

# The Annals of Eutychius of Alexandria (Sa`id ibn Bitriq)

## What This File Is

About eight years ago, on a whim, I decided to read a few passages in the “Annals” of Eutychius, using Bartolomeo’s massive Italian translation. In particular I wanted to read the passages about the time of Jesus, and the Roman period. I used Google Translate to do so, because I have no Italian. I posted the chunks as I did them, to encourage interest in Eutychius. By the end I had produced a complete version spread over 102 blog posts. By the time that I had finished, I was very weary of Eutychius. The whole thing still needs careful revision.

Over the years since then I have received a number of emails, thanking me for producing this draft, but also complaining that it is impossible to find particular passages in all those posts. So I have combined the lot into a single Word file. This file is what you are reading now.

The whole thing is utterly unfit to release to the public. You cannot rely on this translation to give you more than the general sense; and if that is not enough for your purposes, then please make arrangements to get a better translation made, directly from the Arabic! Some portions of the Italian are really beyond me, so I have just done my best. I have rather hurried through general theological stuff, and concentrated on the historical statements. The purpose of all this, otherwise useless labour, is simply to help people who are reading and using Eutychius, and, with luck, to kick-start the process of making a real translation.

There’s only a few footnotes. With incredible labour, Pirone wrote massive numbers of them, and most of mine are shortened versions of his. In one chapter I tried to do more, and realised that I would never finish if I did. In many sections I did leave Pirone’s footnote numbers in brackets (23) thus, and I wish that I had done so throughout, to assist the reader grappling with the Italian.

Pirone rightly left the Arabic spelling of most names, even familiar Old Testament names. I found that it was rather fun to try to work out who they were! The Old Testament is perhaps over-familiar to most of us. It is delightful to read the stories again through eastern eyes which were perhaps rather closer in mindset to the world of the early Hebrews than ourselves.

Roger Pearse  
Ipswich  
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## FIRST PART – FROM ADAM TO HERACLIUS

### Preface

In the name of God, the One, Pre-eternal, Everlasting, Without beginning or end, upon whom we call.

Book of History, compiled with verification and checking. The work of Patriarch Euty chius, also known as Sa' id ibn Batriq, written by him for his brother `Isa, concerning the knowledge of universal history from the time of Adam to the years of the Islamic Hegira.

May God inspire you, my brother, with the best and most useful blessings, and of those things which are distressing and sad, may you receive the least serious and dangerous; may He cover you all over with the veil of His protection and keep you always in greater strength. May He cause you to achieve, in this as in the other world, success, and also your share in this life and the next. May He make you understand everything that pleases Him and may you never be distracted from whatever about Him that could turn you away.

May you understand what you have asked me to write for you – may you render to God blessings of virtue and preserve you from the sordid world of vices! – regarding all knowledge of universal history from the time of Adam to the years of the Islamic Hegira, and I have presented this in the months, the years and the centuries, should you need it, so that you can respond to questions by anyone, scholar or layman. May you trace – May God make you the widest practicable path to happiness and make you know at any moment the most profound science and the highest usefulness! – a representation and a certain example in succinct and profitable form, and in the manner deemed appropriate by me up to your noble soul, adhering acumen of your high and sublime intelligence, quoting and extracting whatever I could find from the Torah and from the Gospel, as well as from other old and new books, then including all these in my book, so as to render it as good as possible, and as accurate as possible with this method. So I have completed a result that can both satisfy those with intellect, and satisfy those who have understanding. I have explained this to you, as well as to your brothers, so that it can be, both from us and to you, a prize and a blessing.

Sa' id ibn Batriq, the physician, spoke as follows: “Before anything else, let us begin by giving praise to our Lord, our Benefactor, to our Creator and the One who gives us life – Exalted be his praise! – and praise – Hallowed be His name! -, and it is the right way to begin every book and treatise. From him – Powerful and Almighty God – we ask help in what we are going to do, according to his usual benevolence. It is right to praise God, who is the Lord and the Creator, and Who expects the thanks of His worshipers. Indeed, he established the first things that they were created and governs them; He has made a way of truth to follow out of mercy and justice, and out of corruption and injustice a way of falsity which it is forbidden to undertake. He has not imposed on his worshipers deeds beyond their ability, or prescribed things to his creatures which are outside their powers. But He has made them arbiters of their actions, moderators of their works and responsible for themselves. He has provided help to them in this, by virtue of judgment, discernment, the subtle reflection and [His] assistance, thanks to the intellect which He has awarded them, making it a final judgment of reason against their mistakes and a way that can be a guide to them, for the sake of

their good and out of compassion for them. Praise be made therefore to God, One alone. He – Powerful and Almighty – in His eternal essence, in His eternal wisdom and in His life without beginning or end, is worthy of praise and celebration and worthy of glory and exaltation. Nothing has He ever left ambiguous in His law that could give rise to doubt and nothing has he left uncertain in his Precepts that could cause dissention; but He has laid out everything in a clear and obvious way to the people, despite their diversity of origin and place, and given a clear understanding to all nations, despite their different languages and dialects, through the revelation made to his Prophets and Apostles, and by means of miracles and terrible signs [given by him]. Thus He has invited us to embrace his religion, promising the blessed vision to those who will believe in Him and a horrible end to those who turn their backs and deny Him. Let us praise Him, then, because that attracts to us most of His good pleasure, and get us closer to Him. I invoke Him and to Him I turn, to make sincere our intentions of welcoming what is acceptable, and so unfold our innermost desires towards that which promotes devotion to Him, and dedicate this to Him by His mercy.<sup>1</sup>

Anyone who, without knowledge of the foundation of any science, intends to discourse, in order to produce something, and who knows only one branch of that science without possessing a foundation to refer to, will only produce dull and rambling discourse, and the fatigue and the effort made by him in doing so will be almost completely a waste and a sham. The Lord and Saviour in His holy gospel offered a simile of this, saying: “He who bumptiously builds his house upon the sand, a wind and a storm will pass over it, and soon heavy rains that overwhelm will destroy it; but he who builds his house on the rock, the winds and heavy rains will not destroy it.”<sup>2</sup> Let’s take this as an example and lesson for those who can. Anyone who speaks of any science without a foundation which to refer and to rest, will soon experience his own impotence, and will have to stop in a hurry, like the one who builds his house upon the sand. With those who discourse of any science, knowing the foundation, sensible, bright, clear and balanced will be the discourse, because he has spoken with a foundation on which to rest and to refer to, like the one who builds his house on rock. Indeed Plato and Aristotle have already spoken in books of logic and in other books on the principles of science, and their definitions, as well as on the principles and definitions of arithmetic, showing what is the way that the learned man must follow, if he intends to acquire knowledge of any science which he wants, explaining and setting forth everything at full length. There is no need to repeat here what they have exhibited in an exemplary way, so that we don’t make our book too long.

Now since I stated earlier, at the beginning of my book, that anyone who wants to talk about the knowledge of a science, must know the foundation, it is necessary for me to give a foundation to refer to and on which to base ourselves. Men, you know, have taken different and conflicting positions about history. Whatever I thought right to excerpt from the Torah and other reliable books, after long consideration and much effort, I will set out in a comprehensive and clear way, and as succinct and concise information, so that my book is in itself sufficient, and it is not so necessary to resort to any other sources, in order to know more of the story. And I shall start with the moment when God created Adam, and carry on up to the present day, so that you will have a clear understanding. In God, our helper in achieving what is being asked, is our support, power and strength, and in Him is we can achieve the things useful to us if we obey Him and we make what is to his liking. For He is in fact Almighty.

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<sup>1</sup> I’m pretty doubtful about this sentence but it is clearly devotional.

<sup>2</sup> Mt. 7:24-27.

## Chapter 1

Cap. I. The Creation of Adam and Eve – Cain, Abel and their sisters – The descendants of Shīt and those of Cain – Noah, his descendants, and the Flood – Noah leaves the Ark – The calling of Malshīsādāq – The commencement of the spread of the cult of images – The confusion of tongues in Bābil and the division of territories among the peoples of the earth – The origin of magic – Abraham came out from Harran and went to live in Kan’ān – More on Malshīsādāq – Ishmael and Isaac – Jacob and his sons – Joseph in Egypt (p.33)

In the name of God, One, Pre-Eternal, Everlasting, without beginning or end, upon whom we call.

1. Let us begin, with the help of the Most High God and the goodness of His assistance, to write the Book of History, compiled critically and with verification, the work of Patriarch Euty chius, called Sa’īd ibn Batrīq.

God, powerful and exalted, created the world, with everything in it, and Adam and Eve, in six days. The creation of Adam took place on the sixth day. God blessed the seventh day, because on it He completed the work of creation, and led Adam and Eve into Paradise. He ordered that they could eat of all the trees except for the tree of knowledge, of which He forbade them to eat. The devil tempted Eve, and Eve disobeyed the order of the Most High God by eating the fruit picked from the tree and making Adam eat it. Because they disobeyed their Lord, [God] drove them from the garden, in the ninth hour of Friday, and exiled them to a mountain in India. He made them live on the earth and commanded them to reproduce so that they would multiply and fill the earth. Adam lay then with Eve who became pregnant and gave birth to a boy and a girl. Adam called the boy Cain and the girl Azrūn. Eve conceived again, and gave birth to a boy and a girl, and the boy Adam called Abel and the girl he called Uwayn, which in Greek means “Lafūra.”<sup>3</sup> When the two boys grew up, Adam said to Eve: “Let Cain take Uwayn, who was delivered along with Abel, and Abel take Azrūn, who was delivered along with Cain.” Cain then said to Eve, his mother, “I will take my sister; let Abel take his”, because Azrūn was more beautiful than Uwayn. On hearing these words, Adam was very distressed and said: “It is against the commandment to take the sister who was brought forth with you”. Cain worked the land, and Abel was a keeper of sheep. Adam said to them: “Take the fruit of the land and some kids, go up on top of this holy mountain and offer your sacrifice. Then you may take your wives.” Cain brought the fruit of his land as a good and pure sacrifice to God, and Abel took the firstborn of his flock as a good and pure sacrifice to God. While they were intent on getting to the top of the mountain, the devil entered into the heart of Cain and incited him to kill his brother Abel because of his sister Azrūn. So God did not accept the sacrifice of Cain. For when they offered their sacrifices, God accepted Abel’s offering but disdained that of Cain. Great was the anger and great was the hatred of Cain against Abel and he envied his brother. As they were descending the mountain, Cain attacked Abel and struck him on the head with a stone and killed him. Adam and Eve were very distressed and mourned the death of Abel for a hundred years. God cursed Cain and his descendants. Cain was in fear and terror, and wandered

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<sup>3</sup> Euty chius is drawing upon material from the Arabic text of The Cave of Treasures, but this gives different names to the daughters of Adam. Josephus, Antiquities book 1, chapter 2, states that Adam had three daughters, but does not name them. Pirone does not explain “Lafura”.



all the days of his life. God sent him forth, still unmarried, to Nūd.<sup>4</sup> Cain took with him his sister Azrūn and lived there. Then Adam lay with Eve, who conceived – Adam was then already two hundred and thirty years old – and gave birth to a boy and [Adam] called him Shīt.<sup>5</sup> Shīt was pleasant faced, a giant, with a perfect complexion like his father, and was the father of the giants who lived before the flood. Adam gave to Shīt in marriage the sister of Cain, Uwayn, who bore him Anush. To Anush was born Qinan. Adam had many more children later. Feeling close to death, Adam called to him his son Shīt, Anush, son of Shīt, Qinan, the son of Anush, son of Shīt, and Mahlali'il, son of Qinan, and gave them instructions saying: “This command will apply to all your children. When I die, embalm my body with myrrh, frankincense and cinnamon and lay me down in the Cave of Treasures. When your children leave the area near paradise, let them take with them my body and bury me at the centre of the earth, because there will be my salvation and the salvation of my descendants.”<sup>6</sup> Adam lived in total nine hundred and thirty years. He died on Friday, the fourteenth month, 6th Nisan, i.e. Barmūdah, in the ninth hour, in the same hour in which he had been cast out of paradise. When Adam died, his son Shīt embalmed him, as he had commanded him to do, he brought the body to the top of the mountain, as he had said, and hid him in the Cave of Treasures. They wept over him for one hundred and forty days.

2. Shīt was two hundred and five years old when Anūsh was born. After Adam's death, Shīt's family separated themselves from the family of Cain, the accursed one. Shīt took his first-born Anūsh, Qīnān, son of Anūsh, and Mahlali'il, son of Qīnān, along with their women and their children and made them climb to the top of the mountain, where Adam was buried. Cain and all his sons remained in the place where Abel was killed (9). Shīt's sons lived on that mountain, pure and holy, and they heard the voices of the angels because they were close to them and they glorified and praised God together with the angels. Therefore they, together with their women and their children, were called children of God. They did not work, they did not sow, they did not reap. They only fed on the fruits of the trees. There was no envy among them, nor injustice, nor lies. And when they swore an oath they used to say: “No, for the blood of Abel”. They went to the top of the holy mountain every day and prostrated themselves before God by invoking blessings on the body of Adam. When Shīt felt death approaching, he made his sons swear on the blood of Abel that none of them would ever come down from that holy mountain nor would they allow any of their children to come down among the sons of Cain, the accursed one. Shīt lived in all nine hundred and twelve years. Anūsh had Qīnān at the age of one hundred and ninety years. In his time the sons of Cain, the accursed, made drums, cymbals, lyres and harps. They were the first to work iron and copper and all that could be obtained, and they finally made tents in which they lived.

3. Anūsh was three hundred years old when Cain was killed, the accursed son of Adam and murderer of his brother Abel. It happened that Lāmikh, the seventh descendant of Cain and a shepherd, shot a dart, as a game, that struck his grandfather Cain killing him. Cain had continued to roam the woods, because he was a wanderer, never stopping in one place. Cain died at the age of nine hundred and thirty years. Anūsh lived in all nine hundred and five years. Qīnān had had Mahlali'il at the age of one hundred and seventy years. Feeling close to death, Qīnān called

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<sup>4</sup> Gen.4:16. *The Cave of Treasures* calls the place al-Aksūriyā. Josephus I 2:2 says Cain founded a city called Nud and lived there.

<sup>5</sup> I.e. Seth. Much of what follows is from *The Cave of Treasures* or a related source, which is trying to align the events of Adam's life to prefigure those of Christ.

<sup>6</sup> I.e. at Jerusalem, at Golgotha, where Christ will be crucified.

Mahlali'īl to himself and made him swear by the blood of Abel that he would not allow any of his sons to come down among the sons of Cain, the accursed. Qīnān lived in all nine hundred and ten years.

4. Mahalali'īl had Yārid at one hundred and sixty-five years. Qīnān died when Mahlali'īl was one hundred and thirty-five years old, and was buried in the Cave of the Treasures. When Mahlali'īl felt close to death, he called to his son Yārid and made him swear by the blood of Abel that he would not allow any of his sons to come down from the mountain among the sons of the murderer Cain, the accursed one. Mahlali'īl lived in all eight hundred and ninety-five years. Yārid had, at one hundred and sixty-two years, Akhnūkh.

Of the sons of the murderer Cain, the men behaved like stallions and whinnied after the women. The women, in turn, were no better and behaved shamelessly like the men. They fornicated and committed adultery among themselves, in front of everyone, in the open, and two or three men had the same woman together. The elders were more libidinous than the young, fathers lay with their daughters and their sons with their mothers. The children did not know who their fathers were, nor did the fathers know who their children were. They played every kind of musical instrument and the echo of their cries and their games reached the top of the holy mountain. On hearing their cries, a hundred men among the sons of Shīt met together with the intention of descending from the mountain among the sons of Cain, the accursed one. Yārid exhorted them to swear on the blood of Abel that they would never come down from the holy mountain, but they did not receive his words and went down. When they were down, they saw the daughters of Cain with beautiful faces, naked and without any modesty, and were seized with burning lust. The daughters of Cain looked at them, they saw that they were beautiful and gigantic and they fell on them like beasts, soiling their bodies. Thus it was that Shīt's sons perished, fornicating with the daughters of Cain. From their union with the sons of Shīt, the daughters of Cain, the accursed, gave birth to the giants (10). In the Torah it is said that the sons of God, also called sons of Elohīm, when they saw that the daughters of Cain were beautiful, descended to live among them and the giants were born. They are therefore mistaken and do not know the truth, those who assert that the angels have descended among the daughters of Adam. They were instead, the sons of Shīt, come down from the holy mountain among the daughters of Cain, the accursed, because the sons of Shīt, both for their purity and because they lived on the holy mountain, were called sons of Elohīm, that is children of God. As for those who claim that the angels have descended among the daughters of men, well they are in error, because the substance of the angels is a simple substance and by their nature they cannot have sexual relations. Man, on the other hand, is a compound substance and by his nature can have sexual relations, as is the case with animals. If the angels could have sex they would not have left any woman among the daughters of the man without contaminating her. When the sons of Shīt, who had come down from the mountain among the daughters of Cain, the accursed, wanted to return to the holy mountain, the stones of the mountain became like fire and it was not possible for them to return to the mountain. Later, group by group, [others also] came down from the holy mountain among the daughters of Cain, the accursed one

5. When Yārid felt near death, he called to him his son Akhnūkh, and Mātūshālikh, son of Akhnūkh, Lāmikh, son of Mātūshālikh and Nūh, son of Lāmikh, and said to them: "Do not let any of you come down from this holy mountain. Your children have already fallen and are lost, and I know that God – powerful and exalted – will not let you remain on this holy mountain. But whoever of you will come

out of this place, let him take with him the body of Adam and these offerings and take them where God will command him". Yārid lived in all nine hundred and sixty-two years.

Akhnūkh had had Mātūshālikh at the age of one hundred and sixty-five years. He was twenty when Shīt died, on Tuesday, at the ninth hour of the day, on the 27th of the month of Āb, that is, of Misra (11). He lived in all nine hundred and twelve years. Anūsh, his son, embalmed the body with myrrh, incense and cinnamon and buried it in the Cave of the Treasures together with Adam, and he mourned him for forty days.

At the age of one hundred and eighty-seven Mātūshālikh had Lāmikh. Mātūshālikh lived in all nine hundred and sixty-nine years. When Mātūshālikh was fifty-three, Anūsh died on Saturday, at the setting of the sun, on the third of the month of Tishrīn al-Awwal, or Bābih (12). He had lived in all nine hundred and five years. His son Qīnān embalmed his body with myrrh, incense and cinnamon, buried it in the Cave of the Treasures and mourned him for forty days.

6. At the age of one hundred and eighty-two Lāmikh had Nūh. Lāmikh lived in all seven hundred and seventy-seven years. Lāmikh was thirteen when God selected Akhnūkh and raised him to himself. The Arabs call him Idrīs (13). Akhnūkh was three hundred and sixty-five years old when God raised him to himself. At that time the sons of Cain, the accursed, and the sons of Shīt who had come down among them worshiped whatever they liked and that the soul desired and sought. Qīnān died when Lāmikh was sixty-one, on Wednesday, at noon, on the 13th of Hazīrān, or Bābih (14). His son Mahlali'īl embalmed his body with myrrh, incense and cinnamon, buried it in the Cave of the Treasures and mourned him for forty days. Qīnān had lived in all nine hundred and ten years.

After five hundred years, Noah had three children. He called the first Sām, the second Yām and the third Yāfit. He lived in all nine hundred and fifty years. Noah was thirty-four years old when Mahlali'īl died, on Sunday, at the third hour of the day, on the 2nd of Nīsān, or Barmūdah (15). His son Yārid embalmed his body with myrrh, incense and cinnamon, buried it in the Cave of the Treasures and mourned for forty days. Mahlali'īl lived in all eight hundred and ninety-five years.

Yārid died when Noah was two hundred and six years old, on Fridays, at sunset, 13 of Adhār, or Baramhāt (16). His son Mātūshālikh, Lāmikh and Noah embalmed his body and buried him in the Cave of the Treasures, mourning his death for forty days. Yārid lived in all nine hundred and sixty-two years.

Noah was five hundred and ninety-five years old when his father Lāmikh died. Before he died, Lāmikh called his son Noah and said to him: "God – powerful and exalted – will not leave you [to live] on this mountain. When you go down, take the body of Adam with you and bring the three offerings with you, namely gold, myrrh and incense (17). Recommend also to your son that, after your death, he take with him the body of Adam, our father, and place him in the centre of the earth, placing at his service his son who shall spend his whole life there, in religion: he will not marry or shed blood; he will not offer either birds or beasts in sacrifice, but only bread and wine, because from that place will come the salvation of Adam. He will dress in the skins of animals, he will not cut his hair or trim his nails. He will be alone, because he will be called a priest of God. You know well that I am referring to Malshīsādāq".

When Lāmikh had finished recommending these things to his son Noah, he died on Sunday at sunset, 19 of Adhār, or Baramhāt (18). Noah embalmed his body and buried it in the Cave of the Treasures and mourned him for forty days. Lāmikh lived in all seven hundred and seventy-seven years. Noah was six hundred years old when Mātūshālakh died on Friday, at noon, on the 21st of the month of Aylūl, or Tūt (19). Noah and Sām embalmed the body and buried it in the Cave of the Treasures and mourned him for forty days. Matūshālakh lived in all nine hundred and sixty-nine years. On the holy mountain there only remained Noah, his wife Haykal, daughter of Nāmūsa, son of Akhnūkh, and his three sons Sām, Hām and Yāfit with their three wives, daughters of Mātūshālakh. Sām’s wife was called Salii, Hām’s wife was called Nahlat, and Yāfit’s wife was called Arīsīnah (20).

7. The corruption was now great upon the earth, for the sons of Shīt had intermingled with the sons of Cain, the accursed, performing sins and every sort of immorality and giving themselves only to entertainment, so God spoke to Noah and said to him: “I will send the flood upon the earth and I will exterminate everything on it”. He then ordered him to come down from the holy mountain, he, his sons, his wife and the wives of his children. He also ordered him to build a square-shaped wooden ark. Some have said that it was of Indian oak. The length of the ark had to be three hundred cubits, the width was fifty and the height was thirty. He had to smear it, inside and out, with tar and pitch, and setting up three floors: the lower floor for the wild beasts and for the quadrupeds; the middle floor for the birds and the upper floor for himself and his children. He ordered him to make the door on the eastern side, to provide receptacles for water and one for food. Noah entered the Cave of Treasures, kissed the bodies of Shīt, of Anūsh, of Qīnān, of Mahlali’īl, of Yārid, of Mātūshālakh, and of Lāmikh and took with him the body of Adam and the offerings. Sām took in his turn the gold, Hām the myrrh and Yāfit the incense. As they descended from the holy mountain, they had one last look at the holy paradise and wept saying: “Goodbye, holy paradise!” and they kissed the rocks and hugged the trees. Then they came down from the holy mountain and Noah began to build the ark. God told him to make a nāqūs<sup>[1]</sup> of Indian oak three cubits long and a cubit and a half wide; the clapper had to be of the same wood. He sounded it three times a day: in the morning, to summon the workers; at noon, for the meal and in the evening for the end of the work. [God] again told him: ‘When they hear you play the nāqūs and they ask: “What are you doing?” say to them: “God will send the flood”’. Noah did everything that God had commanded him to do. God sent him all kinds of animals, sheep, birds, wild beasts and reptiles and told him: “Of these animals, of those which are pure and clean [species], let seven couples, that is seven males and seven females, enter with you; of the unclean, two couples, male and female”.

8. Noah entered the ark with his wife, his sons, and his sons’ wives. Noah brought the body of Adam with him and placed it in the centre of the ark, placing the offerings on it. Noah and his sons settled down in the eastern part of the ark, while his wife and the wives of his sons settled in the western part of the ark so that then men would not approach the women, or the women the men. Noah had brought with him everything that God had ordered him to bring. God then opened the springs of the waters, the earth flooded and the seas flowed into each other and God made the waters of the sky rain down. Noah was six hundred years old when the flood occurred and his son Sām a hundred. Water spurted from the earth and the rains fell for forty days and forty nights. The waters covered the surface of the earth, exceeding the highest mountain by fifteen cubits and remained high upon the earth for one hundred and fifty days. On the earth there remained no animal nor was there any plant that did not die. From Adam to the flood passed two thousand, two hundred and sixty-five

years. One hundred and fifty days after the flood, God sent a wind that blew upon the earth and the waters subsided, the springs ceased to flow and the rain stopped. The waters began to run away, to decrease and to fall until the seventh month. On the 17th day of the seventh month after the flood, that is the month of Aylūl, or Tūt, the ark grounded on a mountain called Arārāt, which is Mount al-Gūdī (22) near Mosul (23), in the region of Diyār Rabī`a (24), in a village called Fardā (25), today known as the region of Thamanīn (26) and Gazīrat Banī `Umar (27). The waters continued to lessen and drain away until the tenth month. On the first day of the tenth month the tops of the mountains were seen. Forty days later, Noah opened the door of the ark and sent the crow out to see if the waters had disappeared from the earth. The crow flew away but did not return. He then sent out the dove, which came back soon after with wet feet. Noah understood then that the waters still covered the surface of the earth. Seven days later he sent out the dove again, which returned in the evening, carrying an olive leaf in its beak. Noah waited some more days, then sent out the dove, which went away without returning. Noah waited another seven days, then opened the door of the ark and looked out: the earth was green and the water was gone. Then Noah came out of the ark together with his sons Sām, Hām and Yāfit, together with his wife and the wives of his sons and with all the animals that were with him in the ark, after a year and two months, on the 17th of the second month, that is Nīsān, or Barmūdah (28).

