

JEWS IN THE QUR'AN

Surah 2 (The Cow)

[2.40] O children of Israel! **Call to mind My favor which I bestowed on you and be faithful to (your) covenant with Me**, I will fulfill (My) covenant with you; and Me, Me alone, should you fear.

[2.47] **O children of Israel! Call to mind My favor which I bestowed on you and that I made you excel the nations.**

[2.62] **Surely those who believe, and those who are Jews, and Christians, and Sabians;** whoever believes in Allah and the Last Day and does good, **they shall have their reward from their Lord**, and there is no fear for them, nor shall they grieve.

[2.88] And they say: Our hearts are covered. No, **Allah has cursed them on account of their unbelief.** Therefore, they believe but little.

[2.111] And they say: None shall enter the garden (or paradise) except he who is a Jew or a

[2.121] **Those to whom We have given the Book recite it with its true recital. They [are the ones who] believe in it.** And whoever disbelieves in it - they will lose out.

Surah 4 (The Women)

[4.46] **Of those who are Jews (there are those who) alter words from their places.** They say: "We have heard" but they have become disobedient. And [they say]: "Hear" without making it heard, and: "Keep us!", but their tongues distort (the words) and they disdain the religion. (...) **But Allah has cursed them on account of their unbelief.** Therefore, they only believe a little.

[4.47] O you who have been given the Book! Believe that which We have revealed, verifying what you have, before We alter faces then turn them on their backs, or curse them as We cursed the violators of the Sabbath, and the command of Allah shall be executed.

[4.50] See how they forge a lie against Allah, and this is sufficient as a manifest sin.

[4.160] Therefore, for the iniquity of those who are Jews We forbade them the good things which had been made lawful for them and for their hindering many (people) from Allah's way.

[4.161] And their taking usury though indeed they were forbidden it and their devouring the property of people falsely, and We have prepared for the unbelievers among them a painful chastisement.

Surah 5 (The Table)

[5.13] **But on account of their breaking their covenant, We cursed them and made their hearts hard. They altered the words from their places, and they neglected a portion of what they were reminded of; and you shall always discover treachery in them except for a few of them...**

[5.18] **The Jews and the Christians say: We are the sons of Allah and His beloved ones. Say: Why does He then chastise you for your faults? Nay, you are mortals** from among those whom He has created. He forgives whom He pleases and chastises whom He pleases.

[5.43] And how do they make you a judge while they have the Torah wherein is Allah's judgment? Yet they turn back after that, and these are not the believers.

[5.44] Surely, We revealed the Torah in which was guidance and light; the prophets who submitted themselves (to Allah) used it to judge among those who were Jews...

[5.51] **O you who believe! Do not take the Jews and the Christians for friends.** They are friends of each other; and whoever amongst you takes them for a friend, then surely, he is one of them; surely Allah does not guide the unjust people.

[5.59] **Say: O followers of the Book!** Do you find fault with us (for anything) except that we believe in Allah and in what has been revealed to us and what was revealed before, and that **most of you are transgressors?**

[5.64] The Jews say: The hand of Allah is tied up! Their hands shall be shackled and they shall be cursed for what they say. No, both His hands are spread out ...

[5.69] Surely those who believe and those who are Jews and the Sabians, and the Christians whoever believes in Allah and the last day and does good-- they shall have no fear, nor shall they grieve.

[5.70] Certainly **We made a covenant with the children of Israel, and We sent to them messengers; whenever there came to them a messenger with what that their souls did not desire, some (of them) did they call liars and some they slew.**

[5.78] Those who disbelieved from among the children of Israel were cursed by the tongue of David and Jesus, son of Mary; this was because they disobeyed and used to exceed the limit.

[5.79] They used not to forbid each other the hateful things (which) they did; certainly, evil was that which they did.

[5.82] Certainly **you will find the most violent of people in enmity for those who believe (to be) the Jews** and those who are polytheists, and you will certainly find the nearest in friendship to those who believe (to be) those who say: We are Christians; this is because there are priests and monks among them and because they do not behave proudly.

Surah 6 (The Cattle)

[6.146] **To those who were Jews, We made unlawful** every animal having claws. And of oxen and sheep We made unlawful to them the fat of both, except such as was on their backs or the entrails or what was mixed with bones. **This was a punishment We gave them on account of their rebellion**, and We are surely Truthful.

Surah 9 (The Immunity)

[9.30] **The Jews say: Ezra is the son of Allah;** and the Christians say: The Messiah is the son of Allah; these are the words of their mouths; they imitate the saying of those who disbelieved before; may Allah destroy them; how they are turned away!

[9:34] **O you who believe! Most surely many of the rabbis and the monks eat away the property of men falsely and turn (them) from Allah's way;** and (as for) those who hoard up gold and silver and do not spend it in Allah's way, **announce to them a painful chastisement....**

Surah 17 (The Children of Israel)

[17.104] **We said to the Israelites (after him): Dwell in the land!** When the promise of the next life shall come to pass, we will bring you both together in judgment.

Surah 20 (Ta Ha)

[20.80] O children of Israel! Indeed, We delivered you from your enemy, and We made a covenant with you on the blessed side of the mountain, and We sent to you the manna and the quails.

Surah 40 (The Believer)

[40.53] And certainly We gave Moses guidance, and We made the children of Israel inherit the Book.

Surah 45 (The Kneeling)

[45.16] And certainly We gave the Book and the wisdom and the prophecy to the children of Israel, and We gave them of the goodly things, and We made them excel the nations.

