their scripture and distorted it, and wrote the scripture with their own hands and said, “It is from Allah,” to sell it for a little gain. Does not the knowledge which has come to you prevent you from asking them about anything? No, by Allah, we have never seen any man from them asking you regarding what has been revealed to you!⁸⁶

Al-Ṭabarī also narrates from Ibn ‘Abbās (رضي الله عنه) while interpreting III:78, “They are the Jews. They used to add to the Book of Allah what Allah never revealed.”⁸⁷ Such *Traditions* shed light on the attitude of Ibn ‘Abbās (رضي الله عنه) towards the scriptural corruption of the People of the Book as well as demonstrate that his above-mentioned perception rested on the Qur’ānic judgment. Because he argues, “Allah has told you that the people of the scripture (Jews and Christians) changed their scripture and distorted it, and wrote the scripture with their own hands and said, ‘It is from Allah’, to sell it for a little gain.”⁸⁸ Moreover, it should be kept in mind that above-mentioned Bukhārī’s statement specifically concerns the Tawrāh and should not be generalized to include the Christian scripture.

Perception of Ibn ‘Abbās’ (رضي الله عنه) may have been influenced by that of the Prophet (ﷺ) himself who did not like for his *Companions* looking into the scriptures possessed by his contemporary People of the Book.⁸⁹ Even he forbade the Muslims from confirming or rejecting what the People of the Book informed them about the contents of their scriptures and demanded them to say only, “We believed in whatever had been sent to us and whatever had been sent to you.”⁹⁰ It implies that the Prophet (ﷺ) was suspicious of the authenticity of the scriptures possessed by his contemporary Jews and Christians, though he showed immense reverence for the original scriptures sent down to the respective prophets (عليهم السلام).

Some Prophetic *Traditions* imply that the Jews of Madinah possessed the Hebrew Tawrah and recited it in Hebrew, but explained its contents to Muslims in Arabic.⁹¹ It also contained some intact portions of the original Tawrah, viz., the injunction about the punishment of the fornication, which they attempted to conceal.⁹² The Qur’ān also refers to this matter in V:43.

The Jews and Christians of the period of the Prophet (ﷺ), some *Traditions* inform, possessed the Tawrah and the Injil and they read them, but they neither practiced their teachings nor made use of them.⁹³ Such *Traditions*, however, imply that the people of the book distorted the meanings of their scripture and sought false interpretations to avoid practising them. Consequently, they were deprived of guidance, despite possessing the scripture.

Interestingly, in *hadīth* literature one finds that the Jews of Madīnah were not only accustomed to the Injil, but also studied it. Moreover, it appears as though the Prophet (ﷺ) thought that the Jews of Madīnah revered the Injil. It has been reported on the authority of al-Faltān b. ‘Āṣim (رضي الله عنه) that a Jew told the Prophet (ﷺ) that he had read the Tawrah and the Injil. It has also been said that the Prophet (ﷺ) asked him about his prophecies in the Tawrah and the Injil saying, “I ask you by Him Who sent down the Tawrah and the Injil ... if you do not find me in both of them.”⁹⁴ Nevertheless, contrary to this, there are other *Traditions*, which show that the Jews of Madīnah disbelieved in prophet ‘Īsā (عليه السلام) and the Injil whereas the Christians of Najran denied the prophethood of Mūsā (عليه السلام) and the Tawrah.⁹⁵ The later report is further strengthened by the Qur’ānic

verse II:113, though Christians, in general, believe in Mūsā (ﷺ) and the Tawrah.

In sum, it seems that although the *ḥadīth* literature indicates to both kinds of corruption of the previous scriptures, especially of the Injīl, it is the textual alteration, which is more obvious.

Prophecies About the Advent of the Prophet Muḥammad (ﷺ)

In *ḥadīth* literature, one finds a number of Prophetic *Traditions*, which indicate that the scriptures of the people of the book – the contemporaries of the Prophet (ﷺ) – contained descriptions of and prophecies about the Prophet (ﷺ). Some of them have been narrated by the Prophet (ﷺ) himself. Others have been ascribed to the *Companions* of the Prophet (ﷺ) or their successors (*al-tābi'ūn*).

The Qur'ān plainly states that the people of the book find the descriptions of Prophet Muḥammad (ﷺ) in their scriptures, “Those who follow the Messenger, the unlettered Prophet (ﷺ), whom they find mentioned in their own (scriptures) – in the law and the Gospel” (VII:157) and refers to some specific similes, which had also been mentioned in the previous scriptures (XLVIII:29). Therefore, Prophet Muḥammad's (ﷺ) and his *Companions'* eagerness to find them out in the then existent stock of the previous scriptures was only natural and logical.

It is reported that Negus, the Abyssinian king, confessed in front of the *Companions* who migrated to Abyssinia, “I witness that he (Muḥammad [ﷺ]) is the Messenger of God; that we find him in the Injīl; and that he is the Messenger about whom 'Īsā b. Maryam (ﷺ) prophesized.”⁹⁶ The *ḥadīth* and *Sīrah* literature preserves several *Traditions*, which reveal that the Prophet (ﷺ) himself enquired from the people of the book about his prophecies mentioned in their scriptures. It has been reported on the authority of Ibn 'Abbās (رضي الله عنه) that the Messenger of God (ﷺ) wrote to the Jews of Khayber. After mentioning his companionship and brotherhood of, and corroboration for prophet Mūsā (ﷺ), he quoted the verse LXVIII:29 and then asked them,

I adjure you by God, by that which has come down to you, and by Him who fed manna and quails to your forbears and tribes,

who dried up the sea for your forefathers to save you from Pharaoh and his deeds that you must tell us whether you find in God's revelations to you (the fact) that you should believe in Muḥammad (ﷺ). And if you do not discover that in your scriptures, then you would not be enforced at all. (By now) what is right has become clear from what is error. And I call you to God and His Prophet (ﷺ)."⁹⁷

The verse (LXVIII:29), referred to in this letter, was revealed on return from Ḥudaybiyyah shortly after which the Prophet (ﷺ) launched a military expedition against the Jews of Khayber.⁹⁸ Therefore, most probably this letter was written not long after the Pact of Ḥudaybiyyah (concluded in the end of 6 A.H.). There are several things to note in this passage. Since Prophet Muḥammad (ﷺ) wrote this letter to the Jews, he mentioned himself as a companion, brother, and corroborator of prophet Mūsā (عليه السلام) in the opening part of the letter. He was so convinced of having been mentioned in the previous revelations that he referred to the above-mentioned verse and argued against the Jews on its basis. He mentioned the blessings, which Allah bestowed upon their forefathers, and asked them about his prophecy, adjuring them by Allah Who gave them such blessings. He assured them that if they really could not find his description in their scripture, he would not enforce them to accept it.