9. When they went out [from the ark] they built a city and called it Thamanīn (29), from their number, which means “We are eight”. God – powerful and exalted – then said to Noah: “There will not be another flood in future”. God then made a covenant with Noah, which is the rainbow that appears in the clouds, telling him: “When you see this rainbow, it will be the sign of the covenant”. Then the sons of Noah planted a vineyard and, having squeezed a new beverage, they gave it to Noah, their father, who drank and got drunk. While he was asleep, his genitals were exposed. Sām and Yāfit then took a cloth and placed it over him and walked backwards so as not to see their father’s genitals. That was how they covered their father’s genitals. When Noah awakened from sleep, his wife informed him of what had happened. He was angry with his son Hām and cursed him saying: “Cursed be Hām and may he be a servant of his brothers” (30). Later Hām adopted all the instruments of entertainment and was also cursed for that. He became a servant of his brothers, he and his descendants, i.e. the Copts, those of the Sūdān, of Abyssinia and of Nubia, also called Berbers.

10. Two years after the flood, Sām had Arfakhshād at the age of one hundred and two years. Noah lived, after the flood, three hundred and fifty years. Feeling close to death, he spoke secretly to his son Sām telling him: “Take the body of Adam out of the ark without anyone seeing you and take bread and wine with you to help you along the way. Take Malshīsādāq, son of Fāliq, with you and go and lay it down where the angel of God shows you. Then order Malshīsādāq to stay in that place without taking a wife and to live there religiously for the rest of his life, because God has chosen him to be a servant in his presence. He will not build a house or shed the blood of wild beasts or birds or any other animal there. He will not offer any other sacrifice to God other than bread and wine. He will dress in animal skins, he will not shave his hair or trim his nails, and he will remain alone, because he is the priest of God Most High. The angel of God will precede you until you have come to the place to bury the body of Adam. Know that this place is the centre of the earth”. After giving these instructions to Sām, Noah died on Wednesday, at two in the morning, on the 2nd of Ayyār, i.e. Bashans (31). Noah had lived in all nine hundred and fifty years, and died when Sām was four hundred and fifty. His sons Sām, Hām and Yāfit embalmed the body, buried it and

mourned him for forty days. Sām lived in all six hundred years, one hundred before the flood and five hundred after the flood.

11. At the age of one hundred and thirty-five years Arfakhshād had Qīnān (32). Arfakhshād lived in all four hundred and sixty-five years. At one hundred and thirty years Qīnān had Shālakh. Qīnān lived in all four hundred and thirty years. At one hundred and thirty years Shālakh had ‘Abir. Shālakh lived in all four hundred and sixty years.(33). ‘Abir is the father of the Jews and the Arabs call him Hūd (34). At one hundred and thirty-four years ‘Abir had Fāliq (35) who was called this way because in his time the earth was divided (36). After Fāliq, ‘Abir had Qahtān (37) who is the father of the Arabs. In his day people used to paint the images of every person renowned for his courage or his beauty or for his wisdom and for his illustrious fame and worship them. The cause of their cult of images dates back to the fact that before the death of a man of great prudence or wisdom or courage, they set up the image in the halls where they used to gather. When an affliction hit them and they sought relief, they would gather before that image and consult with it, as if the same image were to take part with them in their search for wisdom; they took the utmost care not to exclude, in this difficulty, the memory of any of those who had preceded them. And so, continuing in their custom, they ended up worshiping images. From the deluge to the birth of Fāliq five hundred and thirty-one years had passed away, and from Adam to the birth of Fāliq two thousand seven hundred and eighty-seven years.

12. From Fāliq was born Malshīsādāq, the priest (38). As for Sām, he did what his father Noah had advised him. He entered the ark at night and took Adam’s body away without anyone noticing. He then called his brothers and told them: “My father advised me, when he was dying, to walk the earth until reaching the sea and see how the earth is, its rivers and its valleys, then return to you. I entrust to you my wife and my children: watch over them until I return.” Sām then said to Fāliq: “Give me your son Malshīsādāq, so that he may help me along the way”. Sām then took the body of Adam and Malshīsādāq with him, went out and met the angel of God, who walked before them until he brought them to the centre of the earth and showed them the place. When they had set down the body of Adam, the place opened. Sām and Malshīsādāq deposited the body of Adam in the place that had opened to them and it closed. That place is called al-Gulgula, or al-Iqrāniyūn (39). Then Sām instructed Malshīsādāq [to do] all that Noah had advised him and told him: “Stay here and be a priest of God, because God has chosen you to serve in his presence. This is the angel of God, who will come to you at all times”. Then Sām returned to his brothers and Fāliq said to him: “Where is young Malshīsādāq?” Sām replied: “He died on the way and I buried him”. And they felt great pain for him. ‘Ābir was seventy years old when Arfakhshād died in the month of Nīsān, i.e. Barmūdah (40): he had lived all four hundred and sixty-five years. In the one hundred and third year of the life of ‘Abir, there died Sām, son of Noah, on the Friday of the month of Aylūl, i.e. Tūt (41): he had lived for six hundred years (42). ‘Ābir lived in all four hundred and sixty-four years.(43)

13. At that time people spoke only one language and one dialect. Some say that they spoke Syriac, others instead that they spoke Hebrew, and others that they spoke Greek. For me the latter are more reliable, because the Greek language is much more vigorous, richer and more varied than both Syriac and Hebrew (44). Seventy-two of them gathered together and said: “Let us build a city and gird it with walls, and erect in it a tower that reaches up to heaven, because if one day there is a flood we will be protected”. For three years they made crude bricks and put them to bake. Each

brick was thirteen cubits long, ten wide and five high. Then they built a city between Sūr and Bābil. The city was three hundred and thirteen bā' long (45) and it was a hundred and fifty-one bā' wide. The height of the wall was five thousand five hundred and thirty-three bā' and its thickness thirty-three bā'. The tower was ten thousand bā' tall. They built it in forty years. While they were still intent on building, God sent them an angel (46) from heaven who confused their tongues and altered their language, so that when one spoke to another he could not understand what he was saying. That place was called Babil because it was there that the languages became confused, and it was from there that they spread out across the land. Forty-six years had passed since the birth of Fāliq.

Of those seventy-two men, twenty-five belonged to the Banū Sām. They lived from the Euphrates and Mosul as far as the Far East, and from them came the Syrians, the inhabitants of Diyār Rabī'a and Mesopotamia, the Garāmiqa, the Chaldeans, i.e. the inhabitants of Bābil, those of Fāris, of Khurāsān, of Farghāna, of Sind, of India, of the peninsula as-Sin, the Hebrews, the inhabitants of Yemen, of at-Tā'if, of al-Yamāma, of Bahrayn and the different Arab lineages. They have eight forms of writing: Hebrew, Syriac, Persian, Indian, Chaldean, which is the Babylonian writing, Chinese, Himyarite and Arabic. The Sāmites touched, out of the great watercourses, the Euphrates and the Balikh river.

Of those [seventy-two men], thirty-two belonged to the Banū Hām. They inhabited Syria – also called the land of Kan'ān because Hām had a son named Kan'ān – up to the extreme West and there are derived from them the Canaanites, the Philistines, the Egyptians, the Copts, the Mans (47), the lineages of Sūdān, Abyssinia, Nubia, the Bugāhs (48), the Zang, the Zutt, the inhabitants of Qarrān, the Samaritans, the Zābig, the Maghrebins and the Berbers. They have twenty-six islands, including Sardinia (49), Malta and Crete, and a part of the island of Cyprus and others. They have six forms of writing: Egyptian, Nubian, Ethiopian, Farangis (50), Punic and Qunquli (51). The Hāmites touched, out of the great watercourses, the Nile.

Of those [seventy-two men], fifteen belonged to the Banū Yāfit.<sup>7</sup> They lived from the Tigris to the far north and there are derived from them the Turks, the Baġnāk, the Tugharghar, the Tubt, the inhabitants of Yāġūg, of Māġūġ, of Khazar, of Lān, the Anġāz, the Sanābirah (52), the inhabitants of Ġarzān, the inhabitants of Great and Little Armenia, of Hawrān, of Antioch, of al-Khālidiyyah, of Paphlagonia, of Cappadocia, of Kharshana, the Greeks, the Romans, the Byzantines, the Russians, the Daylamites, the Bulgarians, the Slavs, the Lombards, the Franks, the Galsatīn and the Spaniards. They have twelve islands, including Rhodes, Sicily, Cyprus, Samos and others. They have six forms of writing: Greek, Roman, Armenian, Spanish, Frankish and ġurzāni. Of the great watercourses, the Yāfitites touched the Tigris. From the deluge to the construction of the tower and the confusion of languages five hundred and seventy-eight years had passed, and from Adam to the construction of the tower two thousand eight hundred and thirty-four.

14. At one hundred and thirty Fāliq had Rāghū (53) and he was thirty when Qīnān died in the month of Ab, i.e. Misrā, at the age of four hundred and thirty years. Fāliq lived in all three hundred and thirty-nine years. At the age of one hundred and thirty two years Rāghū had Shārū' (54). In his day men worshiped idols and everyone worshiped and venerated what he liked (55). Some worshiped the sky, others worshiped the sun, others the moon, others the stars, others the birds, others the

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<sup>7</sup> i.e. the tribe of Japeth.

earth, others the beasts, others the rivers, others the trees and others the mountains (56). There were those who made themselves an idol in the likeness of their father, mother and those whom they loved more than others and filled with favours, and when one of them died, they adored him and made him a god (57). Others made idols of gold, silver, stone, or wood. The inhabitants of Egypt, Bāhil, and Ifrangis and the inhabitants of the coasts began to do this. In another text they are said to be only imitators. It is also said that the origin of the worship of idols goes back to the custom that they had, of placing on the tomb of a dead person an idol similar to him so that they did not forget his memory. So it was that the earth was filled with idols made in the image of men, women and children (58). At that time a rich man died, having a son who made an idol in the image of his father and placed it on his grave, placing his servant as guardian. But the thieves came and stole everything the young man had at home. The young man rushed to his father's grave and began to cry and moan at that golden idol just as if he was complaining to his father. The devil spoke to him from the belly of the idol and said to him: "Do not cry. Instead, bring your youngest child here and offer him as a sacrifice. Then bathe in his blood and I will give you back everything you had". The young man left and returned with his son, slaughtered him in front of the idol and bathed in his blood. The demon then came out of the idol and entered the young man and taught him magic and incantations. It was from that time that men began to sacrifice their children to demons and to practice magic (59).

15. In the days of Rāghū there reigned the Queen of Sheba, founder of the city of Saba, for many years (60). After her, women continued to reign in the city of Saba, until the time of King Solomon, son of David. In the days of Rāghū there was king Qārūn (61), who built the city of Uqīnīn. It is said that Qārūn melted gold, making bricks with which he built the city of Uqīnīn. Rāghū was sixty-six years old when Shālakh died, in the month of Adhār, or Baramhāt (62), after having lived four hundred sixty years. Rāghū lived in all three hundred and thirty-nine years (63). At one hundred and thirty years Shārū' had Nākhūr (64). Shārū' was sixty-eight years old when 'Ābir died in the month of Kānūn ath-Thānī, or Tūbah (65), at the age of four hundred and sixty-four (66). Shārū' was seventy-seven years old when Fāliq died in the month of Aylūl, or Tūt, at the age of three hundred and thirty-nine (67). Shārū' lived in all three hundred and thirty years (68).

At seventy-nine Nākhūr had Tārih (69). In his day the giants multiplied, and there lived 'Ād (70), son of Aram, son of Sām, son of Noah. Indeed in his time measures and weights were instituted, and also in his time the earth was shaken by a violent and fearful earthquake (71), which was the first in history. And since there were many worshipers of idols who sacrificed their sons and their daughters to the demons, God sent a stormy wind that like a whirlwind broke all the idols and cut down their niches, reducing them to a heap of stones in the shape of hills still visible today (72). When Nākhūr was seventy-seven years old, Rāghū died in the month of Nīsān, or Barmūdah, at the age of three hundred and thirty-nine (73). In his time there appeared a Persian man named Zaradasht (74) who founded the Sabaian religion. And there was in Persia a king called Tahmūrat (75). Some believe that a Greek named al-Yūnān son of Iraqliyūs, based in Ilyas, was the founder of the Sabaian religion; others believe he was from the city of "az-Zaytūna", built near Athens. The Greeks were the first to profess this doctrine and wrote many books on astrology and the motion of the universe. It is also said that the Sabaian religion was founded by one of those who had taken part in the construction of the tower of Bābil. Nākhūr lived in all two hundred and eight years (76).



At the age of seventy Tārih had Abraham. In his time the king of Bābil was Nimrūd (77), the giant. It is said that he was the first king to rule in Bābil. He saw in the sky, in a cloud, something like a crown, and immediately summoned a metal-worker who modelled a crown and he placed it on his head. For this reason, people said: “He was given a crown from heaven”. It is said that he was the first to worship fire because he saw, far to the east, a fire coming out of the earth. Nimrūd went there, worshipped it and placed a man there who remained at the service of the fire, throwing incense on it. From that time the magi began to worship fire and prostrate themselves before it. The man whom Nimrūd had placed at the service of the fire was called Andishān (78). Satan spoke to him from the belly of the fire telling him: “No one can serve the fire or learn my religion unless he has first slept with his mother, with his sister and with his daughter.” Andishān did as Satan had told him, and from that time the priests of the magi began to have relations with their mothers, their sisters and their daughters. This Andishān was the first to profess such a doctrine. Nimrūd founded Adarbīgān, Bābil, Nineveh, Rāsin and many [other] cities (79). Tarih lived in all two hundred and sixty-five years and died (80). From Fāliq to Abraham there had passed five hundred and forty-one years; from the flood to Abraham, a thousand and seventy-two years; from Adam to Abraham, three thousand three hundred and twenty-eight years.

16. Abraham was seventy-five years old when God commanded him to leave Harrān, the land of his father, and to live in the land of Kan’ān, i.e. Syria. Abraham took with him his wife Sarah, who was his sister on his father’s side, because Tārih, father of Abraham, after Yūnā (81), the mother of Abraham, died, married another woman named Tuhwayt, who gave him Sarah, whom Abraham then married. Therefore Abraham used to say: “She is my sister, my father’s daughter, but she is not my mother’s daughter” (82). He also took with him Lūt, son of his brother, and left for the land of “al-Manāriyyih al-‘ Amūriyyah “. (= Amorites). Here everyone was against him and they took Lūt captive. Abraham followed their tracks and freed Lūt from their hands.

When he returned, he crossed the Jebusite mountains and met Malshīsādāq, called the king of peace, a priest of God Most High. When Abraham saw him from afar, he fell upon his feet, embraced him and kissed him, asking him to bless him. Malshīsādāq blessed him and offered him bread and wine. Abraham gave Malshīsādāq a tithe of all he had. God then revealed to Abraham, “From now on you will be greater, because I will bless you and multiply your seed.” When the kings knew of this, and heard of Malshīsādāq they came to him. Among them were Abīmālikh, king of Ġadar, Marqāl, king of Zaghar, Aryūsh, king of Zidstar, Gardā`umir, king of ‘llān, Targhalī, king of Zaghlāy, Bā`āz, king of Ghilāth, Yā`iz , king of Sadūm, Birshā` , king of ‘Āmūrā, Sibāth, king of Adūm, Banbū, king of Dimashq, Baqtar, king of ar-Rabba, and Sim`ān, king of the Amūriyyīn. These twelve kings went to Malshīsādāq, called the king of peace, and when they saw him and heard his words, they asked him to go with them, but he replied, “I can’t leave this place.” Then they consulted and decided to build him a city, saying, “Verily, this is the king of all the earth and the father of all kings.” So they built a city for him and put him there as king. Malshīsādāq called that city Ūrashalīm. When Mākhūl, king of at-Tayman, heard of King Malshīsādāq, he went to see him and gave him much money. Malshīsādāq was honoured by all the kings and they called him the father of kings (83).

As for those who say that the days of Malshīsādāq had no beginning nor that his life has ever ended, bringing as an argument what the apostle Paul says in the passage, “Of whose days there was no beginning, nor an end to his life” (84), well they show that they have not understood the meaning of

the apostle Paul's affirmation, because of Sām, son of Noah, when he took with him Malshīsādāq, taking him away from his parents, it was not written in the [holy] book how old he was when he left the east or how many years old when he died. [It was only written that] Malshīsādāq is the son of Fāliq, son of 'Ābir, son of Shālakh, son of Qīnān, son of Arfakhshād, son of Sām, son of Noah, but none of these his ancestors was called his father. In fact, the apostle Paul says, "No other man of his lineage served in the Temple" (85), nor did they ever attribute him a father among the tribes. In fact the evangelists Matthew and Luke wrote only of the founders of the tribes. This is why the apostle Paul wrote neither the name of his father nor that of his mother. And yet the apostle Paul does not expressly say that he had no father, but that they did not write him in the genealogies of the tribes.

Abraham was fifty-one years old when Sārūgh died in the month of Adhār, or Baramhāt (86), at the age of three hundred and thirty years (87). In the days of Abraham the people of Lut, son of Aran, brother of Abraham, indulged in vice in the cities of Sadūm and 'Amūrā (88). God destroyed them and saved Lūt. Sarah, Abraham's wife, was barren and could not bear children. Abraham was very rich. Sāra diede ad Abramo una sua serva di nome Hāḡar. Hagar conceived by Abraham and bore him a son whom Abraham called Isma'īl (89). Abraham was eighty-six years old. At the age of ninety-nine, Abraham was circumcised and also circumcised his son Ishmael, who was then thirteen years old. Abraham had already turned 100 when Sārah, his wife, bore him a son whom Abraham called Ishāq (90). Sārah was ninety years old. On the eighth day after his birth, Isaac was circumcised. After giving birth to Isaac, Sārah said to Abraham, "Send Hāḡar and her son Ishmael away from me" (91). Abraham gave his son Ishmael money and provisions and sent him, along with his mother, to the land of Yatrib (92) and Yemen (93). Ishmael established his home there, married there, and reproduced and lived in all for one hundred and thirty-seven years.

17. In the days of Abraham there was, in the East, a king named Kūrish, that is the founder of Sumaysāt, of Qlūdiyā and of al-'Irāq (94). Also in his time, there reigned Khābīt (94), wife of Sīn, a priest of the mountain; he built Nissībīn and ar-Ruhā (96) encircling them with a wall, and he also built a great temple in Harrān. Then he had a golden idol made in the name of Sīn, had it placed in the center of the temple and ordered all the inhabitants of Harrān to worship it. The inhabitants of Harrān worshipped it for fifty years. After this, Ba`alsamīn, king of al-'Irāq, fell madly in love with Talbīn, wife of Thamūr, king of Mosul, who escaped from him by setting fire to Harrān and burning it down, together with the temple and the idol (97). Abraham was fifty-nine years old when Nākhūr died in the month of Tammūz, or Abīb (98), at the age of two hundred and eight (99).

18. Abraham was fifty-seven years old when God commanded him to kill his son Isaac and offer him as a sacrifice on the fire. Isaac was then thirty-seven years old. If someone were to ask what is the proof that Isaac was thirty-seven when his father set about sacrificing him, he will be answered, "Sārah had given birth to him at the age of ninety. Now when she heard that Abraham had taken her son Isaac and had taken him to the mountain to sacrifice him, she felt intense pain and fell ill, for the pain she had suffered, until she died. She was then a hundred and twenty-seven years old. Isaac, therefore, had to have been, at that time, thirty-seven years old". So Abraham took his son Isaac and carried him to the mountain, bringing with him wood and fire. Abraham tied his son Isaac's hands behind his back, sat him down on the wood and then had him stretch out in order to sacrifice him. But an angel from heaven called to him and said to him, "O Abraham, do not sacrifice your son. We have tested your resignation and your obedience, we have scrutinized your soul and we have spared him, moved to compassion towards you "(100). God then ordered him to sacrifice a

large ram instead of Isaac. When Sārah heard that Abraham had taken Isaac and led him to the mountain to sacrifice him, she cried out and raised loud laments and for the intense pain and sorrow she felt, she fell ill and died that same year. She had lived in all one hundred and twenty-seven years (101). After Sārah's death, Abraham married a woman named Qītūra, daughter of Biqtar, king of ar-Rabba, and had many children (102). Abraham supplied them with provisions and sent them away, far away from Isaac. Abraham lived all one hundred and seventy-five years.

Isaac was thirty-five years old when Tārikh died in the month of Aylūl, or Tūt, (103) at the age of two hundred and five years and he was buried in Harrān (104). At the age of forty Isaac married a woman named Ribqa (105), daughter of Mānū'il, son of Nākhūr, brother of Abraham (106). Isaac was sixty years old when his wife Rebecca conceived. Her pregnancy was difficult and painful (107). She therefore went to Malshīsādāq, who prayed for her and said to her, "In your womb there are two peoples: you will give birth to two tribes and the older will obey the younger." (108). Rebecca gave birth to two sons in one birth. Isaac called the first al-'Is and the second Ya'qūb (109). He called him Jacob because he had come out of his mother's womb clinging to Esau's heel. Isaac loved Esau and Rebecca Jacob. Esau was stocky, hairy and always smelled bad. When he grew old, Isaac called his son Esau and said to him, "Take your weapons, go to the desert and bring me game. Prepare me a good meal so that that I may eat it and bless you, before I die." (110).

Rebecca heard this, took Jacob, made him wear Esau's clothes, then took some kidskin and placed it on his chest, on his shoulders and along Jacob's arms. Then she prepared a good dish and said: "Go, go to your father Isaac and tell him: 'I am Esau', so that he blesses you before he dies." (111). Jacob went to Isaac and he said to him, "Come closer". He approached, Isaac felt and said, "Certainly the voice is that of Jacob, but the touch is that of Esau" (112). Then Isaac ate and blessed Jacob, making him head over his brother. Then Esau came, returning from the hunt, prepared the food and took it to his father Isaac. But his father said to him, "Who came before you and took the blessing?" Esau burst into tears and said, "My Father, do you really have only one blessing?" Isaac replied, "By now I have made him your chief. What can I do for you?" (113). Esau approached him and Isaac blessed him, after having made Jacob his chief. Esau then decided to kill Jacob, but Jacob fled away from his brother, sheltering in Harrān with his uncle Lābān. At the time of Isaac, Arīhā was built (114). Seven kings built it and each surrounded it with a wall. Isaac was seventy-five years old when Abraham died in the month of Nīsān, or Barmūdah (115), (in another text it says: in the month of Adhār, or Baramhāt) (116), at the age of one hundred and seventy-five (117). Isaac was one hundred and twenty-three years old when Ishmael died in the month of Nīsān, or Barmūdah (118), at the age of one hundred and thirty-seven (119). Isaac lived in all one hundred and eighty years (120). Esau married, at the age of 40, one of the daughters of his uncle Ishmael, named Nahlāt (121), who bore him many children. Then he married a Canaanite named Ghadā, daughter of Alūn, the Hittite (122). He then married other women, among them from Rum, and spread himself among them. He had an innumerable progeny; including the Amalekites and the Qurri (123). Esau lived in all one hundred and twenty-nine years.