Surah 62 (The Congregation)

[62.6] Say: **O you who are Jews, if you think that you are the favorites of Allah to the exclusion of other people, then invoke death if you are truthful.**

Sura 33:26

“And those of the People of the Scripture who supported them¹, He brought down from their fortresses, and He cast terror into their hearts as you² killed part of them, and you took another part as captives.”

Tafsīr Al-Tabarī:

The explanation of God’s word: *“And those of the People of the Scripture who supported them He brought down from their fortresses, and He cast terror into their hearts as you killed part of them, and you took another part as captives.”*

The Almighty brings up the following recollection: God had brought down those who had assisted the bands of the Quraysh and the Ghaṭafān against the messenger of God (God grant him salvation and peace) and his companions. This is what the verse means by ‘supporting them’. The ones alluded to are the Banū Qurayṣa, as they were the ones who had supported these bands against the messenger of God (God grant him salvation and peace). The phrase *“of the People of the Scripture”* means ‘of the People of the Torah’ as they were Jews, and the term *“from their fortresses”* means ‘from their strongholds’.

The scholars of interpretation have explained this in the same vein as we did.

In the words of the following [commentator]:

Muḥammad ibn `Amr told me that Abu `Āṣim passed on the tradition saying that he had heard it from `Īsa. Furthermore, Al-Ḥārith told me that Al-Ḥasan passed on the tradition saying that he had heard it from Warqā’, both going back to Ibn Abī Najīḥ, who heard it from Mujāhid: [About] *“And those of the People of the Scripture who supported them He brought down...”* he said: These are the Qurayṣa; He brought them down from their fortresses.

Bashar told me that Yazīd passed on the tradition saying that he had heard it from Sa`īd who had heard it from Qatāda, who said [referring the words] *“And those of the People of the Scripture who supported them He brought down”* that these were the Banū Qurayṣa. They supported Abū Sufyān and corresponded with him. Thus they violated the treaty that existed between them and God’s prophet.’ Furthermore he said: ‘God’s messenger (God grant him salvation and peace) explained [something] to us in the home of Zaynab, daughter of Jaḥsh. He was washing his head and his cuts were already cleaned. Then [the angel] Gabriel came to [Muḥammad] (God grant him salvation and peace), and said: ‘May God forgive you [of any shortcomings]! The angels have not laid down their weapons for forty nights. So rise up against the tribe of the Qurayṣa! I have cut the strings of their bows, I have opened their gates, and I have left them in shock and confusion’.

He continued: ‘So the messenger of God (God grant him salvation and peace) put on his breast plate and set out on the dirt-path of the Banū Ghanam. The people followed him, raising so much dust that he

¹ Who supported the anti-Muslim forces

² The Muslims

got covered with it, even up to his eyebrow. When the messenger of God (God grant him salvation and peace) arrived at their place, they besieged [the Qurayza] and he called out to them: 'Brotherhood of monkeys!' They answered him: 'Abū Al-Qāsim³! Why such lewd language?' They conceded to accept the judgment of Ibn Mu`ādh, for they had an alliance with his clan and therefore they hoped that he would be inclined towards them with leniency. Abū Lubāba however gestured to them [a warning] that there would be slaughter. Then God revealed the verse (Sura 8:27): *"You faithful ones! Do not betray God and the messenger, nor betray what has been entrusted to you, knowingly."* [Ibn Mu`ādh] passed judgment on [the Qurayza] that they should be killed, that their children should be taken captive and that their real estate would fall to the Muslim immigrants from Mecca, but not to the Muslims from Medina. His tribe and his clan said to him: 'You have favored the immigrants over us with real estate!' He answered: 'You already possess real estate, but the immigrants do not have any.' We were told that God's messenger (God grant him salvation and peace) called out 'Allāhu Akbar!' and exclaimed: 'He decreed God's judgement over you!'"

Ibn Ḥamīd told us that Salama passed on the tradition from Ibn Ishāq who said: 'When the messenger of God (God grant him salvation and peace) withdrew from the trench, he returned with the Muslims to Medina and they laid down their weapons. Then, when it was noon, Gabriel appeared to the messenger of God (God grant him salvation and peace).'

Likewise Ibn Ḥamīd told us that Salama passed on the tradition saying that it was passed on by Muḥammad Ibn Ishāq who had heard it from Ibn Shihāb Al-Zuhrī: 'Donned with a turban made of brocade, on a she-mule that had a saddle covered with a silk garment, [the angel Gabriel] said: 'Did you already put down your arms, o messenger of God?' He replied: 'Yes'. Said Gabriel: 'The angels have not put down their weapons yet! You only returned because of the request of the people. God is commanding you, Muḥammad, to head for the Banū Qurayza, while I advance on the Banū Qurayza [as well].' Thereupon God's messenger (God grant him salvation and peace) called out and issued the order. He announced to the people: 'If someone harkens and obeys, then he shall surely not perform the afternoon prayer until he enters [the place of] the Banū Qurayza.' The messenger of God (God grant him salvation and peace) first sent Alī the son of Abū Ṭālib (God be pleased with him) ahead to the Banū Qurayza with his banner. The people rushed ahead of it⁴. Alī, son of Abū Ṭālib (may God be pleased with him) proceeded until he approached the fortress. From [the fortress] he heard them utter despicable words about God's messenger (God grant him salvation and peace), so he went back and met the messenger of God (God grant him salvation and peace) on the road. He said: 'Messenger of God! Do not come closer to these repulsive people.' He replied: 'Why not? Should I assume that you heard something offensive from them regarding me?' He answered: 'Yes messenger of God.' He then said: "If only they had seen me, they would not have said anything of the kind.' When the messenger of God (God grant him salvation and peace) approached their fortress, he said: 'Brotherhood of monkeys! Did God humiliate you and bring down vengeance on you?' They replied: 'Abū Al-Qāsim! You are not stupid.' The messenger of God (God grant him salvation and peace) walked with the horn blowers by his companions before he reached the Banū Qurayza. He said: 'Did anyone pass by you?' They replied:

³ One of the names of Muḥammad

⁴ Of the banner

‘Messenger of God, Dihya the son of Khalīfa Al-Kalbī passed by on a white she-mule that had a saddle, covered with a silk garment. The messenger of God (God grant him salvation and peace) replied: ‘That was [the angel] Gabriel who was sent to the Banū Qurayza. He will make their fortress tremble and he will cast terror into their hearts.’ When the messenger of God (God grant him salvation and peace) arrive at the Qurayza, he set up camp at one of the wells that was located in an area of their estates, which was called the Ana Well. The people followed in his footsteps. There were men who came to him who had already prayed the evening prayer, but they had not performed the afternoon prayer yet, according to [their understanding of] the words of the messenger of God (God grant him salvation and peace): ‘One shall surely not perform the afternoon prayer until he enters [the place of] the Banū Qurayza.’ They then performed the afternoon prayer [later]. God did not find fault with them for this in His book⁵, nor did His messenger reprimand them for it.

Then there is the tradition from Muḥammad ibn Ishāq who had heard it from his father, who had heard it from Ma`bad the son of Ka`b the son of Mālik Al-Anṣārī, who said: ‘The messenger of God (God grant him salvation and peace) besieged them twenty five nights until the siege exhausted them and God cast terror into their hearts. Now, Ḥuyayy ibn Akhṭab⁶ had joined the Banū Qurayza in their fortress when the Quraysh and the Ghaṭafān had abandoned them, thereby fulfilling the promise he had made to Ka`b ibn Asad⁷. When they convinced themselves that the messenger of God (God grant him salvation and peace) was not going to give up without fighting them, Ka`b ibn Asad said to them: ‘Jewish men! The matter that you see has befallen you. I now propose to you three evils; choose any of them’. They said: ‘What are they?’ He said: ‘That we pledge allegiance to this man and we believe in him, for by God, you realize that he is a prophet sent [by God], and that he is the one that you find in your Scripture. Then you will safeguard your blood and your properties, your children and your wives⁸.’ They answered: ‘We shall never depart from the law of the Torah, and we shall not exchange it for something else!’ He said: ‘If you deny this [proposal] of mine, then go on! Let’s kill our children and our wives. Then we send out men with drawn swords to Muḥammad and his companions, and we won’t leave anything valuable behind that is important to us, and may God judge between us and Muḥammad. If we perish, we perish, but we will not have left anything behind to be concerned about. However if we triumph, then, by my life, we shall again take wives and [beget] children⁹.’ They answered: ‘Shall we kill these poor ones? What good would life be after them?’ He said: ‘If you deny this proposal [as well], then tonight is the night of Shabbat. Muḥammad and his companions will possibly feel safe. So attack them [on Shabbat]! We might be able to strike Muḥammad and his companions by surprise¹⁰. They replied: ‘Should we violate our Shabbat and introduce a practice that those before us never did? What about those – whom you knew – who were transformed [into monkeys]. Does that not frighten you?’

⁵ God’s heavenly book in which man’s good and bad deeds are recorded

⁶ Chief of the Jewish tribe of the Banū Al-Naḍīr which had been expelled before

⁷ Leader of the Banū Qurayza

⁸ This is the first evil

⁹ This is the second evil

¹⁰ Third evil

He said: ‘There is a man among you¹¹ who has always remained prudent his whole life, ever since his mother gave birth to him.’

He continued¹²: ‘They then sent [a request] to the messenger of God (God grant him salvation and peace): “Send us Abū Lubāba the son of `Abd Al-Mundhir who is related to the clan of `Amr ibn `Awf – since they were allied with the Aws – that we may ask him for advice on our situation.’ Thereupon the messenger of God (God grant him salvation and peace) dispatched him. When they saw him, the men rose in his honor and the women and children broke out in tears and cried in his presence. He felt pity on them. When they asked him: ‘Abū Lubāba, do you think we should give up and surrender to the judgment of Muḥammad?’ He said: ‘Yes’, but with his hand he gestured to his throat indicating that there would be slaughter. Abū Lubāba [later] said: ‘By God, my feet hadn’t left before I realized that I had betrayed God and his messenger¹³.’ Abū Lubāba then rushed out. He did not come to the messenger of God (God grant him salvation and peace) but instead he tied himself in the mosque to one of its pillars, and said: ‘I will not leave my place until God will forgive me for what I have done’, and he made a pact with God to never set foot on [the fortress of] the Banū Qurayza, so that ‘God will never see me again in the town where I betrayed God and his messenger.’ When his news reached God’s messenger (God grant him salvation and peace) after he had been waiting for him for a long time, he said: ‘Had he come to me, I would have prayed for his forgiveness. But since he did what he did, I am not the one who can release him from his place until God grants him forgiveness.’