Some *Traditions* reveal that the Jews of Madīnah definitely knew that he was a prophet and found his description in their scripture, but denied him in envy. It is reported on the authority of Abū Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) that when the Prophet (ﷺ) asked 'Abd Allah b. Ṣūriyā,⁹⁹ the most learned Jew of Madīnah of his time, about his prophethood, he answered, "I know (that you are the Messenger of Allah [ﷺ]) and the Jews know what I know as well. Your description has clearly been mentioned in the Tawrāh, but they envied you."¹⁰⁰ In some other *Traditions*, the Prophet (ﷺ) informs the Jews that they find his description in their scriptures. It is reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) passed by some Jewish schools and said to the Jews, "O Jews, accept Islam. For, by Him in Whose hand is my soul, you certainly find my description in your scriptures."¹⁰¹ 'Abd Allah b. 'Amr b. al-Āṣ (رضي الله عنه) who found at the battle of Yarmūk two bags of scriptures of the

people of the book and used to relate from them a great deal,¹⁰² said,

Certainly, he is, by God, referred to in the Tawrah as he is in the Qur'an. "O Prophet, We have sent you to give witness, to bring good tidings, and to warn, and to protect the illiterates. You are My slave and My messenger. I have named you *al-Mutawakkil*"; a man not rough or uncouth nor one who shouts loudly in the markets; a man who does not pay back evil with evil, but one who forgives and pardons; and He will not take him until he sets the deviant community aright by having them bear witness that there is no god but Allah. By Him, he will open blind eyes, dead ears, and closed hearts.¹⁰³

The same description, with slight variation, has also been reported from 'Abd Allah b. Salām and Ka'b al-Aḥbār (رضي الله عنهما), two well-known converted Jewish scholars.¹⁰⁴ Some parts of this description have been reported from 'Ā'ishah (رضي الله عنها), but she has been said to refer it to the Injil rather than the Tawrah. It is reported that she said, "The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) has been described in the Injil as (one who is) not rough, nor uncouth, not one who shouts loudly in the markets, and (as one who) does not repay evil with the like, but pardons and forgives."¹⁰⁵ Sometimes mistakenly this Tradition is directly (*marfū'an*) narrated from the Prophet (ﷺ) on the authority of 'Ā'ishah (رضي الله عنها).¹⁰⁶ Moreover, some of these descriptions have been reported from her without a reference to the Injil.¹⁰⁷

Description of the Prophet (ﷺ) is not confined to the Tawrah and the Injil. Some narrations entail that Prophet Muḥammad (ﷺ) has been prophesied in the Zabūr as well. It is reported on the authority of Wahb b. Munabbih (d. 114/732) that Allah revealed to prophet Dā'wūd (عليه السلام) in the Zabūr,

O Dā'wūd, there will come after you a prophet named Aḥmad and Muḥammad, a truthful man, a lord; I will never be angry with him, and he will never make me angry with him. I have forgiven him before he disobeyed me, both his previous and his later sins. His nation is forgiven. I have made gifts to them similar to those I gave

to the prophets, and I imposed duties upon them that I imposed upon the prophets and the messengers, so that they will come to me on Judgment Day with their light like that of the prophets.¹⁰⁸

Many Prophetic *Traditions* record that a number of people in the prophetic period found or asserted to find the prophecies about and descriptions of Prophet Muḥammad (ﷺ) in the Injīl available to them. Suyūṭī records from Bayhaqī (d. 458 A.H.) on the authority of Ibn ‘Abbās (رضي الله عنه) (d. 68 A.H.) that al-Jārūd b. ‘Abd Allah (رضي الله عنه) came to the Prophet (ﷺ), accepted Islam and said, “By whom Who sent you in truth, I have found your description in the Injīl. And for sure, the son of the blessed virgin has prophesied you.”¹⁰⁷ Moreover, al-Suyūṭī and Al-Ālūsī (d. 1270 A.H.) report from Ibn Sa‘d (d. 230 A.H.) on the authority of Sahl, the freedman of ‘Utaybah the following:

He [Sahl] was a Christian of Mirris and an orphan under the guardianship of his mother and his uncle. He used to recite from al-Injīl. He said: I seized a copy of my uncle’s which I read. I happened to come to a leaf, writing on which was uncommon when I passed by it and touched it with my hand. He said (continuing) I discovered that some leaves seemed to be pasted with an adhesive. He said: I tore them and discovered the qualities of Muḥammad (ﷺ). That he will not be of short stature nor of tall one. He will be of white complexion with two locks (of hair). Between his two shoulders there is a seal. He will often sit with his legs folded. He will not accept *ṣadaqah* (for himself). He will ride the ass and the camel. He will milk she goat and will put on patched shirt and he who does that is free from pride and he will do that. He will be descendant of Ismā‘īl; his name will be Aḥmad. Sahl said: when I reached this account of Muḥammad (ﷺ), my uncle stepped in and when noticed the leaf he beat me and said: What have you to do with the opening of this leaf and reading it. I said: In it are the qualities of the Prophet Aḥmad (ﷺ). Thereupon he said: He has not yet come.¹¹¹

These *Traditions* indicate that some copies of the Injīl, which contained the prophecies about the Prophet (ﷺ), must have survived in the Arabian Peninsula at least until the seventh century C.E. We do not

have enough information about them. However, one thing is confirmed that their contents must have been different from the canonical gospels, which do not contain such prophecies.

