

**THE BIBLE, THE KORAN,  
AND THE TALMUD,  
OR, BIBLICAL LEGENDS OF  
THE MUSSULMANS**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649002719

The Bible, the Koran, and the Talmud, or, Biblical legends of the Mussulmans by G. Weil

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Cover @ 2017

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**G. WEIL**

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THE BIBLE, THE KORAN, AND THE TALMUD;

OR,

BIBLICAL LEGENDS

OF

THE MUSSULMANS.

COMPILED FROM ARABIC SOURCES, AND COMPARED  
WITH JEWISH TRADITIONS.

BY DR. G. WEIL,

LIBRARIAN OF THE UNIVERSITY OF HEIDELBERG, FELLOW OF THE  
ASIATIC SOCIETY OF PARIS, &c., &c., &c.

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN,  
WITH OCCASIONAL NOTES.

NEW-YORK:  
HARPER & BROTHERS, PUBLISHERS,  
82 CLIFF STREET.

1846.

BP  
137  
W4  
1546  
SRL

## TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE.

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DR. WEIL has stated, in his Introduction to these Legends, that he chiefly extracted them from original Arabic records, which are still received by Mohammedans as the inspired biographies of the ancient patriarchs and prophets.

It must still farther be added that the leading ideas of these Mohammedan legends, *i. e.*, their prominent historical narratives, and the doctrines and precepts which they either state expressly or imply, are contained in the Koran. In some instances it gives their minutest particulars. Indeed, it would seem as if these legends formed part, at least, of what the founder of the Mohammedan faith terms "the mother of the book," indicating that they preceded his Koran in order of time, and embodied the germ of that faith which he subsequently developed.

This idea is suggested by the learned German compiler, and is corroborated by the fact that

the legends were unknown to the Arabs before Mohammed began to preach, while in the Koran he refers to them as already familiar to his hearers.

But, be this as it may, it is certain that the fact of their leading ideas being found in the Koran invests them with divine authority to the faithful Moslem, for it is a primary article of his creed that every thing contained in the Koran is of Allah. On first reading these legends, it therefore occurred to the writer that they might be a valuable acquisition, as an epitome of Mohammedan theology and morals. And their peculiar character, their constant allusion to scriptural facts, with which most Bible readers strongly identify themselves, their novel, and gorgeous, and often sublime inventions, investing them at once with the fidelity of historical detail, and the freshness and fascination of Oriental fiction, seem to fit them especially for popular instruction. If it be asked what benefit may be derived from promulgating the tenets of a professedly erroneous system, it is replied that a distinction ought to be observed between the false systems that have ceased to be believed,

and those which are still maintained as divine truths by any portion of mankind.

It may be questioned whether the former ought at all to be taught, although there are reasons why even the exploded mythology of the ancients should be known; but respecting the second class, to which the religion of Mohammed belongs, there should be but one opinion.

Our Redeemer has committed to us, in part, the propagation of his holy faith, by which alone he declares that mankind shall attain to that holiness, peace, and glory for which they have been created. The exhibition, therefore, in the stewards of the Gospel, of a false religion, in which, as in the case before us, one hundred and twenty millions of our immortal race are at this moment staking their all, can not but be important, at once to awaken within us feelings of deep and active charity for these benighted multitudes, and to furnish us with the requisite intelligence for effectually combating their grievous errors with the weapons of truth.

Should the public feel any interest in this work, the translator proposes, in a future vol-



ume, to discuss the legendary principle at some length, and to show the analogy of its practical working in the Jewish, the Mohammedan, and Roman Catholic systems of religion.

## INTRODUCTION.

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MOHAMMED has been frequently reproached with having altered and added most arbitrarily to the religious history of the Jews and Christians, two important considerations not being sufficiently borne in mind. In the first place, it is probable that Mohammed learned only late in life to write, or even to read the Arabic, and he was unquestionably ignorant of every other spoken or written language, as is sufficiently apparent from historical testimony: hence he was unable to draw from the Old and New Testaments for himself, and was entirely restricted to oral instruction from Jews and Christians.

Secondly, Mohammed himself declared both the Old and New Testaments, as possessed by the Jews and Christians of his time, to have been falsified; and, consequently, his own divine mission could be expected to agree with those writings only in part. But the turning-point on which the greater portion of the Koran hinges—the doctrine of the *unity* of God, a doctrine which he embraced with the utmost consistency, and armed with which he appeared as a prophet before the pagan Arabs, who were addicted to

the most diversified Polytheism—appeared to him much obscured in the Gospels, and he was therefore forced to protest against their genuineness.

But with regard to the writings of the Jews of the Old Testament, which he had received from the mouth of his Jewish contemporaries, he was induced to believe, or, at least, pretended to believe, that they too had undergone many changes, inasmuch as Ismael, from whom he was sprung, was evidently treated therein as a step-child, or as the son of a discarded slave, whereas Abraham's paternal love and solicitude, as well as the special favor of the Lord, were the exclusive portion of Isaac and his descendants. The predictions respecting the Messiah, too, as declared in the writings of the Prophets, appeared to him incompatible with the faith in himself as the seal of the Prophets. Moreover, Mohammed was probably indebted for his religious education to a man who, abandoning the religion of Arabia, his native country, had sought refuge first in Judaism, and then in Christianity, though even in the latter he does not seem to have found perfect satisfaction. This man, a cousin of his wife Kadidja, urged forward by an irresistible desire after the knowledge of truth, but, as his repeated apostasies would serve to show, being of a skeptical nature, may have dis-