Then Tha`laba ibn Sa`ya, Asīd ibn Sa`ya and Asad ibn `Ubayd who were a band of the Banū Hudhayl, not belonging to the Banū Qurayza¹⁴ and neither to the [Jewish] Naḍīr tribe, their lineage being above that as they belonged to the general people, converted to Islam during that same night when the Qurayza came down and surrendered to the judgment of the messenger of God (God grant him salvation and peace). And during that very night `Amr ibn Sa`dā from the Qurayza came out and passed by the guard of the messenger of God (God grant him salvation and peace); Muḥammad ibn Maslama Al-Anṣārī was at the head of [the guard] during that night. When he saw him, he said: ‘Who is that?’ He answered: ‘Amr ibn Sa`dā’. `Amr had refused to join the Banū Qurayza in their betrayal of the messenger of God (God grant him salvation and peace), so he said: ‘I will never betray Muḥammad!’ When he recognized him, Muḥammad ibn Maslama said: ‘O God! Do not exclude me when you forgive the stumbling of the kind-hearted!’ Then he let him go. [‘Amr] went on his way and slept that night in the mosque of the messenger of God (God grant him salvation and peace) in Medina. Then he disappeared, and unto the present day it is not known where on God’s Earth he went. The matter was relayed to the messenger of God (God grant him salvation and peace), who said: ‘That man, may God deliver him through his loyalty.’ [Ibn Ishāq] added: ‘But other people claim that he was tied up with an old rope by those who also tied up the [other] Banū Qurayza after they had come down and surrendered to the judgment of God’s messenger (God grant him salvation and peace), and that he managed to throw off his rope, and it is

¹¹ I.e. from among your allies

¹² The narrator; Muḥammad ibn Ishāq

¹³ By giving them a warning

¹⁴ In other sources at least some of these they are called “Al-Qurazī” i.e. from the Banū Qurayza.

unknown where he went, and that the messenger of God (God grant him salvation and peace) [then] uttered this saying. God knows best.'

In the morning they surrendered to the judgment of the messenger of God (God grant him salvation and peace), and the Aws came in a rush. They said: 'Messenger of God! These are our associates and [this time] not of the Khazraj. You know what you recently did to the associates of the Khazraj...!' – Before [the episode of] the Banū Qurayṣa, the messenger of God (God grant him salvation and peace) had besieged the [Jewish tribe of] Banū Qaynuqā' who were the allies of the Khazraj. When the [Qaynuqā'] surrendered to his judgment, 'Abdullah ibn Ubayy ibn Salū¹⁵ had asked [Muḥammad] for them, and he had granted them to him. – When the Aws were done speaking to him, the messenger of God (God grant him salvation and peace) said: 'Would you not agree, people of Aws, if someone from among you would judge them?' They replied: 'Most certainly!' He said: 'So Sa'd ibn Mu'adh it will be!' The messenger of God (God grant him salvation and peace) had placed Sa'd ibn Mu'adh in the tent of Rufayda, the wife of someone who had embraced Islam, which was located in his mosque. She nursed the wounded, dedicating herself selflessly in the service of those Muslims who were uncared for. The messenger of God (God grant him salvation and peace) had said to [Sa'd's] kinsmen when an arrow struck him in [the Battle of] the Trench: 'Place him in the tent of Rufayda, close by, so I can visit him!' When the messenger of God (God grant him salvation and peace) then appointed him as the judge over the Banū Qurayṣa, his kinsmen came to him and carried him on a donkey. They had made it comfortable for him with a pillow made of sheepskin for he was a corpulent man. Then they proceeded with him to the messenger of God (God grant him salvation and peace), saying: 'Abu 'Amr¹⁶! Deal charitably with your allies! Now that the messenger of God (God grant him salvation and peace) has put you in charge of this, you should deal charitably with them!' When they talked to him like this on and on, he said: 'The moment has come for Sa'd that no one, by God, can tell him anything.' Some of his kinsmen who were with him went back to the house of the Banū Abd Al-Ashhal¹⁷ where they announced the death of the Banū Qurayṣa men, even before Sa'd ibn Mu'adh got there, deducing it from the words they had heard from him. When Sa'd ultimately got to the messenger of God (God grant him salvation and peace) and to the Muslims, [Muḥammad] said: 'Stand up for your master!' So [the companions of Muḥammad] stood up for [Sa'd]. They said: 'Abū 'Amr! The messenger of God (God grant him salvation and peace) has appointed you over your allies to judge them...!?' Sa'd replied: 'Regarding this, do you accept upon yourselves, by the covenant of God and by His pact, that what I decide will be their verdict?' He¹⁸ answered: 'Yes'. Then he said: 'What about the one right over here?' [He said it] in the direction of where God's messenger (God grant him salvation and peace) was located, while turning his head away from the messenger of God (God grant him salvation and peace) in reverence for him. The messenger of God (God grant him salvation and peace) then said: 'Yes'. Spoke Sa'd: 'Well then, I judge that the men shall be killed, that their properties shall be divided, and that the women and children shall be taken captive.'

¹⁵ A leader of the Banū Khazraj

¹⁶ One of the names of Sa'd ibn Mu'adh

¹⁷ A sub-clan of the Banū Aws

¹⁸ Should probably be 'they'

Ibn Ḥamīd told us that Salama passed on the tradition, saying: Muḥammad ibn Ishāq told me, who had heard it from `Āṣim ibn `Omar ibn Qatāda who had heard it from `Abd al-Raḥmān the son of `Amr the son of Sa`d ibn Mu`ādh, who heard it from `Alqama ibn Waqqāṣ Al-Lithī, who said: 'The messenger of God (God grant him salvation and peace) said: 'You judged them with the judgment of God from above the seven spheres.'