Some later authorities ascribe to prophet 'Īsā (ﷺ) some prophecies about Prophet Muḥammad (ﷺ) without a reference to the Injīl. Ibn Kathīr reported from Muqātil b. Ḥayyān (d. 150 A.H.) that the Almighty and Glorious Allah revealed to 'Īsā b. Maryam (ﷺ) as follows,

Serve Me well and listen and obey, O son of the pure, chaste, virgin. I have created you without a physical father and have made you a sign for the worlds, so worship Me only, and explain to the people of Sūrān in Syriac; tell those around you that I am the Existent Truth that will never pass away, believe in the Arab *ummī* (unlettered) Prophet; he who has the camel, and wears a *midra'ah* (outer garment), and a turban that is his crown, and sandals, and has a cane that is his staff. His hair is curly, his brow is broad, his eyebrows are joined, his eyes are large, his lashes are fine, his eyes are black, his nose is curved, his cheeks are distinct, and his beard is full. The sweat of his face is like pearls; from him the scent of musk emanates. His neck is like a silver vessel, and along his collarbone gold seems to flow. He has hair that grow long and soft from his throat to his navel, his stomach bearing no other hair. He is broad of fingers and toes. He overshadows all when he is with others. When he walks he seems to emerge from the rock and flow from the stream. He has few progeny, – as if he meant males as is offspring.¹¹¹

It is surprising to note, however, that most of the above-mentioned prophetic descriptions have also been narrated in the books of *Sīrah* and especially of *Shamā'il* in the same way, but without any reference to the previous scriptures. For instance, compare the above-mentioned passage with the following one: "It is reported from 'Alī (ﷺ) that the Prophet (ﷺ) was neither very tall nor short. He is broad of fingers and toes. He had a large head. The joints of the bones were also large. There was a thin line of hair from the chest to the navel. When he walked, it appeared as if he was descending from a high place."¹¹²

The rest of descriptions also get mention in other *ḥadīth*.¹¹³ However, such descriptions do not have any parallels in the existing gospels. Some

of them might have been derived from the same source whence the corpus of Jesus' sayings and stories emerged and scattered in the Islamic literature especially in the ascetic books and in a genre of religious literature called "Tales of the Prophets" (*Qaṣaṣ al-Anbiyā*).¹¹⁴ Raḥmat Allah Kirānawī (d. 1891), a famous Muslim polemicist of the nineteenth-century India, suggests that prophecies about Prophet Muḥammad (ﷺ) – recorded in early Muslim literature on the authority of converted people of the book but not found in the present canonical Jewish and Christian scriptures – might have well existed in the scriptures of the Jews and Christians, which are lost in the course of history.

A Critical Appraisal

One notes that although the *ḥadīth* literature contains a number of useful references to the Injīl, which was revealed to prophet 'Īsā (عليه السلام), some aspects are still in darkness. One finds references to the Injīl, which was in possession of Warāqah b. Nawfal. However, information in this regard is insufficient. Even the knowledge about the personality of Warāqah is obscure. Although, Islamic sources testify to his adoption of Christianity, they do not identify his denominational position among the Christian sects of his day. Moreover, neither the sources of his Injīl are known nor did it leave any traces behind. However, since the Islamic *Traditions* attest to his traveling to Syria, Bahrain, and the territories of the tribe of Ṭayy', one may surmise with some justification that he would have some association with either Nestorianism or Monophysitism, for these two denominations generally prevailed in these areas.

The above discussion of the *ḥadīth* literature indicates that Warāqah's Injīl was either in Arabic or in 'Ibrānī or in both. However, the modern scholarship, both Muslim and Western, is inclined to hold that it was most probably in Syriac from which he used to translate it into Arabic. Some classical *Ḥadīth* commentators also seem to have suggested such a view. Moreover, if the 'Ibrāniyyah mentioned in the *ḥadīth* literature is equated with the Syriac then almost all inconsistency is removed.

Those *ḥadīth Traditions*, which explain how and when the Injīl was revealed and inform about the number of previous revealed scriptures help to conceptualize the nature of the Injīl's revelation. However, it

should be noted that comparatively less authenticity and consistency characterize such *Traditions*. It clearly seems that the *ḥadīth* literature's attitude towards the Injīl is an extension of that of the Qur'ān. In the *ḥadīth Traditions*, the Injīl has been depicted as a Divine revelation to prophet 'Īsā (عليه السلام). One finds many parallels between the Qur'ān and the Injīl. Both descended on a specific night of *Ramaḍān*. Both were subdivided into *sūrahs* and some specific *sūrahs* of the Qur'ān were declared substitute for or simile of the Injīl as well as others were supposed to be unique having no similitude to the contents of any revealed scripture. It may imply that the original Injīl has been considered, in the *ḥadīth* literature, as verbatim word of God as are certain *sūrahs* of the Qur'ān and not as a posthumous historical or biographical record of Jesus' *logia* and deeds.

Ḥadīth literature points out the start of the corruption of the Injīl and other Christian scriptures and connects it with the conspiracies of the rulers. It draws attention towards the persecution of the faithful Christians after the ascension of prophet 'Īsā (عليه السلام), almost in accordance with the accounts of the history of Christianity as narrated by the Christians themselves. However, it seems more likely to set the scene of the *ḥadīth* literature's account of the persecution in the fourth century C.E. when the Trinitarian Church started a vigorous campaign against its opponents after the conversion of the Roman emperor Constantine I (r. 306-337 C.E.). Although, the Prophetic *Traditions* mostly level the charge of corruption against the people of the book in Jewish context, which is quite natural, in some cases, however, it does include the Christian scriptures as well. Whether this charge involves the corruption of both text and meaning or only of the meaning is a moot question, for the evidences support both views, though the charge of textual corruption is more explicit.