19. Jacob joined his Uncle Lābān in Harrān. His uncle had two daughters: the older one was called Liyyā, who had bleary eyes, and the younger Rāhīl (124). Jacob fell in love with Rachel and asked his uncle to marry her who told him, "Serve me for seven years, and I will give you Rachel in marriage." (125). He served him for seven years, but instead he sent Liyyā, Rachel's sister, to him. The next day Jacob told his uncle, "I served you for seven years just because you would give me Rachel as a

wife. Why, then, did you bring in her sister Liyyā to me?" (126). Uncle Lābān answered him, "Serve me for another seven years, and I will marry you to Rachel" (127). He then served him for another seven years, and he gave him Rachel as his wife. Thus Jacob married the two sisters. Liyyā bore him Ruben (128), Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issakar, and Zābulon. Rachel had no children. Then she said to Jacob, "Take my slave Bilhā to conceive by you and I will have a son." (129). Bilhā, Rachel's slave, gave birth to two sons by Jacob: Dān and Nifthālīm. Liyyā then said to Jacob: "Take my servant Zilfa also, so that she may conceive of you and with my children I will have other children" (130). Zilpha, servant of Liyyā, gave birth to two sons by Jacob, 'Ad (131) and Ashir. Later, Rachel also conceived and gave birth to Yūsuf and Binyāmīn (132). From these twelve sons of Jacob all the sons of Israel are descended. Jacob then returned to the land of Kan'ān and God called Jacob Isrā'il. Jacob was eighty-seven years old when Liyyā gave birth to Levi, his third child. Levi's date of birth was written down, unlike that of his other brothers, because Moses is from the lineage of Levi. Jacob loved Joseph intensely and preferred him to his brothers. That was why his brothers envied him and decided to kill him. While they were grazing their sheep and their camels, they passed a caravan of Midianite merchants, Arabs of the lineage of Ishmael, who carried pine nuts, terebinth and oil headed for Egypt. Joseph's brothers took him and sold him for twenty dinars (133). Joseph was seventeen. So they took Joseph's shirt, sprinkled the sleeves with blood and told Jacob, "A wolf has devoured Joseph." (134). When the merchants came with Joseph to Egypt, a servant of the Pharaoh, who was the head chef (135), bought Joseph. His wife desired him and sent for him, but he did not bend to her wishes. Then she spoke ill of him of her husband, saying, "This Jewish slave tried to seduce me." He then had him locked up in prison.

Jacob was one hundred and twenty years old when Isaac died in the month of Ayyār, or Bashans (136), at the age of one hundred and eighty, and he was one hundred and twenty when Esau died in the month of Tishrīn al-Awwal, or Bābih (137), aged one hundred and twenty-nine years old.

20. Pharaoh had the chief baker put in jail and the chief cupbearer together with Joseph. The chief cupbearer dreamed that he was holding a bunch of grapes that he pressed and gave a drink to Pharaoh. Joseph said to him, "It will happen just like you saw in the dream. Then remember me when you are near your lord." (138). The head of the bakers saw in a dream that he had on his head a tray full of bread from which the birds fed. Joseph said to him, "You will be crucified and the birds will feed on your flesh." (139). Joseph's words came true. In fact, the pharaoh had a dream and the chief cupbearer told him, "There is a young Jew in prison who is very adept at interpreting dreams." Pharaoh sent for Joseph and said to him: "I saw seven fat cows come out of the sea followed by seven lean cows. The seven lean cows swallowed the seven fat cows. I then saw seven fat ears of corn grow out of the ground followed by seven empty and dry ears. The seven empty ears have swallowed the seven full ears." Joseph said to him, "Your reign will be flourishing for seven years and for another seven years there will be drought and great famine." (140). Pharaoh then created Joseph the supreme administrator of his kingdom and gave him his ring. In the seven years of prosperity, Joseph amassed so much grain to fill countless barns.

21. Joseph was thirty years old when he married a woman named Asīnāt (141), daughter of the priest of the city of 'Ayn Shams (142), who gave him two sons. Joseph called the first Manasseh, who was his firstborn, and called the other Ifrām. In the place called Minf (143), Joseph built a hydrometer to measure the increase in water from the Nile in Egypt; he had the canal called al-Manha (144) dug, and he built Hagar al-Lāhūn (145). At forty years old Levi, son of Jacob, had Qāhāt,

in the territory of Kan'ān, three years before they entered Egypt. At that time there was great famine in Egypt and in Syria. The Egyptians bought grain from Joseph until they were left without a dīnār or a dirham. They therefore bought more grain by selling their property, their animals and their homes. And when they had nothing left, they said to Joseph, "Let us sell ourselves to pharaoh and declare ourselves his slaves, but give us grain to eat and sow." (146). Thus Joseph bought for the pharaoh the people of the Egyptians, giving them grain to eat and to sow in exchange and making them pay the tithes of their crops, a custom that is still in force today. Thus it was that the Egyptians became slaves of the pharaoh. In his days lived Job the just man (147), or Ayyūb, son of Amūs, son of Zārākh, son of Rāghū'īl, son of Esau, son of Isaac, son of Abraham, son of Abraham. He was very rich, and God put him to the test. However, he gave thanks and endured with a docile spirit, and God withdrew the test from him and returned his goods.

22. A severe famine struck Syria. Jacob then said to his sons, "Go to Egypt and buy grain." (148) Joseph's brothers went to Egypt. When Joseph saw them, he recognized them. But they did not recognize him. Benjamin, his twin brother, was not with them. Joseph said to them, "Who are you? Where do you come from, and what do you want?". They replied, "We are the sons of Jacob. We were twelve, but a wolf devoured one, whose twin brother has remained with his father. Our father is very old and weeps for the son devoured by the wolf day and night". Joseph said to them, "You are nothing but spies." But they swore and Joseph said, "If you tell the truth and you are not spies, leave one of you here and return to your father bringing me your younger brother, the one whose brother the wolf has devoured, to let us know if you are telling the truth." They left with him Simeon, and Joseph ordered that their saddlebags be filled with grain, putting in every bag some silver that belonged to his lord. When they came to Jacob, they informed him of what had happened and each found the silver in his bag. They then returned to Egypt to buy grain, taking with them the silver and some goods. They also brought Benjamin, Joseph's twin brother. When Joseph saw him, he ordered them to be treated with all respect and he felt great tenderness and emotion for them. Their saddlebags were filled with wheat and he ordered once again to put in each one of them the silver of his master, while in that of Benjamin he had put a golden cup that belonged to the pharaoh. When they had left Joseph and were headed to Syria, Joseph's servants joined them and told them, "[Our] lord has treated you with every respect, but you have behaved in the worst way by stealing the king's gold cup." They replied, "Take also the one with whom you find it, and let him be the slave of your king." They searched in their saddlebags and found the cup in the bag of Benjamin. The servants then took Benjamin and took him to Joseph. The brothers came back with him and told Joseph, "Our Lord, our father is very old. The brother of this young man was devoured by a wolf, as we have already told you, and his father still mourns him to this day. If you keep him with you, we will not be able to return to our father, because if he is not with us his father will die from the pain. Leave him free, so that he may return to his father, and take as your slave whichever of us seems good to you". Joseph answered them, "God forbid we take anyone but the one in whose bag we found the cup". Then Joseph took pity on them and said, "I am Joseph, your brother. Do not grieve or fear". Joseph then went to Jacob with tents and chariots and took him, along with all his descendants, to Egypt out of the land of Canaan (149). Jacob entered Egypt in the second year of the famine (in another text it is said: in the third), together with his sons and the children of his sons, without counting the women of his sons not born of his loins, with Joseph and his two sons: there were seventy people in all. Jacob was then a hundred and thirty years old. He remained in Egypt seventeen years. Levi was sixty years old when Jacob died in Egypt. Joseph and

all his sons took him to the land of Canaan and buried him there with his father Isaac. Jacob lived in all forty-seven years.

23. In Egypt Qāhāt had, at sixty years old, ‘Imrān (150). Qāhāt was fifteen years old when Joseph died. His brothers laid him in a coffin and buried him in Egypt. He was one hundred and ten years old. It is said that Joseph’s body was placed in a marble coffin and thrown into the Nile (151). ‘Imrān was seventy-three years old when Maryam was born to him, he had completed seventy-seven years when he had Harūn and after the eightieth year Moses was born to him – on him be peace. ‘Imrān lived in all one hundred and thirty-six years. He was thirty-seven years old when Levi died, at the age of one hundred and thirty-seven, and when he was seventy-six Qāhāt died, at the age of one hundred and twenty-seven.

## Chapter 2

Ch. II. The Israelites become slaves of the Egyptians – The killing of every newborn Jew – Moses is forced to leave Egypt and goes to Midian – Pharaoh allows the children of Israel to leave – Moses on Mount Sinai – Death of Moses, Aaron and Maryam – Joshua becomes leader of the people – Joshua’s battles and alliances with nations and cities – Partition of the conquered territories among the children of Israel (p.63)

1. After the death of Joseph, his brothers and all those of their generation, the Israelites became numerous and spread to such an extent that Egypt was full of them. Then there reigned over Egypt a king who did not know Joseph, who told his advisers: “The sons of Israel have become numerous, and we cannot be sure that, if a rebel rises against us, they will not give him a hand and drive us out of Egypt.” He then stirred up the Egyptians against them, reduced them to slavery and forced them to work clay, bricks and stones, to dig mountains and caves and to plough the land. The pharaoh ordered the midwives to kill every male who was born among the sons of Israel by drowning him in the river. Countless little children were killed and drowned in the river. When Moses was born, his mother feared that they would kill him and she kept him hidden for three months. Fearing then for her own life – Moses’ mother was called Yūkhābad (1) – she made a small ark of papyrus, – in the Torah it is said to be made of pine wood (2) -, covered it within and without with bitumen, placed the child inside and abandoned it on the bank of the Nile, where the water was low, near a city named Dan (3), of the province of Egypt, so that the waves, hitting it, would carry it to the water and the child would be drowned without her being able to see it. Maryam, sister of Moses, was hiding, far away, to see what happened to the baby. Then the daughter of the pharaoh came, whose name was Sī’ūn (4), to bathe in the Nile. She heard the baby crying in the ark, she felt great tenderness and compassion and took him up. She then commanded a nurse to be brought to feed him and raise him. Then Maryam, the sister of Moses, met her and said to her: “I will bring you a nurse from among the children of Israel to breastfeed and raise him” (5). She went and returned with her mother, Moses’ mother, but Pharaoh’s daughter never knew that she was his mother. She then gave the baby to her to breastfeed and bring up.

2. When Moses grew and became a man, he saw an Israelite arguing with an Egyptian. Moses punched the Egyptian and killed him; then he buried him in the sand. A few days later two Israelites were arguing and Moses intervened. But they told him: “So what? Do you want to kill one of us, as you recently did with the Egyptian?”(6). Moses feared for his life and escaped to the Hiḡāz, settling in the city of Madiyan. There he married a woman named Sīfūra, daughter of Yatrū (7), whom the Arabs call Shu’ayb (8), one of the descendants of Ishmael, son of Abraham, and who was a priest in the temple of the city of Madiyan. Sīfūra gave Moses two sons, Girsām and Ilyāzar. While Moses was grazing the sheep of his father-in-law Yatrū, he saw, on the mountain, a bush that burned, at noon, without however being consumed by the fire. He approached to look, and God spoke to him from the bush: “Do not be afraid, Moses, it’s me, God. Go to Pharaoh and tell him to let the children of Israel leave, in order to worship me” (9). Moses went to the pharaoh. Moses was eighty years old when God spoke to him, Hārūn was eighty-three and Maryam, their sister, was eighty-seven. Moses was fifty-six years old when his father ‘Imrān (10) died at the age of one hundred and thirty-six. There prophesied in Egypt, among the sons of Israel, Zārākh, of the tribe of Judah, Zamrī, Abiyātar, Haymān, Halkūk, Dardā’ and finally Moses. When the sons of Israel entered Egypt for the

first time, there were only seventy. They had lived in Egypt two hundred and seventeen years, as slaves of the pharaohs, serving one pharaoh after another.

3. If someone objects that in the Torah it is written that the sons of Abraham – in another text: the sons of Israel – were slaves for four hundred years (11) and then asks why we say instead that they were slaves for two hundred and seventeen years, we answer: “You have not chosen correctly the date from which to begin to compute to get to the four hundred years. Know that it is written in the first book of the Torah that God – highest be His praise – said to Abraham: “Look up at the sky and count the stars if you can count them. Your seed will be as numerous as them.”(12) And God told him again: “I am the God who brought you out of Qarrà of the Chaldeans to bring you to this land that I will give you as an inheritance” (13). Abraham said: “My Lord, how will I know that I shall inherit it?”(14). And God answered him: “Take a young bull, a ram and a three-year-old goat, then take a turtledove and a pigeon. Divide them in half and place each half in front of the respective half, but do not divide the birds “(15). Abraham did [as God had ordered him to do]. The birds immediately rushed to the sides, but Abraham called them and they went to him. It was sunset. On Abraham there fell a deep sleep and a great fright because dense darkness had fallen on Abraham. God told Abraham: “You must know that your descendants will dwell in a land not their own and will work there and will be slaves for four hundred years. But I will judge the nation that they serve. Later they will come out and come here with great riches. As for you, you will go in peace to your fathers and you will be buried after a decent old age”(16). It is from this time when God said to Abraham: “Your descendants will be slaves for four hundred years” that it is necessary to compute the exodus of the children of Israel from Egypt. Understand it well!

4. Pharaoh let the children of Israel go and told them: “Go with Moses and worship your Lord on the holy mountain (17). But in three days, go back to your places”. Moses ordered the women of the children of Israel to borrow clothes and jewels from the Egyptians and wear them. The women did as Moses had ordered them to do. Moses led them out of Egypt. There were six hundred thousand. The sea split in two before them, on the orders of Moses, and allowed them to walk in the middle. The pharaoh regretted allowing the children of Israel to leave. The pharaoh of the times of Moses was called ‘Amyūs (18). He chased them with six hundred thousand men and passed through where they had passed. But the waters rejoined over them and drowned the pharaoh with his men, without even one being saved. From Abraham to when the children of Israel came out of Egypt five hundred and seven years had passed away; from Fāliq to the exodus of the children of Israel from Egypt, one thousand and forty-eight; from the deluge to the exodus of the children of Israel from Egypt, one thousand five hundred and seventy-nine years; from Adam to the exodus of the children of Israel from Egypt, three thousand eight hundred and thirty-five years.

The children of Israel wandered for forty years. God rained manna and quails on them. In their wandering from one place to another they fought against the Amalekites and the Philistines. Whenever they tried to occupy Palestine they were driven out, and every time they tried to enter the territory of the Amalekites they engaged in battle and were driven back. When they thought of returning to Egypt, they were afraid of the people. In the desert there prophesied the sons of Qūrih (19), who were swallowed up by the earth, namely Ashīr, Ilqānā and Anīsāf (20). The earth swallowed Qūrih because he had become arrogant to Moses and insulted him. Moses therefore commanded the earth [to open] and it swallowed Qūrih with his tent and all that belonged to him. Moses and Harun made a census of the sons of Israel who were in the desert, of those who



carried arms, from twenty years upwards, except those of the tribe of Levi, and counted them six hundred and three thousand five hundred and fifty. Then the sons of Levi, those from a month upwards, turned out to be twenty-two thousand two hundred and seventy-three. The total number of the sons of Israel that Moses and Harūn counted thus turned out to be six hundred and twenty-five thousand eight hundred and twenty-three. While in the desert, Moses killed Sīhūn, king of Hishwan (21): he destroyed their homes, killed their men and took their women captive. He killed the king of Madyan, destroyed Madyan and killed the men and the children, taking the women prisoner. He killed the king of 'Ūğ and destroyed the city, killing the men and children and making the women prisoner (22).

5. Moses ascended Mount Tur Sīnā (23) and God gave him the Torah written on plates. When he came down he found that the sons of Israel had taken the jewels of their women, smelted them, and had forged a calf's head and worshiped it. Seeing them in this condition, he threw down the plates which were broken in pieces. Then Moses picked them up and placed them in an ark. Moses built the Tent of time using the thread of the garments of the women of the Israelites and placed a sanctuary within it. Harūn, his brother, was a priest in the sanctuary. In the desert, many snakes were mortally biting the children of Israel, who asked Moses for help. God then ordered Moses to make a bronze serpent and put it in such a way as to be clearly visible and to raise the standard in the camp of the children of Israel. Anyone who was bitten and looked at the bronze snake would not report any damage from the snake's venom. Moses, Harūn and Maryam, their sister, died in the desert in the same year, having wandered for forty years in the desert. First Maryam, their sister, on the sixth of Nīsān, or Barmūdah (24), died at the age of one hundred and twenty-seven; then Harūn died, on the first of the month of Āb, or Misra (25), at the age of one hundred and twenty-three years and was buried on Mount Hūr (26); finally Moses died – on him be peace – on the seventh of the month of Adhār, or Baramhāt (27), in the land of Muwāb. He was buried in the wādī of Muwāb (28): he was one hundred and twenty years old.

6. After the death of Moses, there took command of the people Yūshā' (29), son of Nūn, and held it for thirty-one years. After crossing the Jordan, he besieged Rīha (30) for seven days. On the seventh day, the sons of Israel blew the trumpets around the city of Rīha with loud clamor. By the vehemence of their cries and the sounds of their trumpets the city walls collapsed and all the men, children and women who were in the city were killed. After conquering Rīha, he celebrated the passover in the desert of Rīha. Then he sent his army against the city of 'Ānī (31) and to Bayt II (32) to have news of the city. But the inhabitants of 'Ānī moved against them and killed thirty-six of Yūshā''s men. Then Yūshā' sent an army of thirty thousand men against the city of 'Ānī. Yūshā', son of Nūn, followed the soldiers secretly. The king of 'Ānī went out with his men against the soldiers of Yūshā'. The sons of Israel engaged them in a long pursuit until they had moved away from the city. Yūshā', then, with his men broke into the city of 'Ānī, destroyed it and burned it, killing all the men and women who were there. Then he chased the king of 'Ānī, killed his men, took the king alive and ordered him killed by making his body hang on a cross. Yashū' then went up with his soldiers to the mountains of Canaan. In the desert the sons of Israel had stopped practicing circumcision, but when they occupied the territories of the Jordan and surrounding regions and mingled with their peoples, God ordered Yashū', son of Nūn, to prepare knives and circumcise the sons of Israel with them. He did as God had ordered. There is an Ethiopian tribe, the Buğāhs (33), who still practice it today. He then wrote for the sons of Israel the second law with his blessings and curses (34).

7. When the king of Gī'ūn (35) heard of Yūsha', he wrote to him asking him to make a covenant with him and sent him many gifts. Yūsha' granted him his protection and confirmed him in his charge. When the king of Ūrashalīm, named Nīsādūq, the king of Gibrūn, the king of Yarmūth, the king of Lākhīs and the king of 'Aqlūn (36) understood that the king of Gī'ūn had put himself under the protection of Yūsha', son of Nun, they gathered, moved against the city of Gī'ūn and besieged it. The king of Gī'ūn wrote to Yūsha', son of Nūn, informing him of the fact. Yūsha' gathered an army, went out to fight them and defeated them. [The kings] sheltered in the cities of 'Arīqā and Mafīdā (37). God rained hail stones on them that killed them. The sun remained motionless for Yūsha', son of Nūn, without moving to the east or west, until God gave him victory over them and the five kings fled into the cave of a mountain where they hid (38). Yūsha' took them out of the cave, killed them and had their bodies hung up. Then Yūsha' left the city of Mafīdā and went to the city of Libna (39). He besieged it, took it and killed the king and all who were there. From the city of Libna he marched against the city of Lākhīs, conquered it and killed the king and all who were there.

8. When the king of Ghazza became aware of the fact that Yūsha' had besieged the city of Lākhīs, he went out with his soldiers to help the king of Lāhīsh against Yūsha', son of Nūn. But Yūsha' won the victory over him and killed him along with his men. From Lāhīsh Yūsha' went to the city of Aqlūn, laid siege to it, conquered it and killed the king along with all the inhabitants. Then he marched against the city of Hibrun, besieged it, took it and killed the king and all who were there. Then he went out against the city of Dibīr (40), besieged it, conquered it and killed the king and all who were there. When Yābīn, king of Hāsūr (41), heard these things, he sent messengers to the king of Marūn (42), to the king of Shimrūn (43) to the king of Akhshāf (44), to the king of Saydā (45), to the king of ar-Rāma, ai Muwābiyyūn, the Harrāniyyūn, the Awābiyyūn, ai Qarrāriyyūn, ai Yābūsāniyyūn, ai Sanābiyyūn (46) and all the inhabitants of the sea coast to gather together. The kings and all their men gathered and there were so many that they were as numerous as sand. Then they went out to fight Yūsha', son of Nūn, who moved against them and routed them, killed them and set fire to their tents, and cut the hocks of their beasts and they were all pierced with the sword as far as the city of Mārūn (47) and Saydā, without anyone finding a way out. Then he took the kings and killed them. The kings that Yūsha', son of Nūn, killed occupying the territories were altogether thirty-five: the king of the Sanābiyyūn, the king of the Muwābiyyūn, the king of the Kan'āniyyūn, the king of the Qarrāriyyūn, the king of the Yābūsāniyyūn, the king of the Awāniyyūn, the king of the Girsāniyyūn, the king of Ūrashalīm, the king of 'Ānī, the king of Sābā (48), which is in the vicinity of Bayt Īl, the king of Hibrūn, the king of Yarmūt, the king of Lākhīsh, the king of 'Adūlām (49), the king of Gadar (50), the king of Dabīr, the king of Hāsīr (51), the king of Hurmā (52), the king of 'Arād (53), the king of Libnā, the king of Lālām, the king of Abdād, the king of Hāfir (54), the king of Fīq (55), the king of Sadūm (56), the king of Shimrūn (57), the king of Barmūth (58), the king of Hafīr (59), the king of Qadas (60), the king of Rāhib, the king of Mardūth, the king of Sīqūm, the king of Bātindūn (61), the king of Ġabal al-Ġalīl (62) and the king of Kirsā (63), who were exactly thirty-five (64). Yūsha' fought for six years against kings and nations until he conquered and governed the countries.

9. Later he divided the territories and countries among the sons of Israel for fourteen years, and he ruled the people for eleven years in peace and quiet. In his day there prophesied Il'āzār, son of Harūn, and Finhās, son of Il'āzār, son of Harūn. Yūsha', son of Nūn, died at the age of one hundred and ten years and was buried in the mountains of Ġal'ād (65) together with the flint knives which he used to circumcise the sons of Israel in Ġalġal (66). After the death of Yūsha', son of Nūn, the people were administered by the priest Finhās, son of Il'āzār, son of Harūn. He was priest for twenty-five

years. The Jews believe that the aforementioned Finhās, the priest, is the prophet Iliyā, whom the Arabs call al-Khidr (67).

## Chapter 3

Chap. III. Israel gives itself to the worship of idols – Judges appear – The prophetess Deborah – Judge Gideon – Abimelech rules the nation three years – Israel returns to the worship of the idols Baalim, Ashtarot and Bael – Yefte, judge of Israel – Samson frees the people from the slavery of foreign tribes – Samson gives himself to Delilah, is taken, blinded, killed. (p.73)

1. Later the sons of Israel began to visit the surrounding nations, marrying and giving in marriage their daughters and worshiping the idols, i.e. Ba'alīm (1), 'Ashtārūt and Bā'il. The sons of Israel were then subjugated by Kūshān Rish'atāym, king of Aram (2), i.e. the king of Tyre and Sidon, called for this reason "the king of the two seas" (3). He ruled the people for eight years with firmness and cruelty. There were so many afflictions upon the sons of Israel that they began to worship God, abandoning their impiety. Then the young 'Ithā'il, son of Qinān and brother of Kālib (4), of the tribe of Judah rebelled, fought against Kūshān Rish'atāym and killed him. He ruled the people for forty years. At the death of 'Ithā'il, the sons of Israel began to worship the idols. 'Aqlūn, king of Moab, gathered the Ammonites and the Amalekites (5), marched against the sons of Israel and conquered them, occupying the city of Fīq (6). The children of Israel served him and were under his domination for eighteen years, between anguish and cruelty of all kinds. The sons of Israel chose one of their men named Ihūd, son of Gara, of the tribe of Ephraim (7) – he was left-handed, strong and daring – and sent him with gifts to 'Aqlūn, king of Moab. When he was in the presence of the king with gifts, he said to him: "I need to tell the king a secret, and I would therefore like to speak to him separately". He stood face to face with the king, and stabbed him with a dagger which he had with him, and killed him. He went out, closed the door of the king's meeting room and told his advisors: "The king has ordered that no one come to him" (8). Ihūd then ran away and joined his men. He gathered a group of soldiers and went out against the city of Moab, occupied it, killed all those who were there and destroyed it. He ruled the people for fifty-five years. After him there ruled over the people Sim`ān (9), son of 'Anāt, for twenty-five years. The Philistines waged war and killed six hundred. Sim`ān died.