They then told [the Banū Qurayza] to come down. The messenger of God (God grant him salvation and peace) had detained them in the house of the daughter of Al-Ḥārith, a woman of the Banū Al-Najjār. The messenger of God (God grant him salvation and peace) had them taken out to the market place of Medina, which is still its market place today, and had ditches dug there. He then sent for them and had them decapitated in these ditches. They were brought out to him in groups. Among them was the enemy of God Ḥuyayy ibn Akhṭab, as well as Ka`b ibn Asad the head of their people, six or seven hundred, while many others say : There were between eight hundred and nine hundred.

As the [captives] were taken away in groups to the messenger of God (God grant him salvation and peace), they asked Ka`b ibn Asad: 'Ka`b! What do you think they are going to do to us?' Ka`b said: 'Don't you have any comprehension whatsoever? Don't you notice that the one who summons [us] does not slow down? And that no one from you who is taken away is coming back? This, by God, is assassination!'

They kept herding them out until the messenger of God (God grant him salvation and peace) had finished them off. Ḥuyayy ibn Akhṭab, the enemy of God, was brought. He was wearing a garb with holes he had made on all sides, the size of a fingertip, everywhere fingertip-sized holes so that it would not be taken as spoil. His hands were tied to the back of his neck with a rope. When he noticed the messenger of God (God grant him salvation and peace), he said: 'Yet, by God, I don't blame myself for opposing you. However, he who forsakes God will be forsaken¹⁹.' He then turned to the people and said: 'O people! Do not object to God's decree, God's Book and His edict, as massacre was foreordained to the Israelites!' He then sat down and his head was cut off. Jabal ibn Jawwāl Al-Tha`labī²⁰ commented:

'Ibn Akhṭab, by my life, felt no remorse

But who deserts his Lord, shall be by Him deserted²¹

Devised a pretext for his scheming to endorse²²

Cause glory-glutton turns a man who is perverted²³!

Ibn Ḥamīd told us that Salama passed on the tradition saying: Muḥammad ibn Ishāq passed on a tradition, which he had heard from Muḥammad ibn Ja`far ibn Al-Zubayr, who had heard it from `Amr ibn

¹⁹ While the commentators seem to attribute "who forsakes God" to Ḥuyayy, as it seems unlikely that Ḥuyayy saw himself as betraying God, it possibly alludes to Muḥammad. Apparently the rest of his speech serves to legitimize the massacre, although it is possible that the Jewish community took this as a test or divine retribution, as has been recorded in many cases throughout Jewish history.

²⁰ Reportedly a poet of Jewish origin who converted to Islam. A note on this in the document is mostly superfluous and left untranslated.

²¹ This line, in Arabic formulated in exactly the same words, may be the origin of Ḥuyayy's confession, later put in his mouth.

²² Lit: He strove (lit: 'he waged Jihad') until he found himself an excuse to agitate.

²³ Lit: Every disturbed person desires glory

Zubayr, who had heard it from `Ā'isha, who said: 'Only one of their women was killed.' She recalled: 'By God! She was with me, talking to me and obviously cheerful while the messenger of God (God grant him salvation and peace) was killing their men in the market place. When he called out her name: 'Where is so-and-so?' she answered: 'That's me! By God!'

`Ā'isha continued. 'I said: 'Woe unto you! What is going to happen to you?' She replied: 'I am going to be killed.' I said: 'But why?' She answered: 'Because of something I have done.' Then she was taken away and her head was severed...' `Ā'isha said: 'I will never forget how amazed I was about her: Such a good nature and so full of laughter, even though she knew she was going to be killed!'

Ibn Ḥamīd told us that Salama passed on the tradition, who had heard it from Muḥammad ibn Ishāq, who said: Zayd ibn Rūmān reported about: "*And those of the People of the Scripture who supported them He brought down from their fortresses...*" that 'fortresses (*ṣayāṣī*)' means strongholds (*ḥuṣūn*) and the fortifications (*āṭām*) that they were in, "*and He cast terror into their hearts*".

`Amr ibn Mālik Al-Bikrī told us that Wakī` ibn Al-Jarrāḥ passed on a tradition, that the son of Wakī` told us: 'My father passed on a tradition he had heard from Ibn `Uyayna, who had heard it from `Amr ibn Dīnār, who heard from `Ikrima, regarding the phrase "*from their fortresses*", he would explain it as: from their strongholds (*ḥuṣūn*).'

Muḥammad ibn `Amr told us that Abū `Āṣim passed on a tradition, saying that `isā had reported it. Also Al-Ḥārith told us saying that Al-Ḥasan passed on the tradition, saying that Warqā' passed on this tradition, both going back to Ibn Abī Najīḥ, who heard it from Mujāhid, that the phrase "*from their fortresses*", where it says "*...He brought them down from their fortresses...*" is explained as 'their castles' (*quṣūr*).

Bashar told us that Yazīd reported from Sa`īd who passed on a tradition that he received it from Qatāda, that the expression "*from their fortresses*" means: their strongholds (*ḥuṣūn*) and their fortifications (*āṭām*).

Yūnus told us that Ibn Wahab informed us that Ibn Zayd said about the verse "*And those of the People of the Scripture who supported them, He brought down from their fortresses...*", that the phrase 'fortresses' means: Their strongholds which they thought would protect them against God, Blessed and Exulted. The root of the plural word 'fortresses' (*ṣayāṣī*) is [the singular form] *ṣīṣa*. It is said that in this context it means 'their strongholds' (*ḥuṣūn*). The Arabs call the side of a mountain *ṣīṣa*. And the foundation of something is called *ṣīṣa*. As the expression goes: "May God cut off so-and-so's *ṣīṣa*", meaning: his foundation. Weavers' forks are also called *ṣayāṣī*, as the poet says: "Like forks (*ṣayāṣī*) falling on outspread fabric"²⁴. It is also a term for the spores of a rooster.