Notes and References

1. The term Prophetic *Traditions* or *ḥadīth* literature or Prophetic *Traditions* has been used in this study in a loose sense, which also includes the sayings of the *Companions* of the Prophet (ﷺ).
2. The Qur'ān, XLVI:9.
3. *Ibid.*, III:33; IV:163-64.
4. For the number of the adherents of different religions at the beginning of the

- twenty-first century, see Robert S. Ellwood and Gregory D. Alles, eds., *The Encyclopedia of World Religions*, Rev. Ed., New York, NY, Facts On File, 2007, vol. XIII, p. 87.
5. Wilfred C. Smith, *Islam in Modern History*, Princeton, NJ, Princeton University Press, 1957, pp. 17-18n13; Smith, "Some Similarities and Differences between Christianity and Islam: An Essay in Comparative Religion," in *The World of Islam: Studies in Honour of Philip K. Hitti*, Ed. James Kritzeck and R. Bayly Winder, London, Macmillan, 1959, p. 52; also see Sidney H. Griffith, "The Gospel in Arabic: An Inquiry into Its Appearance in the First 'Abbāsīd Century," *Oriens Christianus*, 1985, vol. LXIX, pp. 128-30.
 6. William H.T. Gairdner, "Moḥammedan Tradition and Gospel Record: The *Ḥadīth* and the Injīl," *The Moslem World*, 1915, vol. V, No. 4, pp. 349-79.
 7. For his views on the development of Prophetic *Traditions*, Muslim theology, and Islamic Law, see Ignaz Goldziher, *Muslim Studies (Muḥammedanische Studien)*, Ed. Samuel M. Stern, trans. C.R. Barber and Samuel M. Stern, 1967-1971, 2 vols., London, George Allen and Unwin; Goldziher, *The Zāhirīs, Their Doctrine and Their History; A Contribution to the History of Islamic Theology*, Trans. and Ed. Wolfgang Behn, Leiden, E.J. Brill, 1971; Goldziher, *Introduction to Islamic Theology and Law*, Trans. Andras and Ruth Hamori, Princeton, NJ, Princeton University Press, 1981. For a Muslim criticism of Goldziher's and Joseph Schacht's views on Prophetic Traditions and Islamic law, see Mohammad Mustafa Azmi, *Studies in Early Ḥadīth Literature with a Critical Edition of Some Early Texts*, Indianapolis, In: American Trust Publications, 1978; Al-Azami, *On Schacht's Origins of Muḥammadan Jurisprudence*, Lahore, Suhail Academy, 2004. For a brief historical and critical survey of the Western criticism of *ḥadīth* literature, see Jonathan A.C. Brown, *Ḥadīth: Muḥammad's Legacy in the Medieval and Modern World*, Oxford, Oneworld, 2009, pp. 197-239.
 8. It is not within the preview of the present study to evaluate author's arguments and conclusions about the reliability of the Gospel record and otherwise of the Prophetic *Traditions*. For a Muslim position on the issue, see Muḥammad Abu Laylah, *The Qur'ān and the Gospels: A Comparative Study*, Cairo, El-Falah for Translation Publishing, 1998; Ghulam Haider Aasi, *Muslim Understanding of Other Religions: A Study of Ibn Ḥazm's Kitāb al-Faṣl fī al-Milal wa Ahwā' wa al-Nahl*, Islamabad, Islamic Research Institute, 1999; For methods and history of *ḥadīth* criticism, see Nabia Abbott, *Studies in Arabic Literary Papyri II: Qur'ānic Commentary and Tradition*, Chicago, University of Chicago, 1967; Muḥammad Muṣṭafā al-A'zamī, *The History of the Qur'ānic Text from Revelation to Compilation: A Comparative Study with the Old and New Testaments*, Leicester, UK Islamic Academy, n.d.
 9. Gairdner, "Mohammedan Tradition and Gospel Record," 349; Smith, *Islam in Modern History*, pp. 17-18n13.
 10. Alfred Guillaume, "The Version of the Gospels Used in Medina circa 700 A.D.," *Al-Andalus*, 1950, vol. XV, No. 1, pp. 289-296.
 11. Lectionary is a book containing certain parts of the Bible selected for recitation on particular days of the year. Following the Jewish practice, the early Christians started reading extracts from the Old Testament on the Sabbath. Later they added

extracts from the writings of the Apostles and Evangelists as well. During the third and fourth centuries, they devised several lectionaries (*Britannica Encyclopedia of World Religions*, s.v. "lectionary"). One of them was the *Palestinian Syriac Lectionary of the Gospels*. For details on the *Palestinian Syriac Lectionary*, see Agnes Smith Lewis, introduction to *The Palestinian Syriac Lectionary of the Gospels*, ed. Agnes Smith Lewis and Margaret Dunlop Gibbs, London, Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner, and Co. 1899, pp. ix-xviii; Edgar J. Goodspeed, review of *The Palestinian Syriac Lectionary of the Gospels*, ed. Agnes Smith Lewis and Margaret Dunlop Gibbs, *The American Journal of Semitic Languages and Literatures*, 1901, vol. XVII, No. 3, pp. 191-192.