2. After his death the children of Israel returned to the worship of idols. Nāyīn (10), king of Canaan, originally from a city named Hāsūr (11), subdued them to his dominion. A man named Sīsarā was the head of his soldiers. He ruled the people for twenty-five years, afflicting them with anguish and pain. In his day there prophesied Dibūrā, wife of al-Qandūn (12), of the tribe of Ephraim. Dibūrā lived between ar-Rāma and Bethel and served as a judge among the sons of Israel. A large group of Israelites came to her and said to her: "You know in what anguish and afflictions we live. Nāyīn (13), king of Canaan, has enslaved us. [Why don't] you govern the sons of Israel and liberate them from the hands of Nāyīn (14), king of Canaan". Dibūrā chose Bāraq, son of Abū Nu'am, of the tribe of Nifthālīm, and entrusted him with the government of the people. In another text it says: "And she gave him the command of the army". Bāraq took ten thousand Israelites from among the sons of Nifthālīm and Zābūlūn, and together with Dibūrā (15) they ascended Mount Thābūr (16). When Sīsarā, Lieutenant of Nāyīn (17), learned of it, he came out against them. The sons of Israel came down from the mountain and defeated him, killing all who were with Sīsarā, lieutenant of Nāyīn (18). Sīsarā managed to escape and sheltered under the tent of Yā'il, wife of Hābir al-Qaynī, i.e. of the descendants of Qā'in, the father-in-law of Moses called [also] Yaru (19). [The woman] hid him from them. [Sisara] asked her for some water to drink and she poured him some milk to put him to the

test and see if he was able to discern. That was how he drank milk, thinking he had drunk water. Then the woman made him lie down and hammered a peg into his temple, so that he was pinned to the earth and died. Dibūrā found him when he was already dead. Dibūrā and Bāraq went out against Nāyīn (20), king of Canaan, defeated him and killed him along with his men. Dibūrā ruled the people for forty years. At her death the sons of Israel resumed adoring idols. The Midianites 'Ūzīb and Zīb (21) subdued them to their power and oppressed the people for seven years amid continued distress and afflictions, taking their flocks, cows and possessions.

3. Gid'ūn, son of Yuwās, of the tribe of Manasseh came out against them, and took ten of his servants with him in the night, and destroyed the temple of the idol Bā'il. But the Midianites surprised them and they fled away. Then he gathered three hundred Israelites and moved against them at night. When they reached the place where the Midianite soldiers were, he divided his men around the soldiers' camp and made the drums and trumpets sound. Among the Midianites there was great turmoil and they began to run, madly killing each other and trying to escape from the Israelites. Gid'ūn wrote to the Israelites of the tribe of Ifrām, who lived in the area of the Jordan, to move and confront the Midianites who were fleeing. They went out against them and made a great slaughter, taking prisoners 'Ūzīb and Zīb, kings of the Midianites. They killed 'Uzīb at the rock of 'Uzīb and Zīb at the kiosk of Zīb (22), and sent their heads to Gid'ūn. Gid'ūn then went to Shukūt (23) and asked the population to give his soldiers food and hospitality. But they answered him: "We will feed your soldiers and offer them hospitality if you bring us the heads of Zābā' and of Salmānā', king of the Midianites" (24). Gid'ūn left them, moved against Zābā' and Salmānā', kings of the Midianites, who had with them fifteen thousand fighters, routed them and brought back a great victory by killing the two kings and their men. He then returned to Shukūt, killed its inhabitants and destroyed it. Gid'ūn had seventy children. He also had a concubine from Nābulus (25) who gave birth to a son, to whom he gave the name Abimālikh. Gid'ūn governed the people for forty years, died and was buried near the tomb of his father Yuwāsh at 'Ufrā 'Azāriya (26).

4. After the death of Gid'ūn the children of Israel began to worship the idols of Ba'alim, 'Ashtarūt and Bā'il. Abimālikh then went to Nābulus to his uncles and told them: "My brothers are seventy in number, and they want to govern the people. Help me, so that I can govern alone, because one alone governs the people better than seventy"(27). So they gave him seventy qintār of silver, taking it from the temple of the idol Bā'il. Then he took some men with him, went to his father's house in 'Ufrā and killed his seventy brothers. Only one was saved, the smallest, or Yūthām, who went to Bīrā (28), where he established his abode. Abimālikh ruled the people for three years. The inhabitants of Nābulus rose up to remove him, but he gathered his men and made a great slaughter. Then he went out of the city, placed wood all around it, and set fire to it, burning the city and all that were there. Then Abimālikh went to Gabal Nābulus (29) and besieged it. The fortified tower of the city was very large. From the top of the fortified tower a woman threw a stone that fell on Abimālikh's head (30). Feeling close to death, he said to the servant who was near him: "Strike my neck with my sword so that I die, and so it will not be said that it was a woman who killed me" (31). Then he hit him with the sword and killed him. After his death there governed the people Yuwākh, son of Fūdī, son of Hālāt, of the tribe of Issākhar (32), for twenty-three years. He died and was buried in Sāmīr (33).

After him there governed the people Tāyir, son of 'Alghād (34), of the tribe of Manasseh, for twenty-two years. He had thirty-two sons who rode purebred horses behind him. He died and was buried in Qāmūrā (35).

5. After his death, the children of Israel began to worship the idols of Ba'alim, 'Ashtārūt, Bā'il, the gods of Syria, of Saydā, of Moab, of 'Amman and of Palestine. The people were overwhelmed by the Ammonites and were governed by them for eighteen years, with pain, afflictions and distresses. The Ammonites crossed the Jordan to fight against the children of Israel, the children of Judah, and the children of Benjamin, who were terrified of them. When the Ammonites came to the city of Ğala'ād the leaders of the people gathered and said: "Who will fight against the Ammonites and be our leader?" Niftākh, son of Ğala'ād, was a violent and strong man, and was the son of a prostitute (36). His brothers had driven him out and disavowed him, depriving him of the right to inherit. He had then fled away into the land of Tūb, and there had been joined by a crowd of beggars who fought with him against the Ammonites. The leaders of the city of Ğala'ād then went to Niftākh and asked him to continue fighting against the Ammonites and to be their leader. He consented, gathered some men and went out to fight against the Ammonites, vowing to the Lord that if He granted him the victory over them, he would offer to God the first of his family to meet him when he came back. God granted him the victory, and he made a great slaughter of the Ammonites and stormed twenty cities. Having heard of it, his daughter came out and stood at the door of the house with all the drum and cymbal players, to welcome her father. The first one he met at the door was his daughter. He had no other children besides her. As soon as he saw her, he tore off his clothes and felt intense pain. His daughter told him: "Do not be sad, my father, and fulfil your vow as well. But let me gather my eldest maids and make them come up with me on the mountain, so that they can cry over me and I cry over my youth" (37). She remained crying over herself on the mountain for two months. The advisers of Niftak suggested that he go to the prophet Finhās, son of Il'āzār, son of Harūn, to ask him if he could give him a response to save his daughter. But his majesty of kings did not allow him to go to the prophet, as also the dignity of the prophet Finhās kept him from going to the king. Two months later, Niftak made a great feast for the Jews, and on the same day he sacrificed his daughter. That party was called "the weeping party". Later the sons of Ifrām went to Niftākh in the city of Shaqil (38) and said to him: "Since you have come out to fight against the Ammonites without consulting us and taking none of us with you, we will burn you and your home" (39). Niftākh fought against them and overcame them, killing forty-two thousand. Niftākh ruled the people for six years, died and was buried in Gala'ād.

6. At that time there was a severe famine in the land of the Greeks. People were starving to such an extent that the streets and markets were full of the dead and the dogs were grazing on corpses. Because this was often happening, they dug great graves and buried their dead. This was the first reason for which burial pits were dug.

After Niftākh's death there governed the people Ifsān (40), of the tribe of Judah, of Bethlehem, for seven years. He had thirty sons, thirty daughters and thirty wives. When he died, he was buried in Bethlehem. After him there governed the people, Iblūn the Zabulonite, for ten years. He died and was buried in Zābulūn (41). After him there governed the people 'Abdūn, son of Hillāl, of the tribe of Ifrām, for eight years. He had forty sons and thirty grandchildren who rode behind him. When he died he was buried in Fārātūn (42), in the territory of Ifrām, in the mountains of Amāliq.

After his death the sons of Israel re-embraced the worship of idols and were subjugated by the foreign tribes, who ruled the people for forty years.

7. There was a man from the tribe of Dān, named Mānūh, descendant of Mānūh, of the city of Surgha (43). His wife was sterile. An angel appeared in her dream and announced that she would give birth. In fact, she conceived and gave birth to a son whom they called Shimshūn (44). Having grown up he went to the city of Timnāthā (45) where he saw a woman from the foreign tribes and married her. He stayed with her for a while, then left her and went to the parts of 'Asqalān (46) where he gave himself to brigandage. Thirty men attacked him, robbed them, and took his clothes, and he went to his wife's house in Timnāthā. But the woman's father prevented him from seeing her by telling him: "I gave her in marriage to another. I have a younger sister of hers, if you want I will give her in marriage" (47). Samson became angry, went away and captured three hundred foxes, set fire to their tails and unleashed them across the fields. So it was that all the camps of the foreign tribes including the trees went up in flames. When the foreign tribes knew what Samson had done, they went to his wife's house and burned her and her home. Then they formed an army and went out to fight against the sons of Judah, who were terrified of them. Samson was then on the cliff of Aghīzām (48). The foreign tribes said to the sons of Judah: "Deliver Samson to us, and we will leave without fighting you". Three thousand men of the sons of Judah went to Aghīzām for Samson. Samson said to them: "Guarantee me that you will not kill me and that you will not hand me over to foreign tribes" (4). They guaranteed it, knowing they were deceiving him. In fact, they took him and handed him over to the foreign tribes who took him away, tying his hands to his back. But Samson untied the ropes, seized the jawbone of a dead donkey, and killed more than a thousand men of the foreign tribes. Then he was thirsty and invoked the Lord who made water spring from the ass's jawbone: he drank and overwhelmed the foreign tribes.

8. [Samson] ruled the people for twenty years. Then he fell in love with a woman from Ghazza (50). Going to Ghazza, the inhabitants of the city were very afraid of him. In the middle of the night, Samson grasped the door of Ghazza's stronghold with his hand, and took it from its hinges, placed it on his shoulders, carried it to the top of the mountain in the area of Hibrun, and took the woman. Later he fell in love with another woman of the people of Sakhīrā (51), named Dalīlā, and took her with him. The leaders of the foreign tribes told her: "Try to deceive him and make him say from which part of his body his strength comes to him". Samson replied: "If they bound me with seven fresh tendons, not passed through the fire, I would become weak". They surprised him and bound him with seven still wet tendons. But Samson leaned over them and broke them. Dalīlā told him: "You do not love me, because if you loved me you would tell me in which part of your body your strength resides". He told her: "If they tied me with seven new hemp ropes, I would become weak". Dalīlā did it, but Samson broke them like cotton threads. Dalīlā told him: "You do not love me, because if you loved me you would tell me in which part of your body your strength resides". He replied: "If you intertwined the seven braids of my head with an inch-wide frame I would become weak". Dalīlā did so, but Samson took them off. She told him: "You do not love me, because if you loved me you would tell me in which part of your body your strength resides". Samson then replied impatiently: "It was announced to me by God, in the womb of my mother, that never should my head have known the touch iron, because on the day when my head was shaved I would lose my strength" (52). Then he fell asleep in Dalīlā's lap and while he was sleeping Dalīlā cut off his seven hair braids. When he awoke, his strength was weakened. Dalīlā then sent for the leaders of the foreign tribes. They captured Samson, took out his eyes and bound

him with chains of copper. They took him to Ghazza and threw him into jail. Samson's hair began to grow again. The leaders of the foreign tribes gathered to offer a sacrifice to their god Dā'ūn (53). So they gave orders to bring Samson out to have some fun with him and kill him. The temple of the god Dā'ūn was full of people, men and women. Even the temple terraces were so crowded that there was no longer a place to stop and see Samson and what was being done to him. Samson then said to the young man that was leading him: "Put my hand on the column that holds up the temple" (54). He stretched out his right hand and grasped a column. Then he grasped the other one with his left hand and pushed them, so that the columns and the temple fell. So it was that Samson died and all the men and women who were in the temple. The dead that Samson killed, dying himself, were more numerous than those he had killed when he was alive. His men took him and buried him between Su'rā and Ishtāwul with his father Mānūh (55). After the death of Samson the sons of Israel governed themselves with tranquility and peace for forty years.



## Chapter 4

Chap. IV The priest Ali governs the people – The Prophet Samuel in the Temple in Shilūn – The Ark and the misadventures of foreign tribes – Samuel governs the people of Israel – The people demand a king – Saul is made king over the children of Israel – Samuel anoints the young David King – David fights, by order of Saul, against foreign tribes – Death of Saul and his sons Gloriata, Abbiadati and Malhīsh (p.83)

1. Then the priest 'Ālī governed the people for twenty years. The temple was located in Shilūm (1). The priest 'Ālī had two sons. The first was called Hufni and the second Finhās. In his time there lived a prophet of ar-Rāmayyayn (2) named Hilqānā, son of Yārūhām, of the tribe of Levi (3). The prophet Hilqānā had two wives: one was called Hanna, and was sterile, and the other Hanānā (4), who had children. Hanna used to go to the temple in Shilūn to invoke God and ask him to give her a child. She had made a vow to God that she would put him at the service of the temple. She conceived and bore Samū'il, the prophet. When Samū'il was three years old, his father Hilqānā and his mother Hanna took him to the temple in Shilūn, where they offered sacrifices to God and entrusted their son Samū'il to the priest 'Ālī. So Samū'il began to serve in the temple. The foreign tribes gathered to fight against the children of Israel and killed four thousand men in war. Then the leaders of the sons of Israel said: "Let us take the Ark of the Covenant from Shilūn and keep it among us when we fight for God, to deliver us through it from the hands of our enemies" (5). So they took the ark from Shilūn and placed the two sons of 'Ālī, Hufni and Finhās near them. The foreign tribes came out against them and beat them and killed thirty thousand Israelites. Whoever managed to escape fled. The two sons of 'Ālī, Hufni and Finhās were also killed. The foreign tribes seized the ark and took it from Yazdūd to Ghazza (6), placing it in the temple of the idol Dā'ūn. The priest 'Ālī was sitting at the temple door in Shilūn, when a man entered who had taken part in the defeat, with a dirty face and tattered clothes. The priest 'Ālī said to him: "What happened to you?" He replied: "The sons of Israel have been defeated. They made a great slaughter, even your children were killed and the ark was taken" (7). On hearing that the ark had been taken, the priest 'Ālī fell face down and died instantly, at the age of ninety (8). The next day the inhabitants of Ghazza poured into the temple of Dā'ūn to see the ark, but they found the idol Dā'ūn with his face to the ground, at the foot of the ark. Death fell on the city of Ghazza, the inhabitants were hit by dysentery and their territory filled with flies and geckos (9). The ark stayed with them for four months. In another text it is said: for seven months. Eventually the inhabitants of Ghazza said: "Clearly if we were struck by the dysentery and the plague of these flies and geckos it was because of this ark. Let's carry it away if we do not want to die". But some said: "Let's see if it is precisely for this reason. Let us take two bulls that have never ploughed, attach them to a new cart and place the ark on top of it, placing a chest near it with images of the flies and geckos (10) of gold and silver, gift of every village, of Ghazza, of 'Asqālān, of Rafakh, of Yazdūd and of 'Aqrūn (11). If the bulls go to the land of the sons of Israel, we will get rid of the ark and we will know that this dysentery, flies and geckos are here because of the ark. But if they do not go in the direction of the land of the sons of Israel, we will know that all this is a phenomenon of the alteration of the air and of the pestilence" (12). They did as they said. But the two bulls made their way to the land of the sons of Israel, and that was how they found peace from the dysentery that had struck them, and the geckos and flies left them. When the two bulls arrived at Bayt Shams (13), the inhabitants were busy at the harvest in the camp of Usiyā (14). They took the ark, tore the chariot to pieces and sacrificed the two

bullocks, hastening them to God as a sacrifice. Then they took the casket with pictures of flies and geckos of gold and silver. The ark was taken to the village known to the inhabitants under the name of Qaryat al-Inab (15), and to the home of Abinādāb, father of Ghazā (16) and hidden in a place called “al-Ġab’ā”, i.e. the stronghold. There were chosen as custodians of the Ark Ghazā and Ahnū (17).

3. After the death of the priest ‘Ālī, the prophet Samuel ruled the people for twenty years. The children of Israel abandoned the worship of idols and began to worship God. The foreign tribes were afraid of them. The sons of Israel took back from the foreign tribes all the cities they had occupied, from ‘Aqrūn to Rafakh. The prophet Samuel had two sons: the elder was called Yū’īl and the younger Abiyyā. They ruled the people in peace and quiet at Bi’r Sab’a (18). When the prophet Samuel became old, some of the Israelites went to him, to ar-Rāma, and told him: “Give us a king to reign over us like all the other peoples have.” The prophet Samuel answered them: “If you make a king, he will take your possessions for himself, and he will take tithes of all that you possess” (19). They answered him: “That is acceptable”. Then the prophet Samuel told them: “I know a man from the tribe of Benjamin, named Qīsh, son of Anī’īl (20), who has a son named Shāwl (21), handsome, tall and brave. I will make him your king “. Qish, Saul’s father, [found that] some donkeys were lost. Qīsh said to his son Saul: “Take your servant with you and go and look for the donkeys”. Saul went out from village to village looking for the donkeys. The servant told him: “Let us go to the village of the prophet Samuel and he will show us the place where the donkeys are” (22). Then they went to the prophet Samuel, who gave them food and drink. Then he took a horn full of oil, poured it on Saul’s head and anointed him saying: “Today God makes you king of the children of Israel. You will have a sign in the fact that you will go to your father and find the donkeys are with him” (23). And it happened as the prophet Samuel had said.

4. Saul was the first to reign over the sons of Israel. The men of the city of Yābīn (24) and of the city of Gala’ad went over to Māhash (25) the Ammonite because they were not satisfied with King Saul. Māhash went out with many men to fight Saul. But Saul won, and he made a great slaughter of the Ammonites. Then the prophet Samuel took with him Saul and a group of elders of the sons of Israel and went with them to Galḡāl (26). He took a horn full of oil and anointed Saul a second time in Galḡāl before those gathered there. The people were pleased with the choice of Saul and offered many sacrifices to God. Saul chose three thousand Israelites to stay with him. Saul had a son named Yūnāthān (27). Gionata, son of Saul, took a thousand of his father’s men and fought against Nāsīm (28) who was in Yūnawā (29) and killed him along with a great multitude of the foreign tribes. When the foreign tribes learned what Jonathan had done, they gathered thirty thousand foot soldiers and six thousand horsemen (30) and went out to fight against the sons of Israel in Galḡāl. The children of Israel were overwhelmed by fear and escaped into the mountains, through the valleys and into the desert. Saul was in Galḡāl. Gionata then took with him a group of Israelites, went out against the soldiers of the foreign tribes and defeated them, making a great slaughter. When he heard about it, Saul attacked the soldiers of the foreign tribes by surprise and killed them, and none were saved. Then the prophet Samuel said to King Saul: “Go to the city of the Amalekites, destroy it and fire it, killing all those who are there, men, women, children and animals” (31). Saul took with him four thousand infantrymen of Galḡāl and thirty thousand Israelites of the tribe of Judah (32) and set off against the Amalekites. He killed all the Amalekites from the city of Hayūlā to the city of Sur (33) and captured Aghāḡ, king of the Amalekites alive. But he did not destroy their farms and their vineyards, nor did he kill any of their animals; on the contrary, his men looted their flocks, their

cattle and their pack animals. When [Saul] returned from the war to Galgāl, the prophet Samuel told him: “Did I not order you to kill their flocks, their cattle, their pack animals and destroy their land? Since you have not done so, I will anoint another man as king of the sons of Israel “(34). Then the prophet Samuel took Aghaḡ, king of the Amalekites, and had him killed. Then he returned to ar-Rāma and Saul returned to his home, al-Gab’a (35).

5. A few days later Samuel went to Bethlehem, took Dāwud (36), son of Yassà, and anointed him with the oil as king of the sons of Israel. David was still young. Later the foreign tribes reunited to fight against Saul. Saul went out to face them with his men. David’s brothers were fighting alongside Saul. Yassà took his son David, provided him with food and sent him to his brothers at the war. David reached his brothers in the middle of the war and saw a man of the foreign tribes, named Gulyāt (37), who shouted: “Sons of Israel, is there no one to come forward?”(38). David told his brothers: “I will kill that man” (39). The brothers scolded him. But King Saul heard about it, called David, gave him a shield and a sword and ordered him to face Goliath. When he was on the front line, David got rid of the shield and the weapons, throwing the sword away and took a sling that he always carried with him, put a stone on it and threw it, striking Goliath’s forehead. Goliath collapsed on the ground. David took the sword and finished him off. The soldiers of the foreign tribes therefore fled and were massacred. Saul named David the head of a thousand leaders (40).

6. Saul sent David to fight against the foreign tribes a second time. David went out and killed a hundred men and cut off their foreskins and sent them to Saul. Saul gave his daughter Milhūl to him as wife (41). And those foreskins were her dowry. Every time Saul sent David to fight he won and conquered [the city]. Seeing this, Saul feared he could take the throne away from him. He was therefore very afraid of David and thought to kill him. But David fled and four hundred men joined him (42). The prophet Samuel died and was buried in his house, in ar-Rāmah. Saul went out once again to fight against the foreign tribes, but he was defeated and was left wounded on the field. He then said to his armour-bearer: “Kill me, so that the enemy do not take me alive” (43). But the servant refused to do so. Then Saul took the sword and killed himself. Seeing this, the servant also gave himself death. In that battle a great slaughter of the sons of Israel was made and among them were killed Gionata, Abīnādām and Malhīsh, the sons of Saul (44). The next morning the tribes sought out the dead, took the head of Saul and those of his sons, and sent them to their country, hanging their bodies on the fortified tower of Baniyas (45). Learning of this in his country (46), they took the bodies and buried them in Baniyas (47). David was in Siqlā` (48). A man with a smeared face and tattered clothes showed up. David told him: “What news do you bring?” He replied: “Saul and his sons Gionata, Abinādam and Malhish were killed in the war. And it was I who killed them” (49). David and his men tore their clothes and for three days (50) remained without eating bread, because of the sadness felt for the fate of Saul and the sons of Israel who had died with him. Then David called the man who had brought him the news and had him killed, to punish him for having himself confessed to having killed them. Saul had reigned for twenty years.

## Chapter 5

Chap. V David, king of Israel, faces various types of opposition and civil unrest – The ark in the house of Abinadab – David wars against the enemies of Israel – Solomon succeeds David – Hiram, king of Tyre, and the origin of purple – Measurements of the Temple built by Solomon – Two women ask for the judgment of Solomon – the Queen of Sheba in Jerusalem – Kingdom of Jeroboam and Rehoboam – the kings of Judah and Israel – Akhab and the prophet Elijah – Akhab and Yosafat. (p.91)

1. After him reigned David, son of Yassà. From the departure of the sons of Israel from Egypt to the kingdom of David there had passed 606 years; from Abraham to the kingdom of David, 1,113 years; from Fāliq to the reign of David, 1,654 years; from the flood to the kingdom of David, 2,185 years; from Adam to the kingdom of David, 4,441 years. At the age of thirty David, son of Yassà, reigned over all the tribes of Israel. He reigned forty years and six months, of which seven and six months were at Hibrūn, and thirty-three at Jerusalem. The head of Saul's soldiers was Abnīr, son of Nīr. Abnīr killed 'Ashā'il (1), brother of Yuwāb. Yuwāb then went out with his men and killed three hundred and sixty men of Abnīr's, burying his brother 'Ashā'il at Bethlehem. After the killing of Saul, Abnīr took Yasūsit (2), son of Saul, and proclaimed him at Ġal'ād, as king of the sons of Ephraim and of the sons of Israel. Yasūsit was forty years old at the time he began to reign. Between the soldiers of Saul and those of David there were many wars and many deaths. Saul had a concubine named Risfà (3). Abnīr took her for himself, but Yasūsit, son of Saul, forbade him. Abnīr became irritated and went over to David asking for his protection. David accepted him and left him at liberty. Yuwāb, son of Sāruyā (4) and husband of David's sister, took Abnīr, who was the commander of David's soldiers, and had him killed to avenge the death of 'Ashā'il, brother of Yuwāb. David became very annoyed when he learned of it, and he ordered all his soldiers to tear their clothes and weep over Abnīr. Then he had him buried at Hibrūn. There were two brothers among the commanders of Saul, one named Rihāb and the other named Bā'anā, of Rimmūn (5), of the tribe of Benjamin. When they heard that Abnīr had been killed, they went at night (6) to the house of Yasūsit, son of Saul, and they set fire to the door, went in and killed him. They then took his head and brought it to David. But David had their hands and feet cut off, had them killed and hanged. The head of Yasūsit, son of Saul, was buried in the tomb of Abnīr.