The phrase: "*He cast terror into their hearts*" means: 'He shed fear for you in their hearts'.

"*As you killed part of them*" means: 'You killed a group of them.' Those were the ones that the

²⁴ This is the second half of a verse by the (pre-Islamic) poet Durayd ibn Al-Suma. The first half goes: "*I reached him while spears came down on him...*" This information is part of a lengthy footnote in the document which I left untranslated as it is rather repetitive.

messenger of God (God grant him salvation and peace) killed when he triumphed over them.

“And you took another part as captives” means: ‘You captured another group of them’. Those were their women and children which were taken as prisoners.

Similarly Bashār told us that Yazīd passed on the tradition from Sa`īd who had reported what he had heard from Qatāda, that *“You killed part of them”*: These are the ones you decapitated. *“And you took another part as captives”*: The ones you took as prisoners.

Ibn Ḥamīd told us that Salama passed on the tradition, who had heard it from Ibn Ishāq, who said: Yazīd ibn Rūmān reported about the phrase *“You killed part of them and you took another part as captives”*: This means killing the men and capturing the children and the women.

Ḥadīth

Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhari

Narrated 'Abdullah bin 'Umar: I heard Allah's Apostle saying, "The Jews will fight with you, and you will be given victory over them so that a stone will say, 'O Muslim! There is a Jew behind me; kill him!' " (Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhari 4:56:791)

Narrated Abbas bin Malik: ...[Muhammad once said:] When I went [over the sixth heaven], there I saw Moses. Gabriel said (to me),' This is Moses; pay him your greeting. So I greeted him and he returned the greetings to me and said: 'You are welcomed, O pious brother and pious prophet!' When I left him (i.e. Moses) he wept. Someone asked him, 'What makes you weep?' Moses said, 'I weep because after me there has been sent [as prophet] a young man whose followers will enter Paradise in greater numbers than my followers.' (Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhari 5:58:227)

Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim

It has been narrated by 'Umar b. al-Khattib that he heard the Messenger of Allah (may peace be upon him) say: I will expel the Jews and Christians from the Arabian Peninsula and will not leave any but Muslims. (Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim 19:4366, and 19:4367)

Abu Huraira reported Allah's Messenger (may peace be upon him) as saying: Do not greet the Jews and the Christians before they greet you, and when you meet any one of them on the roads force him to go to the narrowest part of it. (Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim 26:5389)

Abu Huraira reported Allah's Messenger (may peace be upon him) as saying: The last hour would not come unless the Muslims will fight against the Jews and the Muslims will kill them. The Jews will hide themselves behind a stone or a tree and the stone or a tree will say: "Muslim, servant of Allah, there is a Jew behind me; come and kill him! But the tree Gharqad tree will not speak out, for it is the tree of the Jews. (Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim 41:6981, 41:6982, 41:6983, 41:6984, 41:6985)

Abu Musa reported that Allah's Messenger (may peace be upon him) said: When it will be the Day of Resurrection, Allah will deliver to every Muslim a Jew or a Christian and say: That is your rescue from Hell-Fire. (Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim 37:6665)

Abu Burda reported on the authority of his father that Allah's Apostle (may peace be upon him) said: No Muslim would die but Allah would send in his place a Jew or a Christian to Hell-Fire. (Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim 37:6666, 37:6667)

Abu Burda reported Allah's Messenger (may peace be upon him) as saying: Among the Muslims, there will be come people on the Day of Resurrection with sins heavy as a mountain. But Allah will forgive them, and He will put the Jews and the Christians in their place. (Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim 37:6668)

"Islam and the Jews"

Jacob Rader Marcus, *The Jew in the Medieval Word*, New York, 1999

Islam and the Jews

600-1772

THE Pact of Omar is the body of limitations and privileges entered into by treaty between conquering Moslems and conquered non-Mohammedans. We have no special treaty of this sort with the Jews, but we must assume that all conquered peoples, including the Jews, had to subscribe to it. Thus the laws cited below and directed against churches apply to synagogues too. The Pact was probably originated about 637 by Omar I after the conquest of Christian Syria and Palestine. By accretions from established practices and precedents, the Pact was extended; yet despite these additions the whole Pact was ascribed to Omar. There are many variants of the text and scholars deny that the text as it now stands could have come from the pen of Omar I; it is generally assumed that its present form dates from about the ninth century.

The Pact of Omar has served to govern the relations between the Moslems and "the people of the book," such as Jews, Christians, and the like, down to the present day.

In addition to the conditions of the Pact listed below, the Jews, like the Christians, paid a head-tax in return for protection, and for exemption from military service. Jews and Christians were also forbidden to hold government office. This Pact, like much medieval legislation, was honored more in the breach than in the observance. In general, though, the Pact increased in stringency with the centuries and is still in force in such lands as Yemen.

In 1772 a Moslem scholar in Cairo was asked how Jews and Christians should be treated. The answer is found in the second selection, issued four years before the American Declaration of Independence. This answer is not law, but only the opinion of a conservative Moslem. The Pact and the opinion are both in Arabic.

1. *Pact of Omar, The Ninth Century (?)*

☩ In the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate!