12. Griffith, *The Gospel in Arabic*, pp. 149-50.
13. *Ibid.*, p. 150.
14. David Cook, "New Testament Citations in the *Ḥadīth* Literature and the Question of Early Gospel Translations into Arabic," in *The Encounter of Eastern Christianity with Early Islam*, Ed. Emmanouela Grypeou, Mark N. Swanson, and David Thomas, Leiden, Brill, 2006, pp. 185-186.
15. Tarīf Khālīdī, *The Muslim Jesus*, Karachi, Oxford University Press, 2002.
16. Cook, *New Testament Citations in the Ḥadīth Literature*, p. 204.
17. It is pertinent to note that most of citations, which Cook refers to, are from books of *zuhud* (asceticism) or *Tārīkh Madīnat Dimashq* by Ibn 'Asākīr. However, ascribing these citations to *ḥadīth literature*, in view of the present writer, is problematic. Moreover, a cursory comparison of some citations with the given places of the New Testament led the present writer to the conclusion that many of them do not bear the least resemblance with the suggested biblical texts (for example, compare the citations 27 and 29 with Matthew 8.5-8, 11-15 and Matthew 10 respectively).
18. Ghassān 'Azīz Ḥusayn, *Waraqah b. Nawfal Mubashshir al-Rasūl: 'Asruhu, Hayātuhu, Shi'ruhu*, Beirut, Dar al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah, 1423/2002, pp. 49-50.
19. Griffith, *The Gospel in Arabic*, p. 144.
20. 'Abd al-Malik b. Hishām, *Sīrat al-Nabī*, n.p.: Dar al-Fikr, n.d., vol. I, p. 242; also see C.F. Robinson, "Waraka B. Nawfal," in *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, Ed. P.J. Bearban *et al.*, 2nd Edn., Leiden, Brill, 2002, vol. XI, pp. 142-143.
21. Muḥammad b. Ismā'il al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, Riyadh, Dar al-Salam, 1419/1999, *Ḥadīth* No. 3, p. 1.
22. Muḥammad b. Ḥabīb al-Baghdādī, *al-Munammaq fi Akhbār Quraysh*, Ed. Khurshid Ahmad Faruq, Beirut, 'Alam al-Kutub, n.d., pp. 156-158.
23. Aḥmad b. Abī Ya'qūb al-Ya'qūbī, *Ta'rikh al-Ya'qūbī*, Beirut, Dar Sadr & Dar Bayrut, 1960, vol. I, p. 257.
24. Al-Baghdādī, *al-Munammaq*, p. 158.
25. Jawād 'Alī, *al-Mufaṣṣal*, Baghdad, Dār al-'Ilm li 'l-Malāyīn, 1976, vol. VI, p. 621.
26. Al-Baghdādī, *al-Munammaq*, pp. 158-159.
27. Ismā'il b. Kathīr, *al-Sīrah al-Nabawiyyah*, Ed. Mustafa 'Abd al-Wahid, Beirut, Dar al-Fikr, 1398/1978, vol. I, pp. 367-368.
28. Aḥmad b. 'Alī b. Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī, *Fatḥ al-Bārī Sharḥ Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, Riyadh, Dār al-Salam, 1418/1998), vol. I, p. 34.

29. Al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, *Ḥadīth* No. 4953, p. 886; *Ḥadīth* No. 6982, p. 1204.
30. Muslim b. Ḥajjāj, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, Riyadh, Dār al-Salam, 1419/1998, *Ḥadīth* No. 252, p. 80.
31. Al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, *Ḥadīth* No. 3, p. 1.
32. *Ibid.*, *Ḥadīth* No. 3392, p. 567.
33. For example, see ‘Abd al-Razzāq b. Humām al-San‘āni, *al-Muṣannaḥ*, Ed. Habīb al-Raḥmān al-A‘zāmi, Beirut, al-Maktab al-Islāmi, 1403 A.H., vol. V, p. 321; Muḥammad b. Ḥabbān al-Bustī, *al-Iḥsān fī taqrīb Ṣaḥīḥ Ibn Ḥabbān*, Beirut, Mu‘assasat al-Risālah, 1408/1988, vol. I, p. 218; Aḥmad b. Ḥusayn al-Bayhaqī, *al-Sunān al-Kubrā*, Hyderabad Deccan, Majlis Dā‘irat al-Ma‘ārif al-Nizāmiyyah, 1344 A.H., vol. IX, p. 5; Ishāq b. Ibrāhīm Rahwayh al-Hanzalī, *Musnad Ishāq b. Rahwayh*, Ed. ‘Abd al-Ghāfir b. ‘Abd al-Ḥaqq, Madinah, Maktabat al-Imān, 1412/1991, vol. II, p. 316; Ya‘qūb b. Ishāq al-Isfarā‘īnī, *Musnad Abī ‘Awānah*, Beirut, Dār Ma‘rifah, n.d., vol. I, p. 103.
34. Al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, p. 1. Only Abū Dāwūd Sulaymān b. Dāwūd al-Ṭayālīsī relates that Warāqah used to read the Injīl *bi ‘l-‘ibrāniyyah*, al-Ṭayālīsī, *al-Musnad*, Beirut, Dār al-Ma‘rafah, n.d., p. 206.
35. Aḥmad b. ‘Alī b. Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī, *Fath al-Bārī*, vol. I, p. 34; Yaḥyā b. Sharaf al-Nawawī, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim bi Sharḥ al-Imām Abī Zakariyyā Yaḥyā b. Sharaf al-Nawawī*, Beirut, Dār al-Fikr, 1424/2004, vol. I, p. 165.
36. Maḥmūd b. Aḥmad al-‘Aynī, *‘Umdat al-Qari Sharḥ Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, Beirut, Dār al-Fikr, 1399/1979, vol. I, p. 52.
37. Ibn Hishām, *Sirāt al-Nabī*, vol. I, p. 256.
38. Ḥamidullah, *Two Christians of Pre-Islamic Mecca*, *Journal of the Pakistan Historical Society*, 1958, vol. VI, No. 2, p. 102.
39. Al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, *Ḥadīth* No. 3, p. 1.
40. Griffith, *Gospel in Arabic*, p. 145.
41. Kamāl S. Salibi, *Who was Jesus: Conspiracy in Jerusalem*, London, Tauris Parke Paperbacks, 2007, p. 60.
42. *Ibid.*, p. 61.
43. *Ibid.* However, it should be noted that in the view of Salibi the Injil of Warāqah is not one of the canonical Gospels; rather it must have been a much older one, perhaps it dated as far as the fourth or fifth century B.C.E., associated with the Qur’ānic ‘Isā (*ibid.*, 63). For his radical views on the origin of Judaism and Christianity, see Salibi, *The Bible Came from Arabia*, London, Jonathan Cape, 1985, and Salibi, *Who was Jesus*.
44. Griffith, *Gospel in Arabic*, p. 145.
45. *Ibid.*, 147.
46. *Ibid.*, p. 145.
47. Al-Harīrī, Abū Mūsa, *Qaṣṣ wa nabī*, Beirut, n.p., 1979, pp. 56-59. It is entirely a polemical book, written in the wake of the civil war in Lebanon during which Muslim-Christian relations reached their lowest ebb. For a critical review of it, see Aḥmad ‘Umrān, *al-Ḥaḳīqat al-Sa‘bat fī ‘l-Mizān*, Beirut, al-Mu‘assasat al-A‘lamī li ‘l-Matbū‘āt, 1415/1995.
48. Irfān Shahīd, “Islam and Oriens Christianus: Makka 610-622 A.D.,” in