2. David founded the city of Ūshā and he called it the city of David, which is now Sihyūn (7). When the kings of the foreign tribes heard that David had become king, they gathered to fight him. David confronted them with his army, killed them and annihilated them, thus consolidating the foundations of his reign. The counselor of David was called Yūshāfāt, son of Akhlīq (8). Hīram, king of Sūr (9), sent him as a gift wood of cedar and fir, with which David built a temple. He gathered the chiefs of the sons of Israel and he went to the house of Abīnādāb. He brought out the ark and placed it on a cart. The wagon was led by 'Uzza and Ahyū, sons of Abīnādāb (10), two Israelites of the descendants of Qāhāt, son of Levi, because no one else of the Israelites could carry the ark apart from the descendants of Levi. In loading the ark on the cart they covered it with fabric, and between the ark and the people there was a distance of a thousand cubits. 'Uzzā and Ahyū had already loaded the ark onto the cart when the bullocks leaned on their legs and the ark threatened to fall. 'Uzza then grabbed the ark but he fell dead to the ground. David was frightened and he had the ark brought to the house of 'Ubaydādūm the Hittite (11). The ark remained with him for three months. David later took the ark away from the house of 'Ubaydādūm. Around the ark there were

seven rows of men with trumpets, flutes and all sorts of musical instruments. David wore a colorful robe, and he danced and strutted before the ark. He then placed the ark in the middle of the tent that David himself had raised at Giluwā (12).<sup>8</sup> David slaughtered many heifers and rams. The ark was made of cedar wood, it was long, wide and tall a cubit and a half and all covered with gold.

3. Then the king of Sūbā, called Hadad-‘Āzir, son of Rihūb (13), rose up against David, and waged war on him. David confronted him and conquered him, killing seven thousand horsemen and twenty thousand infantrymen (14). Then Sūris, king of Damascus (15), moved to bring help to Hadad-‘Āzir and David killed twenty-two thousand of his men. Sūris, king of Damascus, became a slave of David. David had all the gold and silver belts and the many jewels of the men of Hadad-‘Āzir taken and brought them to Ūrshalīm. These jewels were then taken away by Sīsāf (16), king of Egypt, when he came to Ūrshalīm during the reign of Ragi‘ām, son of Sulaymān (17). Following that same battle David brought to Ūrshalīm very much copper (18), and it was from this copper that Solomon made the columns, bases and doors when he built the temple.

4. After this David saw a woman named Birsāyi‘, daughter of Yliyāt (19), wife of Uriyā. She was an attractive and beautiful woman. In a passion, he summoned her and the woman went to him. [David] slept with her and she conceived by him, while her husband Uriyā was with David’s lieutenant Yuwāb, fighting the tribes. When [David] knew that [the woman] had conceived by him, he sent for Uriyā and gave him leave, and ordered him to sleep at his house that night. Uriyā did not go home that night, but slept with the ushers in the palace [of the king]. The next day David sent him back to the war, thinking that Uriyā had spent the night at home. By making Uriyā sleep at home, David simply waited for him to lie with his own wife, so that when she appeared that she was pregnant, he would not have had to say anything. But since he had not slept at home, David wrote to Yuwāb to place Uriyā to fight at the head of the ark. Yuwāb did as he was commanded and Uriyā fell fighting at the head of the ark. After the death of Uriyā, David married his wife Bihāyi‘ and had a son. Then the prophet Nāthān presented himself to him and said to him: “Two men lived in a village. One was rich and possessed many sheep and oxen and the other was poor, and had only one sheep upon whose milk and wool he lived. The rich had a man as a guest. He took the poor man’s sheep, slaughtered it and fed it to his guest” (20).

David said to him: “What a wicked thing he did! It is right that [the poor man] should have four [sheep] in exchange for the [stolen sheep]” (21). Then the prophet Nāthān rebuked him saying: “You are that man!” (22). David tore his clothes, put on a rough sackcloth of wool and fasted for seven days, asking the Lord [not] to let the child die. On the seventh day the child died. Later the wife of Uriyā conceived a second time by David and he gave birth to Solomon. David had twenty-four children. Then Amnūn, son of David, who was the eldest of his children, looked at his sister on his father’s side, named Tamar, fell in love with her and lay with her. So angry with him was the uterine brother of Tamar, named Abīshālūm, son of David, that he killed his brother Amnūn and took shelter with Thalmāni, son of ‘Imyāl, king of Kishūr (23). Two hundred Israelites joined him and rose up against his father David, occupying Gibrun (24). When David heard that he had occupied Gibrūn (25) he felt fear and escaped from Ūrshalīm, leaving the city. His son went to Ūrshalīm and made his entrance. He took his father’s concubines and fornicated with them. Then he chased David who fled from him and passed over the Jordan. Then Yuwāb, David’s lieutenant, collected a part of his

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<sup>8</sup> Pirone suggests that the text is corrupt at this point.

men and went out against Abīshālūm, son of David. They came to battle in the territory of Ephraim. Twenty thousand men fell from both sides and the battle was bitter. Abīshālūm rode a mule and his hair became entangled with the branches of a terebinth, breaking the bone of his neck. Yuwāh shot three arrows, hitting him in the heart and one of his men finished him with a sword stroke. The news came to David and he felt immense pain. Then he returned to Ūrashalīm. Abīshālūm, son of David, had thick hair and when his hair was shaved from time to time, it actually weighed two hundred mithqāl (26).

5. There was a prophet in the time of David, Nāthān. In his time also lived Wākhiyā as-Sīlūnī, Isāī, Hīmān and Badūthūn (27), of the tribe of Levi, and Yuwāb, son of Sārūyā sister of David, who was his lieutenant. David and his lieutenant Yuwāb held a census of the tribes of the sons of Israel. The sons of Israel counted by David and his lieutenant Yuwāb were forty million and a hundred thousand. In another text it says: four million and one hundred thousand (28). Four hundred and seventy thousand of them belonged to the tribe of Judah. However, the tribes of Benjamin and Levi were not counted. The number of “Sāqitūn”, of those who did not belong to the lineage of Jacob, was one thousand. God then said to the prophet Kād (29): “I had forbidden David to count the sons of Israel. So go to him and tell him to choose one of these three things: either that there is a famine throughout his kingdom for seven years; or that he is conquered and subjugated by his enemy for three months; or that death prevail for three days throughout his kingdom” (30). David chose death. Seventy thousand people died within the space of six hours. David then begged for help from the prophet Kād. They all implored God, who was moved to compassion on them and turned death away from them. The high priest in the days of David was Abiyāthār, son of Abi-Mālikh (31), of the house of the priest Ālī and of Sādūq. Now an old man, the prophet David called his son Solomon, dictated his will and gave him all the goods, jewels, gold and silver of his kingdom. The prophet David died at the age of seventy. He had reigned for forty years.

6. After him his son Solomon reigned. He was twelve years old. After his father he reigned for forty years. Yuwāb, David’s lieutenant, was afraid of him and took refuge in the sanctuary (32). Solomon sent Nabā, son of Yahūnāda’ (33) against him, who killed Yuwāb with a sword stroke and had him buried in the desert (34). King Solomon came out stronger, and all the kings of the surrounding countries were afraid, and brought him gifts and concluded a truce with him. Solomon surrounded Ūrashalīm with walls, and in the twelfth year of his reign began the construction of the temple. Hiram, king of Sur, sent him many gifts, a lot of cedar, pine and fir wood, and a lot of money to make use of in the construction of the temple. Solomon sent to Hiram each year twenty thousand “kurr” (35) of wheat and twenty thousand “kurr” of zibibbo.

7. It is told that Hīram, king of Tīre, was the first king to wear purple. The cause of this was a shepherd who had a dog. This shepherd went, one day, together with the flock and the dog, right onto the shore of the sea. The dog took a shell that was lying on the bank, of a color similar to purple, and ate it. In doing so, it filled its mouth with the blood of the shell. Seeing him in that state, the shepherd took a woollen cloth and wiped the dog’s muzzle with it. Then he put that woollen cloth on his head, like a crown, and so he began to walk in the sun, so that all those who saw him thought that rays of fire were coming out of his head. Learning of this, Hīram, king of Tyre, sent for the shepherd who went straight to him. [Hīram] saw the crown, was amazed and very pleased with the color, and ordered the dyers to dye an equal. The dyers, then, went to the seashore, looked for shells until they found them, and they smelled the purple. This is how we got purple (36).

The length of the temple that Solomon, son of David, built was sixty cubits, the width twenty and the height one hundred. The interior was made all overlaid with gold. Inside the temple he built a cedar-wood tabernacle twenty cubits long, twenty wide, and twenty high. The inside and the outside he covered in gold. On it he had the image of the cherubim sculptured in gold; the length of each of these was ten cubits, the width was five, one on the right and the other on the left of the tabernacle. Each of them had six wings. They kept their wings spread out over the tabernacle as if to cover it. He brought the ark from the city of Sihyūn and placed it in this [new] dwelling place. In front of this tabernacle he had two majestic and imposing copper columns erected, each one thirty cubits high and five wide. He then made a crimson veil studded with all kinds of precious stones and had it hung on the columns facing the tabernacle. Then he made a table of copper on which to lay the bread of the sacrifice, twenty cubits long, twenty wide and ten high, which was covered all with gold and precious stones. He then brought into the temple every vessel of gold, silver or precious stone. He then built a palace for himself and covered it with gold and silver. Inside the palace he built the hall of judgments, a hundred cubits long, fifty wide and thirty high, with four rows of cedar columns covered with gold on which stood four porticoes carved in gold. Then he made a great ivory throne, engraved in gold and set with precious stones, and he had it placed in the centre of this hall, and he used to sit on it when he was busy with the affairs of the people. He finished building the temple and the palace after seven years. From the reign of David to the end of the construction of the temple fifty-nine years had passed.

8. The tributes owed to Solomon, son of David, each year were six hundred and sixty six thousand “qintār” (37) of gold, in addition to that from trade. His daily provision was thirty “kurrs” of flowers of flour, sixty “kurrs” (38) of flour, ten calves, twenty-two bulls, one hundred sheep in addition to deer, goats, and birds. In the palace of Solomon there were a hundred tables of gold and on each table a hundred trays and three hundred plates of gold, and beside each plate three hundred cups of gold.

One day when Solomon was sitting in the courtroom, two women came forward carrying a baby. One said: “Yesterday, I and this woman gave birth in the same house. The son of this woman died during the night while I was sleeping. She then took her already lifeless son and put him on me, taking my son.” The other said: “This child is mine. It is the son of this woman who is dead”. Solomon then asked that they bring him a sword and taking the child with one hand he said: “I will cut the baby into two parts and give half of it to each of you.” But the child’s mother said: “My lord, do not divide it. Give it to her”. The other said: “Divide him, so that he is neither mine nor hers”. Then Solomon gave the child to the one who had said “Do not divide it” because, from the love that she had shown for him, he realized that she was the mother. And the people remained in admiration of his judgment (39).

Solomon had seven hundred wives and three hundred concubines (40). Solomon married the daughter of Pharaoh Shīshaq (41), king of Egypt, and took her to Ūrashalīm. Later the pharaoh left Egypt, attacked the city of ‘Āzar (42) and set them on fire. He also burned out the Canaanites who lived in Māri‘āb (42), took their possessions and sent them to his daughter, the wife of Solomon.

9. Hearing about King Solomon, the Queen of Sheba (44) came to him with many gifts and gave him one hundred and thirty “qintār” of gold (45). Solomon granted her all that she asked and [the queen] went away. Solomon, son of David, married [many] women of foreign tribes, of the

Ammonites, the Amalekites, the Moabites and other [peoples]. He loved them, and because of his intense love towards them they induced him to build a temple for them where he had idols placed for them to worship and sacrifice to (46). For this reason, Solomon, son of David, was removed from the list of prophets. Among his soldiers there were forty thousand riders on mares and twelve thousand horsemen on horses (47).

10. Solomon had a servant named Rubu'ām, son of Nābāt, of the tribe of Ephraim, whose mother, named Sīsarā, was a prostitute (48). Solomon entrusted the government of the tribe of Joseph to Rubu'ām. Rubu'ām [re]founded the city of Sā'īr [Sichem] in the territory of Ephraim. He was strong and very brave. The prophet Akhiyā came to him, took his garment and cut it into twelve pieces, gave ten to Rubu'ām, son of Nābāt, telling him: "You will reign over ten tribes of the sons of Israel" (49). Solomon then decided to kill Rubu'ām, but he fled from him and took refuge with Shīshaq, Pharaoh of Egypt, and settled with him (50). The pharaoh gave him as wife the sister of his wife, named Atū, who gave him a son whom he called Nābāt, like his father. There prophesied, in the days of Solomon, Nāthān and Akhiyā (51) of the village of Shilūn. The high priest was Sādūq (52). At that time there lived, in the land of the Greeks, the Greek poet Homer.

Solomon died after reigning forty years. He was buried in the house of David, and his son Ragī'ām reigned after him, at the age of sixteen. He reigned for seventeen years in Ūrashalīm. When Rubu'ām, the son of Nābāt, heard that Solomon was dead, he left Egypt, going to the city of Sā'īr (53). The sons of Israel gathered together and went to Ragī'ām, son of Solomon, and said to him: "Your father has administered us in a bad and reprehensible way. Govern us with good manners and we will be your servants." He answered them: "Go ahead, I will give you my answer in three days". He therefore consulted his advisors who told him: "You will tell them: "Where my father has ruled you badly, I will use with you and for you the most beautiful and good manners as well as the sweetest and mildest" (54).' But he did not accept their advice. Instead he went to his women and told them the same words he had addressed to his advisors. The women advised him to tell the children of Israel: "Where my father has ruled you badly, I will so govern you as to disperse your community and break your union". They also told him: "Tell them so, so that they will not treat you like a child and not give you due respect." He received their counsel and spoke to the children of Israel as his women had suggested to him (55). When [the sons of Israel] heard his words, they left the hall and turned against him. Ragī'ām warred against them, and sent against them Dūnīrām, head of the receivers of tribute (56). The sons of Israel stoned him and killed him. Then Ragī'ām fled away from them and returned to Ūrashalīm. The sons of Israel gathered and chose King Rubu'ām, son of Nābāt, as their king, and the kingdom divided.

11. Rubu'ām, the son of Nābāt, reigned over ten tribes of the sons of Israel. He built the city of Nābulus (57), which he chose as his home, and the city of Fāthūyil (58). Ragī'ām, son of Solomon, reigned over the tribes of Judah and Benjamin. Ragī'ām, son of Solomon, had with him a hundred and twenty thousand (59) warriors and ruled over many cities, including Bethlehem, Bātshūr, Zīf, Lākhīsh, Gāt, 'Azīqā and the cities of the territories of Judah and Benjamin (60) . His mother was called Nānān and was an Ammonite (61). His mother urged him to worship idols. As for Rubu'ām, son of Nābāt, fearing that the sons of Israel would go up to Ūrashalīm, to the house of the Lord, with offerings and, on seeing the temple, would rebel against him and betray him to Ragī'ām, son of Solomon, king of Judah, he had two calves of gold made and placed one in Bayt-īl and the other in Bāniyās (62). He appointed to their service some priests of the lineage of Levi telling them: "These



are your gods who have saved you from the hand of the Pharaoh. Worship them and you will no longer need to go up to Ūrashalīm “(63). Then he set up for them a great feast that is still celebrated today in the land of Judah.

12. In the fifth year of the reign of Ragī’ām, son of Solomon, Shīshaq, pharaoh of Egypt, came up to Ūrashalīm at the head of twenty-two thousand men of whom seven thousand were horsemen. Ragī’ām, son of Solomon, fled and Shīshaq, pharaoh of Egypt, took all the gold and silver that was in the house of the Lord and the gold and silver vessels that was in the palace of the King. Ragī’ām, son of Solomon, then replaced it with vessels of copper [1 Kings 14.25-27]. There were many wars between Ragī’ām, son of Solomon, and Rubu’ām, son of Nābāt, for as long as Ragī’ām lived. Ragī’ām, son of Solomon, married eighteen women and had many children. He also married Mākhā, daughter of Abīshālūm (64), who bore him Abiyā and his brothers. He also had thirty concubines (65). His children were thirty-eight in total between males and females (66). In the days of Ragī’ām, son of Solomon, there prophesied Sim’ayā of Nahlām (67) and Akhiyā from Silo. At Bayt-īl there prophesied ‘Ubīd (68) and the altar split in two.

13. Ragī’ām, son of Solomon, died and was buried with his father in David’s house. After him his son Abiyā reigned, over Judah, at Ūrashalīm, for six years. This occurred in the eighteenth year of the reign of Rubu’ām, the son of Nābāt, king of Israel. Between Abiyā, king of Judah, and Rubu’ām, king of Israel, there were many wars. Abiyā, king of Judah, defeated him and killed five hundred thousand of the sons of Israel. Rubu’ām, king of Israel, was afraid of Abiyā, king of Judah. Abiyā, king of Judah, died and was buried in the city of David. After him his son Āsā reigned over Judah, at Urashalīm, for forty-one years. This occurred in the twenty-fourth year (69) of the reign of Rubu’ām, son of Nābāt, king of Israel. The mother of Āsā, king of Judah, was called Nā’imah, daughter of Abīshālūm (70). Rubu’ām, son of Nābāt, king of Israel, died after having reigned for twenty-four years. After him his son Nābāt (71) reigned over Israel for two years. This took place in the second year of the reign of Āsā, king of Judah. Fa’shā, son of Akhiyā, attacked Nābāt in Kib’ātūn and killed him (72). Then he destroyed all the descendants of Rubu’ām, son of Nābāt. Fa’shā, son of Akhiyā, reigned over Israel at Tirsā (73) for twenty-four years. This took place in the third year of the reign of Āsā, king of Judah. Between Āsā, king of Judah, and Fa’shā, king of Israel, there were many wars. Fa’shā, king of Israel, crossed into the territory of Judah and founded Rāmā (74). Āsā, king of Judah, sent [messengers] to Hadād, son of Ġazāyil, king of Damascus (75), with many gifts, and with all the gold, the silver and the precious stones that were piled up in his house asking his help against Fa’shā, king of Israel. Hadād, son of Ġazāyil, sent him a huge army to help him. [Āsā] then went out with the army and destroyed the cities of ‘lyūn, of Bai, all the heights and all the territory of the Nifthālīm (76). When Fa’shā, king of Israel, learned of it, he abandoned the construction of Rāmā and returned to Tirsā. Āsā, king of Judah, took away the stones and wood with which Fa’shā, king of Israel, intended to build Rāmā and used it to build fortresses and palaces in the territory of Benjamin. Zārākh, king of the Kushites, i.e. the inhabitants of Sūdān, came out against him at the head of a thousand thousand warriors. Āsā, king of Judah, confronted them with three hundred thousand men of the tribe of Judah, and with fifty and two thousand men of the tribe of Benjamin (77), and he defeated them and made a great slaughter and put all their possessions to booty.

14. Fa’shā, king of Israel, died and was buried at Tirsā. After him, his son Īlā reigned at Tirsā for two years. This took place in the twenty-sixth year of the reign of Āsā, king of Judah. ‘Omri was commander of the army of Īlā, king of Israel, (78). ‘Omri attacked Īlā and killed him. He also killed all

the descendants of Fa'shā, king of Israel. The sons of Israel had gathered at Gib'āthūr (79) to fight against the tribes, when they heard of the killing of Īlā, king of Israel. Some of them accepted as king Omrī and others proclaimed their king Tibnī, son of Khīnāt, for a short time. But Tibnī died and Omrī reigned over Israel for twelve years. This took place in the twenty-seventh year of the reign of Āsā (80), king of Judah. He reigned for six years at Tirsā and founded a city he called 'Omrī, on Mount Sāmīr (81). He then reigned for six years in Samaria. 'Omrī died and was buried in Samaria. After him, his son Akhāb reigned over Israel in Samaria for twenty-one years. This occurred in the thirty-eight year of the reign of Āsā, king of Judah. In old age Āsā fell ill with gout but his kingdom continued to be tranquil and at peace. There prophesied, in his days, Hanānī, his son Yāhū, and 'Azariyā, son of 'Ūbid the prophet (82). Āsā, king of Judah, died and was buried in the city of David.

15. After him his son Yūshāfāt reigned over Judah, at Ūrashalīm, at the age of thirty-five. This took place in the fourth year of the reign of Akhāb, king of Israel. The reign of Yūshāfāt was full of splendor and many were his possessions and numerous his army. In his day, there prophesied Mikhā, son of Īlā (83), Yāhū, son of Hanānī, Ilī'āzār, son of Dūdāyā (84), 'Ubīdiyā (85), Iliyā, or al-Khadīr (86), and the disciple of the latter Ilīsha (87). In his day there lived a pseudo-prophet named Sidiqiyā, son of Kina'nā (88). As for Akhāb, king of Israel, he married a woman named Izbil, daughter of Thalmānī, king of Sidon (89). Akhāb, king of Israel, built a temple in Samaria where he placed the idol Bā'il and worshiped him. In the days of Akhāb, king of Israel, there lived an Israelite named Nābūthā (90) who had a very nice vegetable garden. King Akhāb fell in love with it and sent messengers from Nābūthā asking him to sell him the garden because it was adjoining his home. But Nābūthā refused it, saying: "I inherited this garden from my fathers and my ancestors and I will not sell it or give it to anyone" (91). Akhāb, king of Israel, received this badly, became irritated and angry. His wife Izbil entered and told him: "Why do I always see you so angry and sad?" He replied: "I asked Nābūthā to sell me his garden, but he refused it, and the fact that he rejected me and did not satisfy my request gave me great pain" (92). Izbil left Akhāb, king of Israel, called the Israelites ready to obey them and told them: "Testify for me against Nābūthā by saying that he has denied God and has blasphemed against Moses" (93). They testified against him and Izbil commanded that Nābūthā should be stoned to death. Then Izbil went to Akhāb, king of Israel, and said to him: "Do not be in pain anymore. I had Nābūthā killed. Take your garden" (94). Then the prophet Īliyās came to Akhāb, king of Israel, and scolded him and told him: "Beware of putting your hands on the garden of Nābūthā and approaching it, because God is full of anger with you for having worshiped the idols and with your wife Izbil for killing prodigally Nābūthā. But God has already chosen against you and your wife he who will kill you and her" (95). On hearing the words of Iliyā, Akhāb, king of Israel, he felt great fear, left the garden and did not approach it. When Izbil then heard that the prophet Iliyā had forbidden King Akhāb to take possession of the garden, she sent men to search for the prophet Iliyā with the intent of killing him. The prophet Iliyā was afraid of her and asked the Lord not to rain on the earth (96). The prophet Iliya escaped to the borders of the Jordan, on Mount Khūrīb, or Tūr-Sīnā (97), and he lived near the crevice of a spring. He used to drink water from the crevasse, and every day a crow brought him bread and in the evening some meat to eat. The prophet Īliyās, son of 'Arbā, [was] from Gala'ad and the Arabs call him al-Khidr. After a few days the spring dried up and the prophet Īliyās repaired to the city of Sārafiyyah of Sidon (98). He came across a widow who collected wood and asked her for food and drink. The woman took him to her house. She had a little flour and some oil, prepared a focaccia and fed him and her children (99). Iliyā invoked the blessing of the Lord on the container that contained the flour and on the one that contained the oil:

that of flour was filled with flour, as was that of oil with oil. The widow's son became ill, and died. Iliyā invoked his Lord, God restored his health and he lived.