This is a writing to Omar from the Christians of such and such a city. When you [Moslems] marched against us [Christians], we

asked of you protection for ourselves, our posterity, our possessions, and our co-religionists; and we made this stipulation with you, that we will not erect in our city or the suburbs any new monastery, church, cell or hermitage; that we will not repair any of such buildings that may fall into ruins, or renew those that may be situated in the Moslem quarters of the town; that we will not refuse the Moslems entry into our churches either by night or by day; that we will open the gates wide to passengers and travellers; that we will receive any Moslem traveller into our houses and give him food and lodging for three nights; that we will not harbor any spy in our churches or houses, or conceal any enemy of the Moslems. [At least six of these laws were taken over from earlier Christian laws against infidels.]

That we will not teach our children the Koran [some nationalist Arabs feared the infidels would ridicule the Koran; others did not want infidels even to learn the language]; that we will not make a show of the Christian religion nor invite any one to embrace it; that we will not prevent any of our kinsmen from embracing Islam, if they so desire. That we will honor the Moslems and rise up in our assemblies when they wish to take their seats; that we will not imitate them in our dress, either in the cap, turban, sandals, or parting of the hair; that we will not make use of their expressions of speech, nor adopt their surnames [infidels must not use greetings and special phrases employed only by Moslems]; that we will not ride on saddles, or gird on swords, or take to ourselves arms or wear them, or engrave Arabic inscriptions on our rings; that we will not sell wine [forbidden to Moslems]; that we will shave the front of our heads; that we will keep to our own style of dress, wherever we may be; that we will wear girdles round our waists [infidels wore leather or cord girdles; Moslems, cloth and silk].

That we will not display the cross upon our churches or display our crosses or our sacred books in the streets of the Moslems, or in their market-places; that we will strike the clappers in our churches lightly [wooden rattles or bells summoned the people to church or synagogue]; that we will not recite our services in a loud voice when a Moslem is present; that we will not carry palm-branches [on Palm Sunday] or our images in procession in the streets; that at the burial of our dead we will not chant loudly or carry lighted candles in the streets of the Moslems or their market-places; that we will not take any slaves that have already been in the possession of Moslems, nor spy into their houses; and that we will not strike any Moslem.

All this we promise to observe, on behalf of ourselves and our co-religionists, and receive protection from you in exchange; and if we violate any of the conditions of this agreement, then we forfeit your protection and you are at liberty to treat us as enemies and rebels.

II. *The Status of Jews and Christians in Moslem Lands, 1772—*
QUESTION

¶(What do you say, O scholars of Islam, shining luminaries who dispel the darkness (may God lengthen your days!)? What do you say of the innovations introduced by the cursed unbelievers [Jewish and Christian] into Cairo, into the city of al-Muizz [founder of Cairo, 969] which by its splendor in legal and philosophic studies sparkles in the first rank of Moslem cities?

What is your opinion concerning these deplorable innovations which are, moreover, contrary to the Pact of Omar which prescribed the expulsion of the unbelievers from Moslem territory? [This is exaggerated. Omar exiled the infidels only from Arabia.]

Among other changes they have put themselves on a footing of equality with the chiefs, scholars, and nobles, wearing, like them, costly garments of cloth of India, expensive silk and cashmere fabrics, and they imitate them even in the cut of these very garments.

In addition, whether through necessity or otherwise, they ride on saddles which are of the same type as those of chiefs, scholars, and officers, with servants at their right, at their left, and behind them, scattering and pushing back Moslems for whom they thus block the streets.

They carry small batons in their hands just like the chiefs. They buy Moslem slaves, the offspring of negro, Abyssinian, and even white slaves; this has become so common and so frequent among them that they no longer consider this offensive. They even buy slaves publicly, just like the Moslems.

They have become the owners of houses and build new ones of a solidity, durability, and height possessed by neither the houses nor mosques of the Moslems themselves. This state of affairs is spreading and is extending beyond all proportions. They contribute for the extension of their churches and convents; they seek to raise them higher and to give them a strength and a durability which even the mosques and the monasteries themselves do not have.

Christian foreigners, foes who solicit our tolerance, settle in the country for more than a year without submitting themselves thereby

to taxation and without renewing their treaties of protection. The women of the tolerated non-Moslem natives liken themselves to our women in that they deck themselves in a garment of black silk and cover their faces with a veil of white muslin with the result that in the streets they are treated with the consideration due only to respectable Moslem women.

Ought one to allow these things to the unbelievers, to the enemies of the faith? Ought one to allow them to dwell among believers under such conditions? Or, indeed, is it not the duty of every Moslem prince and of every magistrate to ask the scholars of the holy law to express their legal opinion, and to call for the advice of wise and enlightened men in order to put an end to these revolting innovations and to these reprehensible acts? Ought one not compel the unbelievers to stick to their pact [of Omar]; ought one not keep them in servitude and prevent them from going beyond the bounds and the limits of their tolerated status in order that there may result from this the greatest glory of God, of His Prophet, and of all Moslems, and likewise of that which is said in the Koran?

Be good enough to give us a precise answer, one based on authentic traditions.

THE ANSWER OF THE SHAIKH HASAN AL KAFRAWI, THE SHAFIITE *

﴿Praise be to God, the guide of the right way!

The decision given by the Shaikh ar-Ramli [a great Cairo legal authority, d. 1596], by the Shaikh al-Islam [the Moslem religious authority in Constantinople], and by the learned scholars whose decrees can hardly be written down here, may be worded as follows: "It is forbidden to the tolerated peoples living on Moslem territory to clothe themselves in the same manner as the chiefs, the scholars, and the nobles. They should not be allowed to clothe themselves in costly fabrics which have been cut in the modes which are forbidden to them, in order that they may not offend the sensibilities of poor Moslems and in order that their faith in their religion should not be shaken by this. [Poor Moslems may regret their faith when they see how well-dressed the Christians and Jews are.]