- The Encounter of Eastern Christianity with Early Islam*, Ed. Emmanouela Grypeou, Mark N. Swanson and David Thomas *et al.*, Leiden, Brill, 2006, p. 18.
49. Aḥmad b. Taymiyyah, *al-Jawāb al-Ṣaḥīḥ liman Baddal dīn al-Maṣīḥ*, Ed. ‘Alī b. Ḥasan b. Nāṣir, ‘Abd al-‘Azīz b. Ibrāhīm al-‘Askar, and Ḥamdān b. Muḥammad al-Ḥamdān, Riyadh, Dar al-‘Aṣimah, 1414 A.H., vol. II, pp. 80-82; vol. III, p. 417.
 50. Al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, vol. I, *Ḥadīth* No. 3392, p. 567, *Ḥadīth* No. 4953, p. 886, *Ḥadīth* No. 6982, p. 1204; Muslim b. Hajjāj, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, *Ḥadīth* No. 252, p. 80.
 51. De Lacy O’Leary, *Comparative Grammar of the Semitic Languages*, London, Kegan Paul, 1923, pp. 14-15.
 52. Sulaymān b. Aḥmad al-Ṭabarānī, *al-Mu’jam al-awsāt*, Ed. Tāriq b. ‘Awd Allāh and ‘Abd al-Muḥsin b. Ibrāhīm al-Ḥusaynī, Cairo, Dār al-Haramayn, 1415 A.H., vol. IV, p. 111. Al-Ṭabarānī comments on this narration that only ‘Imrān al-Qaṭṭān narrated this *ḥadīth* from Qatādah (d. 118 A.H.), and that it has been narrated from the Messenger of God (ﷺ) only by this chain. However, this claim is questionable, for Ibn Kathīr mentions that Ibn Mardawayh narrates this *ḥadīth*, though with some variations, on the authority of Jābir b. ‘Abd Allāh as well (see Ismā‘īl b. ‘Umar b. Kathīr, *Tafsīr al-Qur’ān al-‘Azīm*, Ed. Sāmī b. Muḥammad Salāmah [n.p., Dār Taybah, 1420/1999], vol. I, p. 501; also see Abū Ya‘lā Aḥmad b. ‘Alī al-Tamīmī, *al-Musnad*, Ed. Ḥasan Salīm Asad, Damascus, Dār al-Mā‘mūn li ‘l-Turath, 1404/1984, vol. IV, p. 135).
 53. Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. Ḥanbal, *al-Musnad*, commented by Ḥamzah Aḥmad al-Zayn, Cairo, Dar al-*Hadīth*, 1416/1995, vol. XIII, p. 223. Its chain is *ḥasan*, because of ‘Imrān al-Qaṭṭān. However, the rest of transmitters are *thiqāt* (reliable) (see *ibid.*, vol. XIII, pp. 223n16921).
 54. Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr al-Qur’ān al-‘Azīm*, vol. I, p. 501.
 55. *Ibid.*
 56. Ibn Kathīr, *Qīṣaṣ al-Anbiyā’*, Ed. ‘Abd al-Qādir Aḥmad ‘Aṭā, Beirut, al-Maktabat al-Islāmiyyah, 1401/1981?, vol. II, p. 402.
 57. Ibn Ḥanbal, *al-Musnad*, vol. XIII, p. 222. Its chain is *ḥasan*, because of ‘Imrān al-Qaṭṭān (see *ibid.*, vol. XIII, pp. 222n, 16919).
 58. Aḥmad b. Ḥusayn al-Bayhaqī, *al-Sunan al-Ṣuḡhrā*, Ed. ‘Abd al-Mu‘ṭī Amīn Qal‘ajī, Karachi, Jāmi‘at al-Dirāsāt al-Islāmiyyah, 1410/1989, vol. I, p. 341.
 59. ‘Abd Allāh b. Muslim b. Qutaybah, *Gharīb al-Ḥadīth*, Beirut, Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyyah, 1408/1988, p. 54.
 60. Al-Bayhaqī, *al-Sunan al-Ṣuḡhrā*, vol. I, p. 341. Ibn Qutaybah mentions that sometimes the number of verses in some *al-Mi‘īn sūrahs* is less than one hundred (Ibn Qutaybah, *Gharīb al-Ḥadīth*, p. 54).
 61. See Muḥammad b. ‘Isā al-Tirmidhī, *Jāmi‘ al-Tirmidhī*, Riyadh, Dār al-Salām, p. 646. Al-Tirmidhī declares it *Ḥasan Ṣaḥīḥ* (*ibid.*, p. 647); Ibn Ḥanbal, *al-Musnad*, vol. XV, pp. 405-406.
 62. Sulaymān b. Aḥmad al-Ṭabarānī, *al-Mu’jam al-Kabīr*, Ed. Ḥamdī ‘Abd al-Ḥamid al-Salafī, Cairo, Maktabat Ibn Taymiyyah, 1983?, vol. XXII, p. 75.

