

EQ
Encyclopaedia of
the Qur'ān

VOLUME FOUR

P–Sh

Jane Dammen McAuliffe, *General Editor*

Brill, Leiden–Boston

2004

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Rivers see WATER; PARADISE

Road see PATH OR WAY

Roast(ing) see FIRE; HELL AND HELLFIRE

Robber(y) see THEFT; BOUNDARIES AND PRECEPTS

Rock see STONE; STONING

Rod

Staff or stick upon which one leans for support or uses as a tool. In the Qur'  n, the Arabic word for rod, *'a   *, which is mentioned twelve times, is used in the possessive form when speaking of Moses (q.v.), that is, *'a   M  s  *, "the rod of Moses." It is used in a singular form (*'a  *) when related to Moses and in a plural form (*'a     *) with reference to Pharaoh's (q.v.) sorcerers (see MAGIC). Events involving the word *'a  *, which has a variety of features in the Qur'  n, have been presented in support of its being one of the two great miracles of Moses (see MIRACLES; MARVELS). The qur'  nic commentators narrate various

stories of how Moses received the rod (see EXEGESIS OF THE QUR'  N: CLASSICAL AND MEDIEVAL). Some relate that the prophet Shu'ayb (q.v.), the father-in-law of Moses, gave him the rod and that Adam brought it from heaven when he was compelled to leave (see ADAM AND EVE; FALL OF MAN). It was entrusted to Shu'ayb, who then passed it on to his son-in-law Moses (Tabar  , *Tafs  r*, xx, 67; *Jal  layn*, 511).

The word first appears in the Qur'  n in connection with a great need for water (q.v.). On this occasion, the rod works as a miraculous instrument to bring water from the bottom of a rock. The verse says, "When Moses asked for water for his people, we said, 'Strike with your rod the rock, and there will gush out from the rock twelve springs'" (Q 2:60; 7:160). On another occasion, the same rod works to swallow sorcerers' false snakes. Q 7:117 states, "And we inspired Moses, saying 'Throw your rod,' and thereupon it swallowed up their lying show." Moses' rod, on this occasion, has been transformed into a giant snake, to swallow up those of the opposing sorcerers. Moses understood that the power of the sorcerers was demonic, which is why they were defeated by his powerful and miraculously-bestowed rod. The Qur'  n refers to the rod of Moses in a conversation between Moses and God. Moses seems unaware of the actual nature of his rod: "And what is that in your right hand, O Moses?" He said, 'This is my rod, whereon I lean, and wherewith I beat down branches for my sheep, and wherein I find other uses.' He said, 'Cast it down, O Moses.' So Moses cast it down, and immediately it became a gliding snake." The end of the verse suggests that Moses was told to catch the snake and not to be afraid because God would transform it to its original state (Q 20:17-21; cf. 27:10). A mystical interpretation claims that God blamed Moses because he had related the rod to himself in his presence, when he was sup-

posed to acknowledge that everything belonged to God (see ŠUFISM AND THE QUR'ĀN; GRATITUDE AND INGRATITUDE; POWER AND IMPOTENCE; POSSESSION). Accordingly, God asked him to throw his rod, so that Moses could show God that he was not the actual owner of the rod (Qurtubī, *Jāmi'*, xi, 186; for additional comments, see *ibid.*, vii, 258; Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr*, ii, 237). Clearly Moses was entrusted with such a miraculous rod so that he could respond to the taunts of Pharaoh's sorcerers. They had magical rods and were able to challenge Moses and his message. They said, "by the glory of Pharaoh, we will be victorious" (Q 26:44; cf. 20:66; see VICTORY).

The Qur'ān presents the rod of Moses as instrumental in opening a way in the sea to help the Israelites (see CHILDREN OF ISRAEL) escape from Pharaoh's oppression (q.v.). This miraculous event appeared at a time when Moses and his followers were chased by Pharaoh's troops. "Then we inspired Moses, saying 'Strike the sea with your rod,' and it parted. Each part was as a mountain vast" (Q 26:63). Al-Qurtubī (d. 671/1272) comments that the rod was a simple instrument in this case; the one who parted the sea was actually God himself (*Jāmi'*, xiii, 15).