16. After three years and six months (100) the prophet Iliyā decided to go to Akhāb, king of Israel. It had never rained in all that time, and many people had died because of the great famine and drought. And while 'Ubīdiyā, lieutenant of Akhāb (101), went around the valleys in search of water he came upon Iliyā, who went with him to Akhāb, king of Israel. King Akhāb told him: "It was you who asked the sky not to give rain all this time". The prophet Iliyā answered him: "It was you who made the sky give no more rain because you worshiped idols and your wife Izbil killed prodigally Nābūthā and because you received the words of the false prophets" (102). Then King Akhāb summoned all the Israelites and all the false prophets: the prophets of the idol Bā'il were four hundred thirty-four – In another text it says: they were four hundred and eighty – (103), and the prophets of Astīrā, which was a palm-tree they worshiped, were four hundred (104). The prophet Iliyā said to the false prophets: "Let us take two calves. You will choose the best, slay it and offer it to your gods as a sacrifice. If a fire comes down from heaven and consumes it, we will know that your gods are true. Otherwise I alone will do it and you will know that you are in error and I in truth" (105). They then took a calf, slaughtered it and invoked their gods, Bā'il and others, from noon to night, but nothing happened. Then the prophet Iliyā took twelve stones, formed an altar around which he dug a trench and laid wood on the stones. He slaughtered the calf and laid it on the stones and wood. He poured twelve pitchers of water over it until it filled the little trench that ran around the altar. He invoked his Lord, and there came a fire from heaven that devoured the flesh, the stones and the water until it dug a large ditch into the earth. The Israelites were dismayed. The prophet Iliyā then had the false prophets in the valley of Qīsūn killed by the sword (106). Then the prophet Iliyā invoked his Lord. God rained on them and the calamity left them. When Izbil, wife of Akhab, heard what Iliya had done to the false prophets, she again threatened to kill him. He was afraid of her and ran away. Elisha, son of Yūshāfāt, met him while he was busy grazing oxen (107). He left the oxen, followed Iliyā and became a disciple.

17. Then it happened that Ibn Hadād, king of Damascus (108), gathered the people of his kingdom, asked aid from thirty-two kings, formed a large and innumerable army and went out to fight against Akhāb, king of Israel, to whom he sent to say: "All the gold and silver you have, your male slaves and your female slaves, your women and everything you own is mine" (109). Akhāb, king of Israel, was very afraid and consented to give him everything he had asked. While the messengers came and went from one [king] to another, some young men, sons of the Syrian leaders, made a sortie by beating on the drums around the camp. When the Syrian soldiers saw them they believed they were being assaulted by the children of Israel and they flee wildly, chasing each other and killing each other. Learning this, Akhāb, king of Israel, chased them together with his men. He ransacked their camps, their tents and train and all they had (110). Ibn-Hadād, king of Damascus, succeeded in escaping to Damascus where the other survivors reached him. Then he raised an army and went out to fight, driven by the desire to take revenge on what had happened to him. Akhāb, king of Israel, came out against him and put him to flight, killing twenty-seven thousand men (111). Ibn-Hadād repaired by himself to Damascus where some councilors addressed these words to him: "The king of Israel is merciful, let's go to him and ask him to leave us alone". Then they wore worn garments, and went to Akhāb, king of Israel, and said to him: "Your servant, Ibn-Hadād, sends you to say: 'Do not hold it against me for what I did against you.'" Akhāb, king of Israel, answered them: "I consider him

my brother". They answered him: "If he is your brother, give him a guarantee on Damascus, so that there is a truce between you and him". [Akhāb] consented (112).

18. Three years later Yūshāfāt, king of Judah, came down to Akhāb, king of Israel, to greet him. Akhāb met with him and hosted him at his house. Yūshāfāt married his son Yūrām to 'Ataliyā, sister of Akhāb, king of Israel. Akhāb said to Yūshāfāt, king of Judah: "The city of Rāmūth of Kal'ād was ours (113), but the king of Syria took it from us. If you helped me we could take it back". Yūshāfāt consented to what he had asked of him. Then they gathered their men and marched on Ramwāth (114) of Kal'ād. Learning this, the king of Syria gathered his men and went out against them. Akhāb then said to Yūshāfāt: "Take off your clothes and wear mine so that you will not be recognized in war" (115). He did so. Now the king of Syria had ordered his men to seek, during the fight, the king of Israel, describing how he was dressed. When they saw the garments of Yūshāfāt, king of Judah, they believed that it was Akhāb, king of Israel, pursued him and surrounded him. But he gave a cry, addressed them and escaped them. Akhāb, king of Israel, was hit by a dart and fled before the king of Syria. Yūshāfāt returned to Ūrashalīm and Akhāb, king of Israel, returned home wounded. Akhāb died because of the wound he had brought back and was buried in Samaria.

## Chapter 6

Chap. VI King Ocozia and the prophet Elijah – Reign of Yoram, son of Akhab – Yoram fights against the king of Damascus – Prophecies of Elisha – Ocozia and his mother Athaliah reigned over Judah – Elisha sent to anoint king Yehu – Yehu becomes King of Israel – Yoash reigns over Judah – Akhaz returns to worship of idols – Yoash king of Israel – was followed by the kings of Judah: Amaziah, Azariah, Yotam, Akhaz, Hezekiah, Manasseh, Amori, Josiah, Yoakhaz, Yoakim, Yahunakim – Sennacherib invades Judah – the pharaoh Necho fights against the king of Mosul (p.111)

1. After him his son Ukhuzyā reigns in Samaria for two years. This took place in the nineteenth year of the reign of Yūshāfāt, king of Judah (1). His conduct was as evil as that of his father and he was devoted to the worship of idols under the guidance of his mother Izbil, who had killed Nābūthā. Ukhuzyā, king of Israel, fell seriously ill. He feared for his life and sent a messenger to the priests of the idols, to ask them whether he would be cured of his illness or not. On the way, the messenger came upon the prophet Iliyā. The prophet Iliyā said to the messenger: ‘Say to the king: “You will die.”’ The messenger returned to the king and informed him [of what had happened]. Then the king told him: “Describe the man who met you”. He replied: “He was a thick-haired man and wore a tight leather belt around his waist.” The king said: “It is the prophet Iliyā”. He then sent one of his commanders to him with fifty men. Iliyā was sitting on the top of Mount al-Karmil. The commander told him: “O prophet of God, come down because the king is calling you”. Iliyā replied: “If I am the prophet of God, may a fire come down from heaven to devour you and those who are with you”. A fire came down and devoured them. Then the king sent another commander with fifty men. He said: “O prophet of God, come down, because the king is calling you”. Iliyā replied: “If I am the prophet of God, may a fire come down from heaven to devour you and those who are with you.” And in fact it happened just like that. Then [the king] sent a third commander with fifty men who spoke to him like the first two spoke to him, and he and those who were with him suffered the same fate. Finally the king himself went to him and Iliyā came down to him and said: “You will not heal from your sickness, but you will die because you have worshiped idols and for your bad conduct in the presence of God, powerful and exalted”. In the days of Ukhuzyā, king of Israel, and Yūshāfāt, king of Judah, Iliyā was raised to heaven. Ukhuzyā, king of Israel, died of his illness and was buried with his father.

2. After him his brother Yūrām, son of Akhāb, reigned over the children of Israel, in Samaria, for twelve years. This took place in the twenty-second year of the reign of Yūshāfāt, king of Judah. The Ammonites and the Amalekites went out against Yūshāfāt, king of Judah with a great army, and Yūshāfāt was afraid of them. There was a great outcry at night among the soldiers of ‘Ammān and’ Amāliq, and they killed each other, while the survivors fled before Yūshāfāt. Yūshāfāt’s men set about ransacking their camps, tents and household goods for three days. Then Yūshāfāt returned to Ūrashālīm. Later the king of Moab moved against Yūrām, king of Israel. Yūrām sent to seek help from Yūshāfāt, king of Judah, against the king of Moab. He also sent for help from the king of the Rūm who was then in ash-Sharāh.<sup>9</sup> The three kings joined forces and went out against the king of Moab, taking the desert road in order to take him from behind. They walked in the desert for seven days. They missed the drinking water and so risked dying of thirst. The prophet Elisha was there

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<sup>9</sup> “Rum” here means Edom, rather than Rome.

with them, telling them: “Tomorrow these valleys will be filled with streams and God will give you the victory over your enemy”. It happened as the prophet had said. God gave them victory over the enemy and made a great slaughter of the men of the king of Moab. Seeing that he was defeated, the king of Moab entered the fortified tower, took his firstborn and slaughtered him on the walls of Moab, offering him as a burnt offering. The Israelites were terrified before such a scene, they stopped fighting against him and withdrew. Yūshāfāt, king of Judah, died and was buried in the city of David.

3. After him his son Yūrām reigned, aged thirty-two. He reigned for eight years over Judah, in Ūrashalīm. This took place in the fifth year of the reign of Yūrām, son of Akhāb, king of Israel. There prophesied, in his day, Elisha, disciple of Iliyā, and ‘Ubidiyā. Ibn-Hadād, king of Syria (8), became active again, gathered his soldiers and marched against Yūrām, king of Israel, in Samaria, to wage war on him. Yūrām was afraid of him, but Elisha told him: “Do not fear. Fortify yourself in your city because God will give you victory over your enemy”. Yūrām then stayed in his city. The soldiers of Damascus were as numerous as the sand of the sea and surrounded the city of Yūrām and all the territory of Samaria. The Israelites were under siege for three years. Then a famine fell on Samaria so badly that the people were reduced to feed on the flesh of the dead and pigeon droppings, and the head of a donkey was sold for eighty “dirhams” and a glass of pigeon droppings for five “dirhams” (9). While Yūrām, king of Israel, was walking along the walls of the city, he came across a woman struggling with another woman. One of the women begged the king for help, saying: “This woman said: ‘Slay your son today, so we can eat him so as not to starve. Tomorrow, I will slaughter mine and eat him’. Yesterday I killed my son and we ate him, but today she took her son and hid him”(10). On hearing this, the king shuddered, tore his clothes, and covered his head with dust. He then sent to tell the prophet Elisha: “Did you not say that God would give me the victory over my enemy? But when will this happen?” The prophet Elisha answered the messenger: “Tell the king: ‘Tomorrow, at this same hour, God will grant you the victory over your enemy. At the city gate of Samaria flour will be sold at a dirham for a waybah and barley at a dirham for two waybah’” (11). The messenger replied to the prophet Elisha: “But such a thing is completely impossible”. Elisha answered: “Well instead it will be like this. You will see it [with your own eyes], but you will not eat it.”(12). There were four leper Israelis at the far end of the walls who agreed among themselves: “When night comes we will lower ourselves from the walls and we will go to the Syrian soldiers. They will either kill us or give us bread to eat” (13). They did as they said and once they arrived among the soldiers they tried to rummage through the tents and the camps. But there was nobody there. This was because it was rumoured on that same night among the soldiers of Damascus that the king of Egypt, the king of Israel, the king of Judah and all the kings (14) had joined forces to assail them by surprise, during the night, and they had therefore fled, leaving behind them their camps, tents, baggage, their household goods and all that they had. The lepers came back and informed the king of Israel so that he could send men on the trail of the Syrians. They travelled quickly to the banks of the Jordan River but found no traces [of the Damascus soldiers]. The king then gave orders to open the gate of the city, people poured out and looted everything that was in the tents of the Syrians. Flour was immediately sold for a dirham a waybah and barley at a dirham for two waybah (15). As for the messenger who had accused the prophet Elisha of lying, when he saw all this he died at the gate of the city because of the great crowds and the crush. After this Yūrām, king of Judah, went out against the Rūm who were in ash-Sharāh and massacred them (16). Yūrām, king of Judah, died and was buried in the city of David.

4. After him his son Ukhuziyā reigned over Judah, at Urashalim, for a single year at the age of twenty-two. This took place in the twelfth year of the reign of Yūrām, son of Akhāb, king of Israel. His mother was called ‘Athaliyā, and she was the sister of Akhāb, king of Israel, son of ‘Umri. There prophesied, in his day, Elisha and Abūdiyā. Yūrām, king of Israel, moved, together with Gazāyil, king of the tribes, against ar-Rāmah (17) to fight against the Syrians (18). Yūrām, king of Israel, was wounded in war and returned to the city of Yizrā’īl for treatment. Ukhuziyā, son of Yūrām, came to him to greet him. The prophet Elisha called his disciple Yūnis, son of Mitthāī, i.e. an-Nūn (19), who had been swallowed by the fish, gave him a horn with oil inside and told him: “Go to the city of Rāmah of Kal’ād and you will find a commander named Yāhū, son of Yimsi (20). Anoint him with this ointment as king of Israel” (21). Yūnis, disciple of Elisha, went and did as he had ordered him. Yāhū gave the news to his men, gathered them and moved to the city of Yizrā’īl in search of Yūrām, king of Israel. Yūrām, king of Israel, and Ukhuziyā, king of Judah, came out against him. Yāhū shot a dart which struck Yūrām, king of Israel, in the heart, and he killed him and cut off his head. Ukhuziyā, king of Judah, fled but Yāhū pursued him and covered him with wounds. However he managed to escape, and he took refuge in Mighiddū (22) and died there. When Ukhuziyā died, his servants took him to Ūrashalīm and he was buried in the city of David.

5. Then the mother of Ukhuziyā, named ‘Athaliyā, reigned over Judah, at Ūrashalīm, for seven years. Yāhū wrote to the chiefs of Samaria [telling them]: “If you are willing to obey me, choose yourself a king from among the sons of Akhāb, king of Israel”. They answered him: “We have no other king but you”. He wrote to them again: “Then kill all the sons of Akhab, king of Israel” (23). The sons of Akhāb and the sons of his sons were seventy. They killed them and sent their heads to Yāhū. Yāhū then went to Samaria, and of the descendants of Akhāb he did not leave one, but put everyone of them to death. As he was walking he came across forty-two men and asked them: “Who are you?” They said: “We are the brothers of Ukhuziyā, king of Judah” (24). Then Yāhū cut off their heads, destroyed the temple of the idol Bā’īl in Samaria, and killed the priests and their leaders. He reigned over the Israelites for twenty-eight years. Izbil, wife of Akhāb, went out, after dressing up, to meet Yāhū. But Yāhū had her killed; her body was left unburied for several days and the dogs devoured her. Then [Yāhū] arranged to bury what was left of her body. ‘Athaliyā, after having obtained the kingdom of Judah, after her son Ukhuziyā, in Ūrashalīm, had the sons of her son Ukhuziyā killed. She then went after the family of David with the intent to exterminate it as it belonged to the tribe of Akhāb, king of Israel. She wanted to wipe out the whole race of David. She had a daughter, the sister of Ukhuziyā, named Yahūshāyī’, the wife of Yahwādā’, leader of the priests (25). She managed to save from her mother a son of Ukhuziyā, named Yuwāsh, keeping him hidden for six years. In the days of ‘Athaliyā there prophesied Elisha and ‘Ubidiyā. ‘Athaliyā profaned Ūrashalīm with adultery, because she ordered women to prostitute themselves in public without any restraint and men to fornicate with women without being censured (26). When Yuwāsh, son of Ukhuziyā, grew bigger, the priest Yahūnādā’ (27) gathered the magnates of Judah, presented Yuwāsh, son of Ukhuziyā, to them, and proclaimed him king. Hearing this, ‘Athaliya tore her clothes, went out to see him and was killed with a sword stroke.

6. Yuwāsh, son of Ukhuziyā, reigned over Judah, at Ūrashalīm, for forty years, from the age of six (28). This took place in the seventh year of the reign of Yāhū, king of Israel. The mother of Yuwāsh was called Sinbā and was originally from Bersabea (29). In his time there prophesied Elisha, Uriyā, and Zakhariyā, son of the priest Yahūnādā’ (30). During his life he always behaved well in Judah until

the priest Yahūnādā` died at the age of one hundred and thirty years. Then Yuwāsh, king of Judah, gave himself over to the worship of idols. The prophet Zakhariyā, son of the priest Yahūnādā`, tried to dissuade him from doing so, but the king had him stoned to death. It was in this way that Yuwāsh rewarded the priest Yahūnādā` who had made him king, namely by killing his son Zakhariyā, the prophet. Gazāyil, king of Syria, came out against him (31), and seized the city of Gatti (32) by taking possession of it. He then set about going up to Ūrshalīm. Yuwāsh was very afraid of him, took all the treasures that were in the temple and that his fathers Yūshāfāt, Yūrām and Ukhuziyā had accumulated there and sent them to Gazāyil, king of Syria, to ingratiate himself. He departed, and left him alone. Yāhū, king of Israel, died and was buried in Samaria.

7. After his son Akhāz (33) reigned in Samaria for seventeen years. This happened in the twenty-third year of the reign of Yuwāsh, king of Judah. Akhāz devoted himself to the worship of idols and Israel was subjugated by Gazāyil, king of Syria, and by Hadād, son of Gazāyil (34). Of the men of Israel, so many were killed in the war that only ten thousand footmen and fifty horsemen remained at the side of Akhaz, king of Israel. The prophet Elisha died and Gazayil, king of Syria, also died. His son Hadād reigned after him. Akhāz, king of Israel, fought again and defeated Hadād, son of Gazāyil, king of Syria, taking from him the countries which his father had taken over and re-establishing his sovereignty. Akhaz, king of Israel, died and was buried in Samaria.

8. After him, his son Yuwāsh reigned over Samaria in Israel for sixteen years. This occurred in the thirty-ninth year of the reign of Yuwāsh, king of Judah (35). His conduct of life was worse than his father's and he worshiped the idols. As for Yuwāsh, king of Judah, his servants attacked him and killed him. He was buried in the city of David.

After him his son Amasiyā reigned over Judah, at Ūrshalīm, for twenty-nine years. This took place in the second year of the reign of Yuwāsh, king of Israel. He had the servants who had killed his father arrested and had them killed. In his time there prophesied 'Amūs, the Davidic prophet. Yuwāsh, king of Israel, went up to Ūrshalīm. Amasiyā, king of Judah, was afraid of him and fled to Bayt Shams, abandoning the city (36). Yuwāsh, king of Israel, tore down four hundred cubits of the walls of the city of Ūrshalīm and looted all the gold and silver that was in the palace of Amasiyā, king of Judah, taking it with him to Samaria. Yuwāsh, king of Israel, died and was buried in Samaria.

9. After him his son Rubu'am reigned over Israel in Samaria, for forty-one years. This occurred in the fifteenth year of the reign of Amasiyā, king of Judah. After the death of Yuwāsh, king of Israel, Amasiyā returned from Bayt Shams to Ūrshalīm in Judea. Shortly thereafter, Rubu'am, king of Israel, gathered his army and went up to Ūrshalīm. Amasiyā, king of Judah, fled from him, sheltering in the city of Lāhish. But [Rubu'am] pursued him to Lāhish and killed him (37). His servants took him to Ūrshalīm and he was buried in the city of David. After him his son 'Uziyā ruled over Judah, at Ūrshalīm, for fifty-two years, at the age of sixteen. This occurred in the fifteenth year (38) of the reign of Rubu'am, king of Israel. In his time there prophesied 'Amūs (39) and his son Sha'iyā (40) of the house of David, Yūsha', son of Yihādi of the tribe of Rubri (41) and Yūnis son of Matatay, i.e. Dhū'n-Nūn, of Kātihāfadh (42). Rubu'am, king of Israel, died and was buried in Samaria.

10. After him, his son Zakhariyā reigned over Israel, in Samaria, for six months. This took place in the twenty-ninth year of the reign of 'Uziyā, king of Judah (43). Shāllūm, son of Yābish, and Bil'am, two of his commanders, rebelled against him and killed him (44). Shāllūm, son of Yābish, took possession



of the kingdom. He reigned over Israel, in Samaria, for thirty days. This took place in the twenty-ninth year of the reign of 'Uziyā, king of Judah (45). Then Menhakhim, son of Hadi, one of his commanders, rebelled and killed him and took possession of the kingdom. He reigned over Israel in Samaria for twenty years (46). This occurred in the thirty-first year of the reign of 'Uziyā, king of Judah (47). He went out against the city of Tirsā and stormed it, killing all the inhabitants and gutting their pregnant women. Tula, king of Mossul (49) and Memphis, king of Israel, came out against him, and he gave them much gold and silver to ingratiate himself. They then withdrew and left him alone. Menhakhim, king of Israel, died and was buried in Samaria.

11. After him his son Fiqahiyā reigned in Israel, in Samaria, for two years. This happened in the fiftieth year of the reign of 'Uziyā, king of Judah. Fāqih, son of Rimaliyā, who was one of his commanders, rebelled against him and killed him, seizing the kingdom. This Fāqih, son of Rimaliyā, reigned over Israel in Samaria for twenty-eight years (49). This happened in the fifty-second year of the reign of 'Uziyā, king of Judah. This 'Uziyā committed all sorts of evil. He dared even to enter the Holy of Holies, took the thurible from the priest's hand and incensed the temple (50). It was for this reason that 'Uziyā contracted leprosy in the face, and yet he did not give up the kingdom because his son Yuwāthām administered and defended it (51). 'Uziyā, king of Judah, died and was buried in the city of David.

12. After him his son Yuwāthām reigned over Judah, at Ūrashalīm, for sixteen years, at the age of twenty-five. This took place in the second year of the reign of Fāqih, king of Israel. In his time there prophesied Isha'iyā, Mīkhā al-Mūrashti (52) and Yū'īl, son of Fānū'īl (53). Tighlāt Filitsir, king of Mossul (54), came out [against him], occupied many cities of Israel and took possession of it. Yuwāthām, king of Judah, died and was buried in Bethlehem, the city of David. After him his son Akhāz ruled over Judah, at Ūrashalīm, for sixteen years, at the age of twenty. In his time, there prophesied Isha'iyā, Yūsha' and Mīkhā. The high priest was Uriyā. Rāzūn, king of Damascus (55), came out [against him] with Fāqih, king of Israel, went up to Ūrashalīm and besieged the city. But they could not take it, and withdrew. Rāzūn, king of Damascus, destroyed the city of Fām of Syria (56), drove out the Jews and installed the Rūm that still live there. Akhaz, king of Judah, wrote to Salmān-Asar, king of Mosul (57), asking for his help and sending him all the gold, silver and precious stones that were in the temple. The king of Mossul went after him with his soldiers, conquered Damascus, burned it, and killed King Rāzūn. Akhaz, king of Judah, went to him and thanked him for what he had done. A commander of Fāqih, named Hūshi`, son of Ila (58), rebelled against Fāqih, king of Israel, and killed him, seizing the kingdom. Hūshi` reigned over Samaria for nine years. This happened in the twelfth year of the reign of Akhaz, king of Judah. Akhaz, king of Judah, died and was buried in the house of David. After him his son Hiziqiyā reigned over Judah, at Ūrashalīm, at the age of twenty-five, for twenty-nine years. This happened in the third year of the reign of Hūshi`, king of Israel. In his time there prophesied Sha'yā, Yūshā' and Mīkhā of the tribe of Ephraim. In the fourth year of the reign of Hiziqiyā, king of Judah, i.e. in the seventh year of the reign of Hūshi`, king of Israel, Salmān-Asar, king of Mossul and al-Gazirah (59), went up to Samaria and besieged it for three years, until he took it. He took Hūshi`, king of Israel, and had him put in prison, deporting ten tribes of Israel from the land of Samaria to Āmid (60), to Mossul and to Bābil. Only the tribe of Judah and the house of David remained to reign and the tribe of Benjamin. He then deported part of the populations of Bābil, Āmid and Mossul and made them live in the cities of Samaria instead of the Israelites. Salmān-Asar, king of Mosul, left with them a priest named Lūn (61) to teach them the law. Lūn taught them the Law that they still follow, and they

were the fathers of the Samaritans and their sons are the Samaritans of today, because they separated from the Jews, denying the gift of prophecy to David and all the prophets, asserting that there was no prophet after the prophet Moses. They elected their leader from the House of Harun and gave him the name of ar-ra'is. Hiziqiyā, king of Judah, reigned over all the Israelites and over as many of them as remained in Samaria. He had the idols torn down, the steles swept away, and the bronze serpent cut to pieces that Moses – peace be upon him – had forged in the desert and that the Israelites had revered and worshiped up to that time. He had that shattered in pieces, and he began to fight against the foreign tribes and he confined them to Ghazza and to the city of Rafakh. He then sent word to all the Israelites who were in Samaria and in the land of Judah to gather at Ūrashalīm to celebrate the passover. They gathered and celebrated passover at Ūrashalīm. Hiziqiyā, king of Judah, sacrificed two thousand calves and seven thousand sheep (62). His commanders slaughtered a thousand calves and ten thousand sheep and celebrated a sumptuous and grandiose festival.