63. Abū Nu‘aym Aḥmad b. ‘Abd Allāh al-Aṣbahānī, *Dalā‘il al-Nubuwwah*, Hyderabad Deccan, Majlis Dā‘irat al-Ma‘ārif al-‘Uthmāniyyah, 1369/1950, vol. I, p. 28.
64. Muḥammad b. ‘Abd Allāh al-Ḥākim, *al-Mustadrak ‘ala ‘l-Saḥīḥayn*, Ed. Maḥmūd Maṭrajī, Beirut, Dār al-Fikr, 1422/2002, vol. II, p. 125. Ḥākim declared it *Saḥīḥ* (authentic), but Dhahabī narrated, in *al-Talkhīṣ*, from Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal that scholars of *Ḥadīth* gave up narrations of one of its transmitters, that is, ‘Ubayd Allāh (see, *ibid.*, vol. II, pp. 125n, 2129).
65. Muḥammad b. Naṣr al-Marwazī, *Mukhtaṣar Qiyām al-Layl*, Faisalabad, *Ḥadīth Akādmī*, 1408/1988, p. 170. However, Albānī declares it *dā‘if jiddan* (very weak), because of one of its transmitters, Khārijah b. Mus‘ab (see Muḥammad Nāṣir al-Dīn al-Albānī, *Silsilat al-Aḥadīth al-Da‘īfah wa ‘l-Mawdū‘ah wa Atharuhā ‘l- Sayyi’ ‘alā ‘l-Ummah*, Riyadh, Dār al-Ma‘ārif, 1412/1992, vol. VII, p. 51).
66. ‘Abd Allāh b. ‘Abd al-Raḥmān al-Dārimī, *Musnad al-Dārimī*, Ed. Ḥusayn Salīm Asad al-Dārānī, Riyadh, Dār al-Mughnī, 1421/2000, vol. IV, p. 2140. Its chain is *da‘if* (weak), for al-Musayyib b. Rafī‘ who narrated it from ‘Abd Allāh b. Mas‘ūd did not meet the latter (see *ibid.*, vol. IV, pp. 2140n, 5).
67. Ibn Ḥanbal, *al-Musnad*, vol. XIII, pp. 344, 376; vol. XV, pp. 405-06. These *aḥadīth* are authentic (see *ibid.*, vol. XIII, pp. 344n17267, 376n17383; vol. XC, pp. 405-406nn, 20993-20994).
68. Al-Bustī, *Saḥīḥ Ibn Ḥabbān*, vol. II, p. 77. The chain of this *ḥadīth* is *da‘if jiddan* (extremely weak), for one of its transmitters is Ibrāhīm b. Hishām b. Yaḥyā b. Yaḥyā ‘l-Ghassānī whom Abū Ḥātim and Abū Zur‘āh declared *da‘if* (unreliable), though Ibn Ḥabbān himself authenticated him (*waththaqahu*) (see *ibid.*, vol. II, p. 79n).
69. Muḥammad b. Yūsuf al-Ṣāliḥī, *Subul al-Ḥudā wa ‘l-Rashād fī Sīrat Kayr al-‘Ibād*, Ed. ‘Ādil Aḥmad ‘Abd al-Mawjud and ‘Alī Muḥammad Mu‘awwid, Beirut, Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyyah, 1428/2007, vol. I, p. 319.
70. Muḥammad b. Aḥmad b. Iyās, *Badā‘i‘ al-Zuhūr fī Waqā‘i‘ al-Duhūr*, Cairo, Matba‘at Mustafā ‘l-Bābī ‘l-Halabī wa Awlādih, 1919, p. 178.
71. The translation is of ‘Abdullah Yūsuf ‘Ali, *The Meaning of the Holy Qur‘ān*, Beltsville, MD, Amana Publications, 1424/2004, pp. 237-238.
72. Aḥmad b. Shu‘ayb al-Nasā‘ī, *Sunan al-Nasā‘i al-Suḡhrā*, Riyadh, Dār al-Salām, 1420/1999, *Ḥadīth* No. 5402, p. 732.
73. *Ibid.* It is important to note that Jane D. McAuliffe misunderstands this *Tradition* while referring to Ṭabarī’s commentary on the Qur‘ānic verse LVII:27, as she thinks that the faithful group complained to the ruler against those who falsified the scripture and that the falsifiers chose the self-exile. She says, “Goaded by the taunts of the falsifiers, the faithful group sought redress from a sympathetic authority, demanding that he order their coreligionists to cease the altered recitation. When the king complied with this request, the falsifiers took umbrage and chose to exile themselves rather than return to the original scriptures”, (Jane Dammen McAuliffe, *Qur‘ānic Christians: An Analysis of Classical and Modern Exegesis*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1991, p. 264).
74. Al-Nasā‘ī, *Sunan al-Nasā‘i al-Suḡhrā*, p. 732.

75. *Ibid.*
76. *Ibid.*
77. *Ibid.*, *Ḥadīth* No. 5402, pp. 732-733.
78. Al-Ḥākim, *al-Mustadrak*, vol. III, p. 85. Ḥākim declared it *Ṣaḥīḥ* (authentic). However, Dhahābī, in *al-Talkhīṣ*, declared it weak because one of its transmitters was ‘Āqil b. Yaḥyā whom Bukhārī declared *munkar al-ḥadīth* (see, *ibid.*, vol. III, pp. 85n, 3840).
79. Al-Nasā’i, *Sunan al-Nasa’i al-Sughra*, *Ḥadīth* No. 5402, p. 733.
80. *Ibid.*
81. Al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, p. 1303.
82. *Ibid.*
83. Aḥmad b. ‘Abd al-Raḥīm al-Dihlawī, *al-Fawz al-Kabīr Fi Uṣūl al-Tafsīr*, Aleppo, Dār al-Ghawthānī, 1429/2008, p. 29. It is pertinent to note that al-Dihlawī first admits the existence of literal distortion in the Tawrah but then explains it in a way that cannot be but distortion of meaning.
84. Aḥmad b. ‘Alī b. Hajar al-‘Asqalānī, *Fatḥ al-Bārī*, vol. XIII, p. 642.
85. *Ibid.*, vol. XIII, p. 645.
86. Al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, p. 1266. The translation is of Muḥammad bin Ismaiel al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, *Arabic-English*, Trans. Muḥammad Matraji, New Delhi, Islamic Book Service, 1997, vol. IX, pp. 357, 359.
87. Muḥammad b. Jarīr al-Ṭabarī, *Jamī’ al-Bayān*, vol. VI, p. 536.
88. Al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, p. 1266. The Translation is of al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, *Arabic-English*, vol. IX, pp. 357, 359.
89. Al-Darimī, *Musnad al-Darimī*, vol. I, p. 403. Its chain is *dā’if* (weak), because of one of its transmitters Mujāhid. However, the authenticity of this *ḥadīth* is no less than *ḥasan* (see *ibid.*, vol. I, p. 403n2).
90. Al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, *Ḥadīth* No. 7362, p. 1266.
91. *Ibid.*, *Ḥadīth* No. 7362, p. 1302, *Ḥadīth* No. 7542, p. 1302.
92. *Ibid.*, p. 776.
93. Muḥammad b. Yazīd b. Mājah, *Sunan Ibn Mājah*, Riyadh, Dār al-Sālam, 1420/1999, p. 585; Al-Ḥākim, *al-Mustadrak*, vol. I, pp. 199-200. Ḥākim declared it *ṣaḥīḥ* (authentic) and Dhahābī, in *al-Talkhīs*, agreed with him (see *ibid.*, vol. I, pp. 199-200nn, 341-42).
94. Al-Ṭabarānī, *al-Mu’jām al-Kabīr*, vol. XVIII, pp. 332-334. The author of *al-Mājma’* declared its transmitters as *thīqāt* (reliable) (see *ibid.*, vol. XVIII, pp. 332-334n, 854).
95. Ibn Hishām, *Sīrat al-Nabī*, vol. II, p. 175.
96. Ibn Ḥanbal, *al-Musnad*, vol. IV, pp. 244-246. The chain of this *ḥadīth* is *ḥasan* (see *ibid.*, vol. IV, pp. 244-245n, 4400).
97. Ibn Kathīr, *al-Sīrah al-Nabawīyyah*, vol. I, pp. 324-325. The translation is, with slight changes, of Ibn Kathīr, *The Life of the Prophet Muḥammad*, Trans. Trevor Le Gassick, Berkshire, Garnet Publishing, 1998, vol. I, pp. 234-235.
98. Ibn Hishām, that Ibn Suriya later allegedly embraced Islam. See, *Sīrat al-Nabī*, vol. III, pp. 369, 378.
99. Ibn Kathīr, mentions that Ibn Suriya later allegedly embraced Islam, see *al-Sīrah al-Nabawīyyah*, vol. I, p. 324.
100. *Ibid.*, vol. I, p. 324.
101. *Ibid.*, vol. I, pp. 326-327.