Another word used in the Qur'ān to signify a rod is *minsā'a*, which refers to the rod of Solomon (q.v.). Q 34:14 states, "And when we decreed death for him (Solomon), nothing showed his death to them (the jinn), save a creeping creature of the earth, which gnawed away his rod." The verse indicates that the jinn (q.v.) were unaware of the world of the unseen (*ghayb*). Since Solomon died while leaning on his rod, they did not know he was dead until his rod decayed, allowing him to fall (see HIDDEN AND THE HIDDEN).

One can argue that the qur'ānic emphasis on the rod of Moses has resulted in the idea that, in Arab culture, carrying a rod

has become a sign of faith (q.v.) and an imitation of the prophets (see PROPHETS AND PROPHETHOOD; although there is no mention of Jesus' [q.v.] rod in the Qur'ān, al-Tabarī [*Tafsīr*, iii, 285], an early qur'ānic commentator, narrates that Jesus also had a rod). The prophet Muḥammad used to carry a rod and lean on it during the Friday sermon (Qurtubī, *Jāmi'*, xi, 188; Bayhaqī, *Sunan*, iii, 206; see FRIDAY PRAYER). The rod of the Prophet remained significant, even after his death. It is known that the rod was entrusted to 'Abdallāh b. Mas'ūd, one of his great Companions (see COMPANIONS OF THE PROPHET). He was given the honorary title Holder of the Rod of the Prophet (*ṣāhib 'asā l-nabī*, Qurtubī, *Jāmi'*, xi, 189). In Islamic culture, the use of a rod has been viewed as a symbol of spiritual transition among Sūfis. Al-Qurtubī narrates that an ascetic (see ASCETICISM) was asked why he carried the rod despite the fact that he was not sick or old. He answered, "This reminds me that I am a traveler in this world" (Qurtubī, *Jāmi'*, xi, 189; see JOURNEY).

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Romans see BYZANTINES

Ruby see METALS AND MINERALS

Rugs see PARADISE; GARDENS; MATERIAL CULTURE AND THE QUR'ĀN

Ruin(s) see GEOGRAPHY; GENERATIONS; REMNANT

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efforts were directed toward counteracting the spiritual decay in Israel. When he assembled the people at Mizpah for prayer, he sought to distinguish between the faithful and the idolatrous, in order to mete out punishment to the disloyal. He had all the people drink water, whose effect was to prevent idolaters from opening their lips.

Considering also that when Gideon was asked to rule the people he directed them back to their lord, saying, "... the lord shall rule over you," it is possible to detect an important point of reference that distinguishes the changed situation in the time of Samuel. This may also explain the (deliberate?) faint resonance of Gideon in the qur'anic account of Samuel and Saul.

Philip F. Kennedy

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Sanctity and the Sacred see SACRED PRECINCTS; PROFANE AND SACRED; FORBIDDEN; SAINT

Sanctuary see SACRED PRECINCTS

Sand

Loose granular material resulting from the disintegration of rocks. The most common Arabic word for sand is *raml*, which is not found in the Qur'ān. There are, however, some other terms for sand in the Arabic language, such as *kathīb* and *hāṣīb*. These two words are used in the Qur'ān, in a variety of verses. The former is mentioned explicitly only a single time in the Qur'ān (Q 73:14). Referring to the final hour (*qiyāma*), the verse says, "On the day when the earth and the hills rock, and the mountains become *kathīb*." The word *kathīb* can be interpreted as meaning "a huge amount of sand" (*qit'a 'aẓīma min al-raml*; Haddād, *Kashf*, vii, 105; see also *Lisān al-'Arab*, i, 235). On the interpretation of the same word, al-Shawkānī (d. 1250/1834), a Muslim commentator and jurist, says that after the final earthquake, the mountains will become like moving sand (Shawkānī, *Tafsīr*, iv, 371; see APOCALYPSE; LAST JUDGMENT).