"They should not be permitted to employ mounts like the Moslems. They must use neither saddles, nor iron-stirrups, in order to be distinguished from the true believers. They must under no circumstance ride horses because of the noble character of this animal. The Most-High has said [Koran 8:62]: 'And through powerful

* Professor of canon law in Cairo, d. 1788.

squadrons [of horses] through which you will strike terror into your own and God's enemies.' [A verse of the Koran makes a good support for a law. Verses may even be torn out of their context.]

"They should not be permitted to take Moslems into their service because God has glorified the people of Islam. He has given them His aid and has given them a guarantee by these words [Koran 3:140]: 'Surely God will never give preeminence to unbelievers over the true believers.' Now this is just what is happening today, for their servants are Moslems taken from among men of a mature age or from those who are still young. This is one of the greatest scandals to which the guardians of authority must put an end. It is wrong to greet them even with a simple 'how-do-you-do'; to serve them, even for wages, at the baths or in what relates to their riding animals; and it is forbidden to accept anything from their hand, for that would be an act of debasement by the faithful. They are forbidden while going through the streets to ape the manners of the Moslems, and still less those of the emirs of the religion. They shall only walk single-file, and in narrow lanes they must withdraw even more into the most cramped part of the road.

"One may read that which follows in Bukhari and Muslim [religious authorities of the ninth century]: 'Jews and Christians shall never begin a greeting; if you encounter one of them on the road, push him into the narrowest and tightest spot.' The absence of every mark of consideration toward them is obligatory for us; we ought never to give them the place of honor in an assembly when a Moslem is present. This is in order to humble them and to honor the true believers. They should under no circumstances acquire Moslem slaves, white or black. Therefore they should get rid of the slaves which they now have for they have no right to own them. If one of their slaves who was formerly an infidel, becomes a Moslem, he shall be removed from them, and his master, willingly or unwillingly, shall be compelled to sell him and to accept the price for him.

"It is no longer permitted them to put themselves, with respect to their houses, on an equal footing with the dwellings of their Moslem neighbors, and still less to build their buildings higher. If they are of the same height, or higher, it is incumbent upon us to pull them down to a size a little less than the houses of the true believers. This conforms to the word of the Prophet: 'Islam rules, and nothing shall raise itself above it.' This is also in order to hinder them from knowing where our weak spots are and in order to make a distinction between their dwellings and ours.

"They are forbidden to build new churches, chapels, or monas-

teries in any Moslem land. We should destroy everything that is of new construction in every place, such as Cairo, for instance, founded under the Moslem religion, for it is said in a tradition of Omar: 'No church shall be built in Islam.' They shall no longer be permitted to repair the parts of these [post-Islamic] buildings which are in ruins. However, the old buildings [of pre-Islamic times] which are found in a land whose population had embraced Islam need not be destroyed. They shall not, however, be enlarged by means of repairs or otherwise. In case the tolerated peoples [Jews, Christians, etc.] act contrary to these provisions we will be obliged to destroy everything that has been added to the original size of the building. [Only pre-Islamic churches and synagogues may be repaired; new ones must be torn down.]

"Entrance into Moslem territory by infidels of foreign lands under the pact guaranteeing protection to the tolerated peoples is permitted only for the time necessary to settle their business affairs. If they exceed this period, their safe-conduct having expired, they will be put to death or be subject to the payment of the head-tax. [Jews and Christians of foreign lands must pay a special head-tax if they wish to remain permanently in Moslem lands.] As to those with whom the ruler may have signed treaties, and with whom he, for whatever motive, may have granted a temporary truce, they form only the smallest fraction. But they, too, must not pass the fixed limit of more than four months [without paying the tax], particularly if this occurs at a time when Islam is prosperous and flourishing. The Most-High has said [Koran 2:234]: 'They should wait four-months,' and he has again said [47:37]: 'Do not show any cowardice, and do not at all invite the unbelievers to a peace when you have the upper-hand and may God be with you.'

"Their men and women are ordered to wear garments different from those of the Moslems in order to be distinguished from them. They are forbidden to exhibit anything which might scandalize us, as, for instance, their fermented liquors, and if they do not conceal these from us, we are obliged to pour them into the street."

This which precedes is only a part of that which has been written on this subject, and if we should wish to mention it all here it would take too long. But this brief recital will be sufficient for those men whose intelligence God has enlightened, to whom he has given the breath of life, and whose inner thoughts he has sanctified. Now let us beg the Sovereign Master of the world to extend His justice over humanity universally, in order that they may direct all their efforts toward raising with firmness the banner of the religion.

In a tradition of the sincere and faithful [Calif Abu Bekr, 632-634] it is likewise said: "The abolition of a sacrilegious innovation is preferable to the permanent operation of the law." In another tradition it is also said: "One hour of justice is worth more than sixty years of ritual." The verses of the Koran and the traditions are very numerous on this subject, and they are known by all the faithful. God has cursed the former nations because they have not condemned scandalous things; and He has said [Koran 5:82]: "They [the children of Israel] seek not at all to turn one another from the bad actions which they have committed. O how detestable were their actions. But He has punished these men because of their obstinate conduct." The Most-High has also said [Koran 9:113]: "Those who bid what is right and forbid what is wrong, who observe the divine precepts, will be rewarded. Announce these glad tidings to the Moslems."

May the Most High God admit us to the number of this company and may He lead us in the paths of His favor. Certainly God is powerful in everything; He is full of mercy to His servants; He sees all.

Written by the humble Hasan al Kafrawi, the Shafiite.

1772.

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