13. In the fourteenth year of the reign of Hiziqiyā, king of Judah, Sinnāhārib, king of Mossul (63) went up to the land of Judah and occupied many cities. Hiziqiyā, king of Judah, was afraid of him and sent word to him, at Lāhish: “Whatever you want to impose on me, I commit myself to give it to you, but please go away from me”. Sinnāhārib, king of Mossul, wrote to him telling him: “Send me three hundred ‘qintār’ of gold and three hundred ‘qintār’ of silver” (64). Hiziqiyā, king of Judah, sent him all the gold and silver that was in the temple, and he took down the golden doors of the temple and sent them to him. That same night a cry was heard among the soldiers of Sinnāhārib, king of Mossul, and they killed one another. Then Hiziqiyā, king of Judah, went out against them and killed one hundred and eighty-five thousand, and Sinnāhārib, king of Mossul, fled to Ninawā (65). He had two sons, one named Anzarmālākh and the other Sarāsirā (66): they rebelled and killed him by the sword, then fleeing to the district of Qardā (67) in the Mossul region. This king Hiziqiyā is the one whom God allowed to live for another fifteen years. This is because he was close to dying and, having no children, he turned his face to the wall and wept bitterly in the presence of God. God mercifully had compassion on him and sent an angel to let him know that God was extending his life by fifteen years. Later he had a son whom he called Manassā. It is said [well] that the one who told him: “God has prolonged your life by fifteen years” was the prophet Isha'iyā. And it is true (68). The son of Sinnāhārib, named as-Sarḡadūn, reigned over Mossul (69). In the days of Hiziqiyā, king of Judah, there reigned over the Rūm Rūmiyūs, who founded a city calling it Rūmiyā, from his name. And in fact the Rūm were called Rūm just from the name of Rūmiyūs. After that the king moved his residence to the city of Rūmiyā (70). Rūmiyūs reigned for thirty-six years. Hiziqiyā, king of Judah, died and was buried in the house of David.

14. After him his son Manassā reigned over Judah, at Ūrashalīm, for fifty-five years, at the age of twelve. In the third year of his reign (71) he made idols and the Israelites began to worship them. The prophet Isaiah rebuked him, but he had him killed (72) by having him sawn in two and burning his body. It is said that the prophet Isaiah, before being killed, was thirsty and invoked his Lord. A spring of water opened before him and he drank from it. [This would be] the spring of Silwān, whose interpretation is “sent”. It is also said that when the pagans later inhabited Ūrashalīm, the spring had dried up, and it resumed flowing when the Israelites lived there [again]. The Israelites worshiped idols for fifty-four years. Then the king of Bābil captured Manassā, king of Judah, and had him locked up in the cavity of a bronze calf (73) under which he set fire. In the cavity of the calf Manassā raised prayers to God repenting of what he had done and imploring

his Lord. God forgave his sin and had compassion on him. The idol split in two and [Manassā] came out [alive]. God then sent him an angel who took him away to Ūrashalim. Manassā, king of Judah, died and was buried in the garden of 'Uziyā (74). After him, his son Amnūn (75) reigned for two years, at the age of twenty-two. He lived like his father, worshiping idols. His servants attacked him in his house, killed him and buried him with his father in the garden of 'Uziyā. After him his son Yūsiyā reigned over Judah, at Ūrashalīm, for thirty-one years, at the age of eight. In the second year of his reign (76), he broke down the idols and burnt them, and he also destroyed, by burning them, every temple dedicated to the idols in Samaria that the Israelites had built. He had the priests of the idols killed and had them burned. He then collected the bones of the dead who had worshiped the idols and burned them. In the eighteenth year of his reign he celebrated the passover like no other, since the time of Yashū', son of Nūn, [= Joshua] had done. There was then priest Hilqiyā, father of the prophet Irimiyā. Hilqiyā found the book of the Law in the temple, read it, and arranged to celebrate passover according to what was said. In his day there prophesied Khuldā, wife of Sallūm, custodian of the temple garments, the prophet Irimiyā and the prophet Sūfūniyā. The prophet Irimiyā took the ark and hid it in a niche of a rock (77). [In his day] there lived a false prophet named Hininā (78).

15. At the time of Yūsā, king of Judah, the pharaoh Nāhū (79), i.e. the lame, King of Egypt, went up against the king of Mosul, fought against him, overcame him and put him to flight, advancing to the Euphrates. On his return Yūsā, king of Judah, met him with many gifts. But after seeing him he had him killed. His servants brought him from Mighiddū, i.e. Manbiğ (80), to Ūrashalīm, and buried him there. He was thirty-nine.

After him his son Yuwakhāz ruled over Judah, at Ūrashalīm, for three months, at the age of twenty-three. The pharaoh Nāhū went up to Ūrashalīm, took Yuwakhāz, king of Judah, and had him chained and deported to Egypt along with a large number of Jews. The pharaoh imposed a tribute on all the inhabitants of Ūrashalīm, forcing them to pay him every year a hundred "qintār" of gold and one hundred "qintār" of silver (81). Then the pharaoh Nāhū returned to Egypt. Yuwakhāz, king of Judah, died in Egypt.

16. After him his son Iliyāqim, son of Yūsiyā, also called Yuwāqim, reigned over Judah, at Ūrashalīm, for eleven years, at the age of twenty-five.(82) In his day there prophesied the prophet Irimiyā, Uriyā, son of Sima'yā, of Qaryat al-'Inab (83), and Yūri (84), father of Hiziqiyā. Yuwāqim, king of Judah, sent annually to pharaoh Nāhū, king of Egypt, as a ransom for himself and for his country, one hundred "qintār" of gold and one hundred "qintār" of silver. In the fourth year of the reign of Yuwāqim, king of Judah, Bakhtanāsir reigned in Bābil (85). In his time this Bakhtanāsir went up to Ūrashalīm and Yuwāqim, king of Judah, welcomed him and became his vassal for three years. Bakhtanassar then returned to Bābil and Yuwāqim sent him every year the same quantity of gold and silver that he sent to Pharaoh Nāhū, because Bakhtanassar reigned from the Euphrates to the city of Rafakh. Later Yuwāqim, king of Judah, broke the covenant and sent him nothing more. Yuwāqim, king of Judah, died and was buried in the house of David.

17. After him his son Yahūnākhīm, called Akhiyā, reigned at Ūrashalīm for three months at the age of eighteen. Having failed to send to Bakhtanassar the price of the ransom, Bakhtanassar in person came to Ūrashalīm at the head of his army and besieged it. Yahūnākhīm went to meet him with his mother, his servants and the magnates of Israel and opened the gates of the

city. Bakhtanassar entered the city and took away from the temple all the gold and silver vessels together with the precious stones, as well as all the precious stones, all the gold and silver that were in the king's palace, sending them to Bābil. He then chained Yahūnākhīm, king of Judah, and took him with him to Bābil along with seven thousand of his men (86). He also brought every strong man of Israel to Bābil. There were among the prisoners Dāniyāl, still a young man, and the three young men Hanāniyā, 'Azariyā and Misā'il who were thrown into the furnace (87). Only the defenseless and the needy remained in the city. Bakhtanassar entrusted the government of Ūrashalīm to a brother of Yuwāqim, king of Judah, son of Yūshiyā, named Mataniyā. Bakhtanassar called him Sidiqiyā and [he was] the maternal uncle of Yahūnākhīm, king of Judah. He reigned eleven years in Ūrashalīm at the age of twenty-one. In his time there prophesied Irimiyā, Habaqūq and Yūri (88). In the ninth year of his reign, Sidiqiyā, king of Judah, ceased to send to Bakhtanassar the gold and silver that he used to send him. Bakhtanassar was irritated and sent one of his commanders, named Yanūzardān (89), head of the king's guards, to Ūrashalīm and held it in a state of siege for three years. Most of the people died because of famine and Sidiqiyā, king of Judah, sheltered at night in a cave, known as the "cave of dogs" (90), which he himself had prepared. Yanūzardān noticed this, pursued him to Rihā, captured him, and sent him to Bakhtanassar at Antākiyah (91). Bakhtanassar had him blinded and then ordered all his children decapitated. Yanūzardān made a great slaughter of the Jews, destroyed the temple and burned it, sowed the ruins of Ūrashalīm and set it on fire, bringing to Bābil all the gold, silver and copper that was in the temple. Some of the Jews fled to Egypt and others to the desert and the valleys. Those who remained were made captive and deported to Bābil. Ūrashalīm was reduced to a mass of ruins and there was no one left. The prophet Habaqūq fled to the territory of Isma'il and then descended into Egypt. This happened in the nineteenth year of the reign of Bakhtanassar.

18. From the reign of David to the captivity of Bābil and to the destruction of Bayt al-Maqdis (92), four hundred and seventy-seven years had elapsed; from the departure of the sons of Israel from Egypt to the captivity of Bābil, a thousand and eighty-three years had elapsed; from Abraham to the captivity of Bābil, fifteen hundred and ninety years had elapsed; from Fāliq to the captivity of Bābil, two thousand and one hundred and thirty years had elapsed; from the flood to the captivity of Bābil, two thousand six hundred and sixty-two years had elapsed; from Adam to the captivity of Bābil, four thousand nine hundred and eighteen years had elapsed.

## Chapter 7

Chap. VII Nebuchadnezzar and the three young men in the furnace – Daniel interprets and explains the king’s dream – Prophets in Babylon – Nebuchadnezzar’s conquest of Egypt, then he dies – Reign of his successors – Daniel explains to King Belshazzar the meaning of the three words on the wall – the reign of Darius and the appearance of the Persians – Daniel and the idols of Babil – Daniel in the den – Sequence of Persian kings – Ezra rebuilds the Temple – War between Darius and Alexander the Great: exchange of Letters – Death of Darius and campaigns of Alexander – Death of Alexander and panegyrics of the sages of the time, before the body of the hero, humbled by death – Dismemberment of the empire: the Ptolemies – Simeon the Just receives the grace of seeing the Messiah (p.127)

1. In the eighteenth year of the reign of Bakhtanassar, i.e. in the year before the destruction of Bayt al-Maqdis, [the king] made an idol of gold sixty cubits high and six cubits wide, and erected it in the centre of the city of Bābil, ordering all the people of his kingdom to worship it. Anyone who refused to worship it would be burned in the furnace. Bakhtanassar chose three young Israelites and named the first Sīdrākh, the second Mīsākh and the third ‘Abdanāghū. These three young men refused to prostrate themselves in front of the idol and the king commanded them to be thrown into the furnace. But God sent them an angel from heaven who extinguished the fire, and the fire was changed for them into coolness and health. Seeing this, Bakhtanassar ordered them to be taken out of the furnace, scrutinized them thoroughly and found no traces of fire injuries either on their bodies or on their garments. This increased his astonishment, and he was afraid, and honored them, invoking his power and making them heads of his household.

2. In the fourth year after the destruction of Bayt al-Maqdis, Bakhtanassar had a dream. He therefore summoned the interpreters of dreams and the astrologers and said to them: “Tell me about the dream I had and give me an explanation, otherwise I will kill you.” They replied, “How will we know what dream you had, if you do not tell us what you dreamed about, so that we can give it an interpretation?” Bakhtanassar became angry and thought about having them beheaded. The prophet Dāniyāl was still young when the deportation had taken place. Bakhtanassar had taken him for himself, and had educated him in his house covering him with favours. He then sent to call him. Dāniyāl said to him: “I will tell you the dream you had, and I will give you an interpretation. The king saw a great idol, which looked like a beast. Its head was of gold, its hands of silver, its belly and thighs of bronze, the legs of iron, and the feet of clay. Then the king saw a huge boulder fall from a mountain, and batter and shatter the idol until nothing was left of it. The boulder then became an imposing mountain and filled the earth. This is what the king saw. The interpretation is then the following. You, O king, are the head of that idol, the gold. After you will rule one less than you, the silver. After him will rule a king less than him, the bronze. After him will rule a king less than him, the iron. After him will rule a king less than him, the clay. Then after him will rule a great king whose kingdom will never end. And just as you saw a boulder fall from the mountain alone and break the idol and fill the earth, so that king will reign over all the earth forever”. Bakhtanassar then ordered them to give new clothes to Dāniyāl, to cover him with honour, preferred him to all the wise men of Bābil, appointed him chief of his house and called him Baltāssar.

3. In the fifth year of the captivity of Bābil and the destruction of Ūrashalīm, Hizqiyāl, son of Yūzi, prophesied at Bābil, in the place called Karmila, Bārūkh, son of Nāriyā, and his brother Sirās, Dāniyāl of the house of David, Mardukhāf of the house of Benjamin, Hakāy, Zakhariyā, son of Bārāshiyā, Malākhīya, 'Izrā e Nāhūm. In Egypt there were Habaqūq, the tribe of Simeon, and the prophet Irimiyā. In Bābil the Israelites worshiped idols, and the prophet Hizqiyāl reproached them for their conduct. But the magnates of the Israelites attacked him and killed him.

4. In the twenty-fifth year of the reign of Bakhtanassar, he marched against Egypt, devastated it and killed its king, thus extending his kingdom over Egypt, Syria, the land of Judah, of the Rūm, of the Greeks, the Fāris, of Bābil and of Mossul. Bakhtanassar reigned for forty-five years, nineteen of which were before the destruction of Ūrashalīm and the captivity of the Israelites, and twenty-six after the destruction of Ūrashalīm. King Bakhtanassar died.

5. After him, his son Awīl Marūdakh<sup>10</sup> reigned for twenty-three years. He released Yahūnākhīm, king of the Israelites, from prison, and put on him the garments of honour, and treated him with every respect, and set free all the prisoners of Israel. In Egypt the prophet Irimiyah<sup>11</sup> was stoned to death and was buried. It is said that when Alexander entered Egypt, he brought the body of the prophet Irimiyā to Alexandria and buried it there. Awīl Marūdakh died.

6. After him, his son Baltāssar reigned for three years and was killed. After he had eaten and drunk with his companions, and having become drunk, he had brought in the gold and silver vessels of the temple that his grandfather Bakhtanassar had taken away from Ūrashalīm<sup>12</sup> and drank from them, ordering his companions to do likewise. But while he slept in the room, behold he saw the fist of a hand move on the wall, and the fingers of the hand write. He was greatly frightened, and gathered together the wise men of Bābil, to read the writing and explain it. But they did not succeed. They said to the king, "There is here an Israelite named Dāniyāl whom your grandfather Bakhtanassar highly honoured and held in great consideration. He will read it to you, and explain this to you". The king then summoned Dāniyāl. Dāniyāl read the writing and recited the writing as follows: "Mānī. Thākāl. Fārās". Then he said: "Mānī means 'God has made your kingdom perfect and great.' Thākāl means 'The kingdom, already perfect, is destined to end' and Fārās means 'Your kingdom will be divided between the Medes and the Persians'". The king gave a mantle of honour to Dāniyāl and put a gold collar on his neck. That same night, King Baltāssar was killed.

7. Then Dāriyūsh, son of Asrīr, the Mede, that is, of the house of Mādānī, reigned after him for a single year. He took Dāniyāl and appointed him chief of his soldiers. But his generals were jealous, and sought to discredit him in the eyes of the king, saying, "Dāniyāl is marching against the king with the intent of killing him". The king then cast Dāniyāl into a pit full of hungry lions. Then, on his own, the next day he removed Dāniyāl from the pit. The lions had not touched him. The king felt very afraid, and threw in the pit the generals who had slandered him, and they were all devoured by the lions. The king reconfirmed Dāniyāl as chief of his soldiers, and supreme organizer of his army.

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<sup>10</sup> Or Evil-Merodach, as our bibles memorably label him.

<sup>11</sup> Jeremiah.

<sup>12</sup> Jerusalem.

8. On the death of Dāriyūsh, the kingdom passed into the hands of the Persians. The first Persian to reign was Kūrish the Persian.<sup>13</sup> He also appointed Dāniyāl as chief of the army. There was in Bābil a huge bronze idol called Bīl.<sup>14</sup> To this idol there was offered daily twelve “makkūk”<sup>15</sup> of flour, forty rams and six divine measures. Every day the king prostrated himself and worshipped the idol.<sup>16</sup> But Dāniyāl responded, saying, “The servants of the idol are those who eat what is given to them as a daily ration”. The king then called the servants, threatened them and confirmed [what Dāniyāl had said to him]. The king then ordered the demolition of the idol and that the servants should be put to death.

There was also, in Bābil, a great snake that the people of the city worshiped. Dāniyāl said to the king: “Give me permission, and I will kill it.” Dāniyāl then took some sausage, some pitch, and some hair, kneaded them together and fed them to the serpent. As soon as the snake ate this, it died. When the inhabitants of Bābil saw what Dāniyāl had done, they were angry and sought to discredit him in the king’s eyes, saying: “Dāniyāl wants to kill you”. The king was irritated with him, and threw him into a pit full of hungry lions, where he remained for six days. The lions were given food, daily, of two bulls, and two rams. But during those six days, no meat was given to the lions. In the land of Judah, in a place called Tiqwa’, there was the prophet Habaqūq.<sup>17</sup> He was cooking lentils and prepared a soup in a bowl to feed the harvesters. But an angel from heaven called to him and said to him, “Habaqūq, bring the food you have with you to Dāniyāl in Bāhil. He has been in the pit of the lions for six days and has not eaten any food”. Then the angel of God grabbed the prophet Habaqūq by his hair and brought him to Bābil with the food that he had. [Habaqūq] appeared at the pit where Dāniyāl was, called to him, and said to him: “Dāniyāl, I am Habaqūq. God has sent me to you with food for you to eat”. Dāniyāl came out of the pit, ate and praised God, then went back down into the pit. The angel then took Habaqūq and brought him back to the land of Judah. Then the king repented of what he had done to Dāniyāl and ordered them to pull him out of the pit. The lions had not touched him. The king was surprised, and restored to Dāniyāl the post of chief of the army. The reign of Kūrish the Persian lasted for three years.<sup>18</sup> Then he died.

9. After him reigned Akhshūwīrus for twelve years. After him reigned his son Kūrish, known as Dāriyūs, for thirty years. In the first year of his reign, Dāniyāl the prophet died. In the second year of his reign he ordered the Israelites to return to Ūrashalīm and to [re]build the city and the temple. This was because Kūrish the Persian had married an Israelite named Malihāt, sister of Zurūbābil, and made her queen according to the Persian custom. Kūrish loved her very much and when she asked him to return the Israelites to Ūrashalīm with her brother Zurūbābil, the king agreed. So Kūrish ordered Zurūbābil to reign at Ūrashalīm. In his days prophesied Anagua<sup>19</sup> and Zakariya, son of Haḡliyah. He was the Ra’s al-Ġālūth,<sup>20</sup> and he was entrusted with the task of [re]building the temple. There was with him Izra, son of Sirāyā, the priest, and a multitude of the

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<sup>13</sup> Cyrus.

<sup>14</sup> Baal.

<sup>15</sup> A makkuk is about 55 litres of dry material.

<sup>16</sup> I wonder if something is missing from the text after this sentence – it reads as if someone accused Daniel, who then replies.

<sup>17</sup> The biblical account does not mention that Habakuk lived at Tecoa, modern Khirbet Tiqwa’.

<sup>18</sup> Much longer in reality; from 559-530 BC.

<sup>19</sup> Haggai.

<sup>20</sup> “27. The wording is obscure and very difficult to interpret.” – Pirone. It looks like a title, like “Reis” i.e. “overseer”.

Israelites. From the captivity of Bābil to the [re]building of the Temple seventy years had passed. The construction lasted four years. Zurūbābil, son of Salātiyil, son of Akhiyah, known as Yahūnākhīm, king of Judah, whom Bakhtanassar had deported and put into prison, waited for the construction. Zurūbābil reigned over the Israelites at Ūrashalīm. One year after the temple was rebuilt, the priest, `Izrā, died. He had been a priest before the arrival of Yūsha, son of the priest Yahūsādūq,<sup>21</sup> and seeing the Jews commit many errors against the Torah, he wrote for them the Torah that they currently have. He reformed the dictates of their law and taught them their religion. Kūrish-Dāriyūsh, king of Bābil, died.

10. After him reigned his son Qamīsūs for nine years.<sup>22</sup> After him, Smardhiyūs the Magian reigned for a single year. He was called the Magian because a Persian named Zarādast appeared in his days, under whose influence the religion of the Magi became official, and he instituted the worship at the temples of fire. After him, Dārā I reigned for twenty years.<sup>23</sup> After him reigned Artakhshāst, nicknamed “Longimanus” for twenty-four years.

In his time there lived in Greece in the city of Quwā,<sup>24</sup> the physician Buqrāt, master of medical art.<sup>25</sup> Sa`īd ibn Batrīq the physician says: “It is true what Ĝālinūs says in his commentary to “Kitāb Iman Buqrāt wa ‘ahdihī”<sup>26</sup> where he asserts: ‘The king of Persia sent messengers to Hippocrates with a lot of money, asking him to go to him. But Hippocrates did not consent to his request and did not go to him because he did not consider it right to care for the Persian enemies of the Greeks.’ Hunayn ibn Ishāq reports, in his translation of this book from Greek into Arabic, that Galen has conveyed that Hippocrates did not go to Artakhshāst nicknamed “Longimanus” because it was said that at the time of this king the Persians had been affected by the disease called “Al-Mawāriq”.<sup>27</sup> In another text it is said that it was an epizootic disease.<sup>28</sup> [The king] then sent the satrap of the city of Quwāsah to give Hippocrates a hundred “qintār” of gold, and sent it to him with honors and signs of esteem, to heal the Persians from the illness that had struck them. But Hippocrates refused because he did not feel that it was right to help and care for the enemies of the Greeks.”

11. Artakhshāst Longimanus died and after him Artakhshāst the Great reigned for thirty years. After him reigned Makidūniyūs for three years. After him reigned Sa`adaniyūs for three years.<sup>29</sup> After him, Dārā II, nicknamed an-Nākit,<sup>30</sup> reigned for seventeen years. After him, Artakhshāst, one of the sons of his brother Kūrish II, reigned for twenty-two years. The wise men and philosophers of his time living in Greece were Hiraqlus, Mālūs, Fīthāghūras, Suqrātis, Sīlūn the legislator, Zīnūn, Abindaflis.<sup>31</sup> After him reigned his son Artakhshāst known as Akhūs<sup>32</sup> for twenty years. Akhus, king of the Persians, gathered the army and marched on Egypt. The king of Egypt went

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<sup>21</sup> The actions of Joshua son of Yozadak are referred to in the books of Esdras and Haggai.

<sup>22</sup> Cambyses II, son of Cyrus.

<sup>23</sup> Darius I.

<sup>24</sup> Cos?

<sup>25</sup> Hippocrates.

<sup>26</sup> I.e. “the Book of the Oath and Testament of Hippocrates.” Cf. Strohmaier, G., “Hunayn ibn Ishāq et le Serment Hippocratique”, in: *Arabica* 21 (1974), pp. 318-323.

<sup>27</sup> More commonly “mayrūq”, i.e. fungus or jaundice.

<sup>28</sup> I.e. an epidemic among animals, often communicable to men.

<sup>29</sup> Sogdianus.

<sup>30</sup> Darius II Notus.

<sup>31</sup> Heraclitus, Malus (?), Pythagoras, Socrates, Solon, Zeno, Empedocles.

<sup>32</sup> Artaxerxes III Ochus.



out, and occupied the land. The king of Egypt, who was then the Pharaoh Shānāq,<sup>33</sup> fearing to fall into the hands of Akhūs, King of the Persians, and be tortured, cut off his hair, shaved his beard and fled in disguise to the town of Maqidūniyah.<sup>34</sup> Akhūsh, king of the Persians, built the citadel known as Qasr ash-Shama in Fustāt, Egypt. He also built an imposing temple for the house of fire known today under the name of the church of Mār Tādurus.” The king of the town of Maqidūniyah was Philip, father of Alexander. Akhus, King of the Persians, died. After him reigned his son Arsīs, nicknamed “an-Nākit” for eleven years. The philosophers and wise men of his time living in the city of Athīnā and in Greece were Aflātūn, Kinsālūn, Dīmūkrātīs, Abullūniyūs and Suqrāt.<sup>35</sup>

12. Arsīs, king of the Persians, died. After him, his son Dāriyūs reigned for seven years until he was killed by Alexander, who had become king of the kings who were in Mossul, Bābil, Fāris and Āmid. The cause for which Alexander killed Dāriyūs, king of the Persians, was this. When his father Philip died, Alexander succeeded him on the throne of Makidūniyah at the age of sixteen. Dāriyūsh, king of Fāris, knowing that Alexander was reigning over the Rūm after his father, tried to subdue him and wrote a letter to him as follows: “It has come to my notice that you have taken to reign over the Rūm without my permission. If you had followed your father’s judicious conduct and acted according to our agreements, it would have been better for you and your prosperity would be long. But the inexperience of your youth has induced you to behave with foolishness, and fools also are those who are with you. Desist from the state in which you are, and send the tribute for yourself and your country, acknowledge your mistake and do it soon, without delay, otherwise I will move against you with the men of Fāris, and with them I will trample your country, I will kill your men, and I will deprive you of your prosperity. I send you something that, if you can count it, you will know how many are my men and my friends. Peace [to you]”. And he sent to him by a messenger, a *qafir* of sesame seeds.