102. *Ibid.*, vol. I, p. 328. Ibn Kathīr notes that many previous Muslim scholars used the term Tawrah to denote the scriptures of the People of the Book in general and that their perception of the Tawrah is broader than what was actually revealed to Prophet Mūsā (ﷺ) (*ibid.*).
103. Al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, p. 341.
104. *Ibid.*, Muḥammad b. Jarīr al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-Bayān*, vol. XIII, p. 164.
105. Muḥammad b. Sa'd, *Al-Ṭabaqāt al-Kubrā*, Ed., Ihsan Abbas, Beirut, Dar Sadir, 1968, vol. I, p. 363; Al-Ḥākim, *al-Mustadrak*, vol. III, pp. 214-215. Ḥākim declared it *Ṣaḥīḥ* (authentic) and Dhahābī, in *al-Talkhīṣ*, agreed with him (see *ibid.*, vol. III, pp. 214-215n, 4277).
106. Muḥammad b. Ismā'il b. Kathīr, *al-Bidāyat wa 'l-Nihāyah*, Ed. 'Alī Shayrī, Beirut, Dār Iḥyā' al-Turāth al-'Arabī, 1408/1988, vol. II, p. 400.
107. Aḥmad b. al-Ḥusayn al-Bayhaqī, *Dalā'il al-Nubuwwah*, Ed. 'Abd al-Mu'tī Qal'ajī, Beirut, Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah, 1429/2008, vol. I, p. 315.
108. Ibn Kathīr, *al-Sīrah al-Nabawīyyah*, vol. I, p. 329. The translation is of Ibn Kathīr, *Life of the Prophet Muḥammad* (ﷺ), vol. I, pp. 237-238.
109. Al-Bayhaqī, *Dalā'il al-Nubuwwah*, vol. II, p. 105; Abd al-Raḥmān b. Abī Bakr al-Suyūṭī, *al-Durr al-Manthūr fī 'l-Tafsīr al-Ma'thūr*, Beirut, Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah, 1421/2000, vol. III, p. 245.
110. Ibn Sa'd, *Al-Ṭabaqāt al-Kubrā*, vol. I, p. 363. The translation is of S. Moinul Haq, Trans., Ibn Sa'd's *Kitāb al-Ṭabaqāt al-Kabīr*, Karachi, Pakistan Historical Society, 1972, vol. I, p. 426; al-Suyūṭī, *al-Durr al-Manthūr*, vol. III, p. 245; Maḥmūd al-Alūsī, *Rūḥ al-ma'ānī fī tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-'Azīm wa 'l-Sab' al-Mathānī*, Ed. Muḥammad Aḥmad al-Amad and 'Umar 'Abd al-Salām al-Salāmī, Beirut, Dār Iḥyā' al-Turāth al-'Arabī and Mu'assasah al-Ta'rīkh al-'Arabī, 1420/1999, vol. IX, pp. 107-108.
111. Ibn Kathīr, *al-Sīrah al-Nabawīyyah*, vol. I, pp. 330-331. The translation is, with some variations, of Ibn Kathīr, *Life of the Prophet Muḥammad* (ﷺ), vol. I, p. 239.
112. Muḥammad b. Sūrat al-Tirmidhī, *al-Shamā'il al-Muḥammadiyyah*, Ed. Muḥammad 'Aḥfīf al-Za'bī, Jeddah, Dār al-Maṭbū'āt al-Ḥadīthah, 1409/1988), p. 19.
113. See al-Bayhaqī, *Dalā'il al-Nubuwwah*, vol. I, pp. 268-275.
114. On Jesus' sayings and stories as preserved in Muslim literature, see Khalidi's *The Muslim Jesus*, which also contains a detailed introduction, in which the author attempts to place this genre in its historical context. He names this kind of literature "Muslim gospel."
115. Raḥmat Allah b. Khalīl al-Raḥmān al-Kirānawī, Izhār al-Ḥaqq, Ed. Muḥammad Aḥmad Malkawī, Riyadh, *Al-Ri'asah al-'Ammah li Idarat al-Buḥuth al-'Ilmiyyah wa 'l-Iftā' wa 'l-Da'wah wa 'l-Irshād*, 1410/1989, vol. II, p. 587.

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