The word *hāṣīb* is mentioned in four verses in the Qur'ān (Q 17:68; 29:40; 54:34; 67:17). On the meaning of the word there are several interpretations by qur'anic commentators. Ibn Kathīr (d. 774/1372), a prominent commentator (see EXEGESIS OF THE QUR'ĀN: CLASSICAL AND MEDIEVAL), interprets the word in a way that can be understood as "a rainy sandstorm." It comes as a punishment for those who disbelieve God's message (see BELIEF AND

UNBELIEF; CHASTISEMENT AND PUNISHMENT; PUNISHMENT STORIES). The people of Lot (q.v.) were punished in such a way (Q 54:34; Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr*, iv, 328). Some commentators believe that the army of Abrahā (q.v.), who had attempted to destroy what is now the holy shrine of Islam in Mecca (q.v.), was destroyed in such a sandstorm (Shawkānī, *Tafsīr*, vii, 317-8, 553-4). The word is also interpreted as "a strong wind which carries pebbles" (Ḥaddād, *Kashf*, vii, 46).

The two words *kathīb* and *ḥāṣīb* are mentioned in reference to the punishment by God of those who deny the message of the prophets (see PROPHETS AND PROPHETHOOD). The Qur'ān threatens its immediate audience, i.e. the Arabs (q.v.), that, if they fail to listen to God's messenger (q.v.), they will be punished like the ancient disbelievers. A verse says: "Have you taken security from him, who is in the heavens (see HEAVEN AND SKY), that he will not send upon you the *ḥāṣīb*" (Q 67:17). It is interesting to note how the Qur'ān threatens its initial audience with disasters with which they were already familiar. In the interpretation of the word *ḥāṣīb*, al-'Ālūsī (d. 1270/1854), a prominent nineteenth-century qur'ānic commentator, says that the destructive storm on the land is called *ḥāṣīb*. A similar storm on the sea is called *qāṣīf* ('Ālūsī, *Rūh*, xv, 117).

The Prophet used the word *raml* in an allegorical sense (see METAPHOR; SIMILES). Speaking of the attributes of God (see GOD AND HIS ATTRIBUTES), and commenting on the qur'ānic verse, "the one who forgives all sins, the most forgiving one" (Q 39:53), the Prophet mentions that anyone who says a certain prayer before going to bed, will be forgiven by God for all of her/his sins, even if they are as numerous as sand (Tirmidhī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, 470; see also 'Ālūsī, *Rūh*, xx, 259; see ḤADĪTH AND THE QUR'ĀN; RITUAL AND THE QUR'ĀN; POPULAR AND

TALISMANIC USES OF THE QUR'ĀN; EVERYDAY LIFE, THE QUR'ĀN IN; SIN, MAJOR AND MINOR; FORGIVENESS).

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Satan(s) see DEVIL

Satanic Verses

Name given by western scholarship to an incident known in the Muslim tradition as "the story of the cranes" (*qisṣat al-gharānīq*) or "the story of the maidens." According to various versions, this is the assertion that the prophet Muḥammad once mistook words suggested to him by Satan as divine revelation (see REVELATION AND INSPIRATION; DEVIL); that is to say, as verses of the Qur'ān — the words reportedly interpolated by Satan are called the "satanic verses." The historicity of the satanic verses incident is strenuously rejected by modern Islamic orthodoxy, often on pain of *taḳfīr* (being declared an unbeliever; see BELIEF AND UNBELIEF).

The satanic verses incident is reported in the *tafsīr* (qur'ānic exegesis; see EXEGESIS OF THE QUR'ĀN: CLASSICAL AND MEDIEVAL) and the *sīra-maghāzī* literature (epic prophetic biography; see SĪRA AND THE QUR'ĀN) dating from the first two centuries of Islam. While the numerous reports on the incident differ in the construction and detail of the narrative, they may be broadly collated as follows. The incident is generally dated to the fifth year of Muḥammad's mission, when the small Muslim community in Mecca (q.v.) was