13. The messenger of Dāriyūs presented himself to Alexander and handed him the letter and the sesame seeds. Alexander summoned his generals and read them the letter of Dāriyūs. Then he said to them, “If you are gathered together, and you unite, you will beat him, but if you are divided he will get the better of you.” One by one they expressed their opinion and Alexander answered them, saying, “I feel that we will conquer Dāriyūs. It is proof of this, that he compared his men to sesame, which is an insubstantial food, and one that is eaten without effort. I feel that his kingdom will be ours.” His men said to him, “This is the will of God.” Then Alexander wrote a letter to Dāriyūs in these terms: “From him who has become king by the will of God, from Alexander, the servant of God and King of the Greeks, to the excellent Dāriyūs. I understand the content of your letter, what you describe as a transgression to your order, and what you are threatening me, that if I do not abandon the state in which I am and delay to send what you order me to send you, you will move against me with your men of Fars. But your heart has spoken what your hand can not take, nor your thinking reach, because, in truth, I will come out against you with the lions of the Greeks, and then I will let you know how matters stand at our meeting. I send you something to be able to anticipate the strong flavour of my men. Peace [to you]”. And he sent him a small bag of mustard.

14. And when he came to the king, the messenger told him what Alexander had done. Then Alexander gathered together his compatriots and his men, and said to them, “There are three ways

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<sup>33</sup> This must be Nectanebo II.

<sup>34</sup> Macedonia.

<sup>35</sup> Plato, Xenophon, Democritus, Apollonius, and Socrates.

to accomplish things: with great forethought, with the ability to realize them, and with the implementation of both with a firm intention. Whoever of you is of this opinion will get what he wants and, whoever shares this will join with me, but whoever is not of the same opinion should stay away from me.” They replied, “God has united these three things in our king, while we have some who own one and some who own another, but no one is able to effectively implement what he has.” Alexander was fully satisfied with their words. Then he made all the arrangements and went out against Dāriyūs. They met at al-Gazirah<sup>36</sup> and the war was protracted on both sides for forty days. Dāriyūs had five trenches dug, and he placed in each of them a general (“isbahid”) at the head of twelve thousand men and every man went out to fight every five days. Dāriyūs then ordered his men to bring him two heads of Rūm every day. And in fact, two heads of the Rūm or one only were delivered to him daily. Alexander was saddened at that in his heart and his rage reached its peak. He then sent to Dāriyūs: “We are almost annihilating each other. I therefore propose a way that allows us and you to come out of this; that is, that you deploy your men with a gap, so that I can take the way through your troops on the side where you are, and so can go back to my country. We, indeed, have no intention of fleeing in the face of deployed troops, because such a thing would be a dishonour that could never be washed away, a spot that could never be purified and an unforgivable ignominy.” Dāriyūs replied, “We do not think it appropriate to give you what you ask for, or see the reason for it.” When he saw this, Alexander was thoughtful, with his head in his hands, looking for a way out. Then he said to his men: “O Rūm, this means we are feeble and with little strength to win. If there is any one among you, or among the Persians, who can suggest some stratagem in this matter in order to get us out of such anguish, he will have half the realm of the Persians and the Rūm and half of what is at the junction [of the whole territory]”. The words of Alexander were heard by Khisnisf and Adarshīst,<sup>37</sup> the sons of Adarbakht, the captains of the guard of Dāriyūs. In another text it is said “of the armies”. When it came to arms, they fell on Dāriyūs with their swords and struck him to the ground. The Persians were put to flight, and many were killed on the field. It happened then that Alexander came to Dāriyūs, and saw him in that state, and he dismounted from his horse, rested his head on his chest, washed his face, bended his wounds, kissed him and wept, said, “Praise God who has not given it to any of my men to kill you. What we now see was already written in the foreknowledge of God. Ask whatever you want. For my part I grant you the right to ask three things, but you will also allow me to ask for one.” Dāriyūs said to him: “I want you not to overthrow the nobles and dignitaries of Fāris, and to guarantee their safety. I want you to not destroy the temples of fire, and to care for their security. I want you to do justice on those who killed me, and return him the same, because he will certainly betray your favour if he is released as he has already betrayed mine.” Alexander assured him that he would do what he had asked, and said, “What I want from you is that you give me your daughter Rūshtaq, and that this is done through you and with your blessing.” Dāriyūs replied, “I grant her to you in marriage, provided that you entrust the kingdom, after you, to a son that you have from her.” Alexander consented and Dāriyūs gave his daughter to him in marriage. Then he died. Alexander then ordered him to be buried, wrapping him in the most precious linen that the king possessed and commanded the soldiers, Greeks and Persians, to march with the weapons [in salute] before his coffin. Alexander and his most prominent men followed the parade to the place of the burial. Then Alexander said, “If it had been my task to reduce Dāriyūs to the state in which you

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<sup>36</sup> I.e. in Mesopotamia.

<sup>37</sup> Arrian in the *Anabasis* III, 21, calls them “Satibarzan and Barsaente.”

saw him, I would have done it because he was in any case my enemy. Great is therefore the service of he who has spared me such an action and I feel I must reward him. Come before me, and I swear solemnly in the name of God, that I will exalt him and raise him up above all my men.” Then Khisnif and Adarshīst, sons of Adarbakht, went on to him, and said to him, “We are the leaders of the guard of Dāriyūs, who have spared you such an action. Therefore, give us what you promised us.” [Alexander] ordered them to be crucified on two great crosses, saying: “These two men deserved to get what I ordered for them, because of their broken promise and for having betrayed their king. If they have not been loyal to their king, they will not be to anyone else. I gave them what I had promised them and raised them above all my men.” He then ordered gifts to be made to the mother, wife and daughter of Dāriyūsh, to give them the appropriate clothes to their rank and surround them with all honour. He then ordered that gifts and clothing should be given to the Persian generals and notables as appropriate to their rank, benefits and expectations and confirmed them in their offices. For these things they loved him, and held him dear to them. Then Alexander invited those who wished to follow him in the invasion of India. They went with him, glad and ready to fight.

15. Alexander thus reigned over seven provinces. From the captivity of Babil to the reign of Alexander 263 years had passed; from the reign of David to that of Alexander, 740; from the exodus of the children of Israel from Egypt to the reign of Alexander, 1,346; from Abraham to the reign of Alexander, 1,853; from Fāliq to the reign of Alexander, 2,394; from the flood to the reign of Alexander, 2,925; from Adam to the reign of Alexander, 5,181. The teacher of Alexander was Aristātālis, the philosopher. Also in the city of Athinah was a wise man named Diyūḡānūs.<sup>38</sup>

16. Alexander won many victories, and among the Greeks, thirteen kings obeyed him. He founded thirteen cities, some in the west and others in the east. He waged so many wars and gained so many victories that no king was greater than him. He founded a city and called it by his name, Alexandria. He then moved the government from the city of Makidūniya to the city of Alexandria. He raised the lighthouse of Alexandria and made it a guide for all those who sailed by sea to lead them to the route that went to Alexandria. After the king had conquered and obtained the empire of the world, he went to Bābil where he was poisoned and died. This is because Alūmafīdā,<sup>39</sup> his mother, had written a letter in which she complained about his lieutenant, who commanded Makidūniyah, and as Alexander was angry at him, he had thought of killing him. But getting wind of this, he sent his son to Alexander with many gifts and presents and with deadly poison, advising him to conduct himself with every kind of gentle wisdom in order to poison Alexander.<sup>40</sup> The young man came to Alexander, bearing all the gifts he had with him. He came across, among others, the cupbearer of Alexander, with whom the latter had previously clashed and beaten up. So, nourishing a great grudge against Alexander, the cupbearer assisted the young man in his intentions. Then one of Alexander’s followers joined them, in their conspiracy. Now it happened that Alexander gave a banquet to his friends, where everyone ate and drank. Alexander was sitting with his followers and his close friends, cheerful and happy among the diners. When he asked for a drink, the cupbearer poured the poison into the king’s cup and handed it to

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<sup>38</sup> Aristotle and Diogenes.

<sup>39</sup> Olympias.

<sup>40</sup> Eutychius believes that Cassander (not named) poisoned Alexander. How interesting that the evil reputation of Cassander persisted after 13 centuries.

him. Drinking it, the king immediately knew that he would die, and he called a scribe and dictated a letter to his mother in these terms:

“From the servant of God, Alexander, conqueror and lord of the land of the earth yesterday and today his pledge,<sup>41</sup> to his affectionate and merciful mother Alūmafīdā whose nearness he is unable to enjoy. Sincere and great peace to you. The road that I am now travelling, O my mother, is the same as those have travelled who have fallen asleep before me, and that you and those who survive me will travel. In this world we are just like the day that chases away the day that came before it. Do not regret this world for the fact that it deceives its creatures. You have an example of what you know about King Philip who could not stay with you nor survive. Arm yourself, then, with sound endurance and remove your anguish and look for solitude. Order that none should come to you unless they have not seen misfortune, so that you may know better what it is and know better about your condition and you can better care for your own. What I go to is a better and more restful condition than the one in which I lived. Do good by me and accept this in resignation and endurance so that sorrow does not overcome you. This letter I send to you on the last day of this life and on the first of the other, with the hope that it will console you and be a source of blessing to you. Do not disappoint me and do not sadden my spirit. Peace to you”.

He then commanded his seal put to the letter and for it to be sent secretly to his mother. He then ordered his minister Filīmūn to keep his death secret and to go immediately to Alexandria. Then he died. It is said that when Alexander came to Qūmus, he became seriously ill and that his illness grew worse and worse every day. His mother had told him that a diviner had predicted, when he was born, that he would die in a place whose sky was golden and whose earth was iron. As ill as he was, Alexander came to Shahrazūr. His illness had become more acute during the journey. Then he stopped, and they put under him two boards with a coating of iron, and he sat down, while a man gave him shade with a shield inlaid with gold. On seeing this, Alexander remembered the words of his mother, called his minister, dictated a letter to his mother and died. When his mother received the letter, she ordered a banquet, inviting people to join. However, she placed custodians at the door, with the order that nobody should enter except those who had not been hit by some misfortune. The gatekeepers therefore questioned those who came and if they were struck by a disaster they would not let him in. By doing so they excluded everyone and there was no one who could take part in the banquet. On seeing this, [Alūmafīdā] accepted her fate in good faith, became strong and was convinced that this was the common fate of the mortals. The minister Filīmūn laid the body of Alexander in a golden coffin as an honour. In another text it is said: “He filled it with honey and kept the death secret.” He then led the soldiers to Alexandria, carrying behind the coffin of the [king], and as soon as the death of Alexander was made public in front of the people, he showed them the coffin and placed it in the centre of the court. Then the minister Filīmūn ordered the wise men to keep up a funeral elegy, which was a comfort for the friends of the followers, and an education for all the people.<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>41</sup> I really didn't understand this: “Dal servo di Dio, Alessandro, conquistatore e signore dei paesi della terra ieri ed oggi suo pegno”.

<sup>42</sup> There follows a series of extracts from Arabic Christian “Sayings” literature, themselves derived from Byzantine collections. These often were concerned with Alexander, and sought to show that pagan philosophy also predicted the coming of Christ.

17. Filīmūn the philosopher said, “This is a day of great instruction. For the evil that he did has come about, and he abandoned the good that preceded him.<sup>43</sup> He who wishes to weep over him whose kingdom has come to an end, let him weep.

Aflātūn [Plato] the philosopher said: “O you who gained by force everything, you accumulated what has deceived and abandoned you, and left you only the trouble of it, while the pleasure will pass to another.”

Aristatālīs [Aristotle] the philosopher said: “Alexander went away full of eloquence and returned to us silent.”

Nārin the philosopher said: “Say to Alexander’s flock, ‘This is a day when the flock leads the shepherd to pasture.’”

And Nīlūn said: “Can anyone console us for our king, who has suffered no disgrace, and truly leave us consoled?”

And another said, “This is the way that we must travel. Desire what lasts as much as that which is temporary.”

And another said, “Take this as an example. Yesterday gold was for Alexander a treasure. Today Alexander was buried in gold.”

And another said, “You join those who rejoiced over your death, like those whose death will please you will join you.”<sup>44</sup>

And the philosopher Lūtas said: “Do not marvel at him who did not teach us anything when he was alive, and now warns us by his death.”

And the philosopher Mitrūn said: “Yesterday, O man, we could listen but not speak. Can you hear what we are saying today?”

And the philosopher Sīsan said, “This man has killed many people in order not to die himself. Yet he died. How could he not have been able to get rid of death with death?”

And another said, “Alexander did not teach us with his words as much as he teaches us now with his silence.”

And philosopher Dimitar said, “O you whose anger was the cause of your death, why have you never been angry with death?”

And another said, “Your strongholds tremble with fear, O king, and you have reassured the strongholds of those who feared you.”

And another said, “How do people neglect you today, O king, and how interested they are in your coffin!”

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<sup>43</sup> Not sure that I correctly render this sentence: “ne è venuto fuori il male che gli stava alle spalle e l’ha abbandonato il bene che lo precedeva.”

<sup>44</sup> The Italian is: “Ti possa raggiungere chi si è rallegrato della tua morte come tu hai raggiunto coloro la cui morte ti rallegrò”. I can’t really understand this.

And another said, “How true is death to his own, yet they will not see, and they block their ears!”<sup>45</sup>

And the philosopher Filuqatūn said: “If this is the end of life, it is best for us to be indifferent from its inception.”

And another said: “O people, do not weep over someone who has ceased to weep, but each of you weep for yourselves.”

And another said, “Well, you who were accustomed to the vastness of the conquered countries, how can you now endure such a narrow place?”

And another said: “If someone only weeps at death when it happens, there is still death on every new day.”

And another said: “You who were exalted, you have now become humble, and if you were in an enviable position, you have now become worthy of pity.”

And another said, “Who is he now whose anger was terrible, and standing beside him was forbidden? Why are you not angry that death is allotted to you, or that you were unable to resist the humiliation [of death]?”<sup>46</sup>

And another said, “It is easy to see the example of the death of kings, and from kings the warning of the death of the will.”

And another said, “Alexander never had a lesson more effective than that of his death.”

And another said, “Your voice was terrible and high your kingdom. But now your voice is gone and your kingdom has fallen.”

And another said, “You could give favours and I could not speak. Today, however, I can speak and you can not give favours.”

And another said, “If nobody was safe from you yesterday, there is no one today who is your subject.”

And another said, “Yesterday the shepherd had cared for his flock, but today the flock cares for its shepherd.”

And another said, “You’ve joined those who had a claim against you and you’ll definitely have to pay it off. Maybe I could know what tolerance you show to acts of paying debt and of justice.”

And another said, “If you had had as much severity and serenity in the past as you show us today, you would have been a sage.”

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<sup>45</sup> “Come è verace la morte con i suoi, eppure essi tacciano di falsità i loro occhi e si otturano le orecchie!”

<sup>46</sup> “Perché non ti sei incollerito sì che la morte s’allontanasse da te o perché non hai opposto resistenza per cacciar via da te l’umiliazione /della morte/?”

18. When the philosophers had finished speaking, the wife of Alexander, Rushtak, daughter of Dāriyūsh, king of the Persians, who had been the most dear creature to Alexander, arose, and laid her hand on the coffin, and said: "I did not think, O king, that by conquering Dāriyūsh your own kingdom would be conquered." Then she said to the philosophers: "If you're afraid about what you've spoken about Alexander, you have the cup that he's been drinking with, and each one of you is free to think as he wishes. But if you have spoken to give comfort and as a sign of mourning, be prepared to answer, and to make good arguments, otherwise you will enjoy what he enjoyed and so your works will be in accordance with your words because, of course, you are not sheltered." Then Alexander's mother came forward, put her cheek on the coffin and said, "You have comforted us enough. What I feared for Alexander has happened to him and now there is no kingdom for him or against him. Be great in your loyalty to earthly life and also defend [your] truth. For my part, I have been pleased with your comfort. " And so she ordered that he be buried.

19. Alexander reigned for sixteen years. He lived in all for thirty-two years. Alexander had appointed a servant to each country. (In another text it is said: "a prefect".) He ordered them not to entertain relations by correspondence with anyone superior to them, but everyone was to write only to him, and no one, except him, was called a king. On the death of Alexander, however, each of them took possession of his own province. The kingdom of Aḡam was divided.<sup>47</sup> In the hands of the Iskāniyyūn there remained the kingdoms of Paris and of al-Ahwāz and these were called "rules."<sup>48</sup>

20. After Alexander there reigned in Alexandria and Egypt his brother named Philip, called Batlīmūs Arīdāwus, for seven years.<sup>49</sup> (In another text it is said: "for forty years".) After him ruled Ptolemy, called al-Iksandrus, and nicknamed "the conquerer of Ur" for twenty-seven years. (In another text it is said: "for twenty-one years.") In his twentieth year of reign he ordered seventy Jews taken from Ūrashalīm and brought them to Alexandria, ordering them to translate the Torah and the Books of Prophets from Hebrew to Greek, placing each of them in a dwelling, isolated from the others, to see what was the interpretation of each of them. When they finished translating the books, he saw their interpretations. The versions were identical, with no discrepancy. He then gathered the books together, sealed them with his own seal and placed them in the temple of an idol called Sirābiyūn.<sup>50</sup>

21. Among the Seventy was a man named Simeon the Just, who took Christ our Lord [into his arms] in the temple. This Simeon, in explaining the Torah and translating the Prophets from Hebrew into Greek, found in every letter that he was transcribing, a prophecy about Christ our Lord, and in his heart he tried not to admit it by saying, "This is not possible!" God therefore delayed his death, and he lived three hundred and fifty years until he saw Christ our Lord. When he saw Him he said: "Now send your servant out in peace, O Lord, according to your word, for our eyes have seen your salvation, which you have prepared for the benefit of all peoples."

22. Ptolemy, the conqueror of Ur, died. After him ruled Ptolemy [I], called Lagus, for twenty-nine years. Euty chius has got confused here. Ptolemy I, son of Lagus, was the first Ptolemy. He built a large hippodrome for horse racing in Alexandria, which was later burned down in the days of King Zeno. After him, his son Ptolemy [II] reigned, called Philadelphus, for twenty-six years. After him

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<sup>47</sup> I.e. the kingdom of the non-Arabs.

<sup>48</sup> Not sure about this: 'e furono chiamati "regoli"'. The kingdoms are Pars, old Persia, and Susiana.

<sup>49</sup> I.e. Philip III Aridhaeus.

<sup>50</sup> I.e. the Serapeum.

ruled Ptolemy [III], called Euergetes, for twenty-five years. After him ruled Ptolemy [IV], named Philopator, for seventeen years. After him ruled Ptolemy [V], Epiphanes, for twenty-four years. After him ruled Ptolemy [VI], known as Philometor, for twenty years. In his time Syria and the land of Judah were subjugated by Antiyukhus, king of Rūm, who expelled the Jews from Syria, and slaughtered them with all sorts of violence and punishment.<sup>51</sup> After him ruled his brother Ptolemy [VIII], also called Evergetes, for twenty-three years.<sup>52</sup> In his time, Antiochus, King of the Rūm, founded Antakiya, who gave his own name. And so the city of Antiochus was called Antioch. After him ruled Ptolemy [IX], Soter, for twenty years. In its time the city of Sulukiyah was built.<sup>53</sup> After him ruled Ptolemy, also called Soter, for fifteen years.<sup>54</sup> After him ruled Ptolemy [X], called al-Iskandrus, and nicknamed Yasfis Philopator, for ten years.<sup>55</sup> (In another text it says “for twelve years”.) After him ruled Ptolemy [XI], called Phusas, for eighteen days. (In another text it is said “for eight years”.) After him ruled Ptolemy [XII] Diyunisiyus for twenty-nine years. After him, his daughter Iklawbatrah reigned, [the name] meaning “she who weeps on the rock,” for twenty-two years.<sup>56</sup> She built many great buildings in Alexandria and many wonderful things, introduced mosaic work, and built an imposing temple called “the Temple of Saturn.” When the Christians came, they transformed the temple into a church and called it ‘kanīsat Mīkā’il’ (i.e. St. Michael’s Church), which is then what they call today ‘al-Qaysāriyyah’ and which was burnt down in the time when the Maghāribah entered into Alexandria with Mawlana al-Mansūr Abu’l Qasim, known under the name Abdallah and with Habāsah, when the caliph was al-Muqtadir Ja’far and Takin, his freeman, was prince of Egypt and Alexandria.<sup>57</sup> [Cleopatra] build in the city of Ikhmīm<sup>58</sup> a hydrometer in order to keep under control the waters of the Nile of Egypt. She then built another nilometer in the town of Ansinā.<sup>59</sup>

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<sup>51</sup> Antiochus IV Epiphanes. Cf. 1 Maccabees.

<sup>52</sup> Ptolemy VII, co-regent of Ptolemy VI, seems to be omitted.

<sup>53</sup> I.e. Seleucia, near Babylon; but actually founded much earlier, just like Antioch.

<sup>54</sup> Unknown to the Ptolemaic king-lists.

<sup>55</sup> Ptolemy X Alexander.

<sup>56</sup> The famous Cleopatra VII.

<sup>57</sup> This is the Caesarium, converted into a church and burned down in 912 AD.

<sup>58</sup> I.e. the Greek Chemnis or Panopolis.

<sup>59</sup> Antinoe or Antinopolis.



## Chapter 8

Chap. VIII Caesar and Augustus rule Rome – Death of Cleopatra – Herod terrorizes Jerusalem and the region – Augustus orders a census in the territories of the Empire – The Birth of Christ – The Magi looking for Jesus – Jesus is baptized by John – Death of John and death of Christ – Joseph of Arimathea places the body in a tomb – the Resurrection and Ascension of Our Lord Jesus Christ (p.147)

1. In the fourth year of the reign of Cleopatra, there reigned over the city of Rome a king named Ghābiyūs Qaysar for four years. After him then reigned, over Rome, a king called Yūliyūs Qaysar for three years (1). After him, there reigned in the city of Rome Awghustus Qaysar son of Mūnarkhus, in the eleventh year of the reign of Cleopatra.

Caesar Augustus extended his dominion over the world and made kings subject to him. When Cleopatra heard of Caesar Augustus she was dismayed, and felt a great fear. She therefore strengthened her kingdom by erecting a wall from Nubia to al-Farama (2), on the east bank of the Nile, and a wall from Nubia to Alexandria on the west bank of the Nile. Today [that] wall is called “Hayt al-‘Ağūz” (3). Cleopatra then lived at Alexandria in Egypt and had a lieutenant named Anthony. Caesar Augustus heard about her and decided to subject her to his dominion. Then Augustus learned that the Jews of Ūrashalīm had refused obedience to him, and that the kingdom of Judah had not been ruled by the family of David since the time of their deportation at the hands of Bakhtanassar. The Jews, in fact, do not recognize anyone as their king, even today, unless he is one of the descendants of David. At that time there was a priest descended from David, named Aristūbal, who ruled the Jews instead of a king. Augustus sent his general named Bitiyūs (4), who laid siege to Bayt al-Maqdis [Jerusalem] and conquered it. He bound Aristobulus, priest of the Jews, together with a group of his men, and he sent them to Rome after imposing a personal tribute on the Jews. Then he went away from them. Among the Jews there arose serious disorder, and they elected as priest, instead of Aristobulus, his brother called Irqān (5). Irqān had become friends with a man of Ascalon, named Antibatrus (6). A native of Cyprus (7), he was a servant of the temple of idols and the father of Hirūdus.

The priest Hyrcanus appointed Herod, son of Antipater, to hunt down thieves, he being a very rude man. But some residents of the Ghawr (8) made a raid on Bayt al-Maqdis, captured the priest Hyrcanus and killed Antipater, father of Herod. The city was thus without an administrator and headless. Herod ingratiated himself with the Rums [Romans] who resided in Bayt al-Maqdis, and gave them great wealth, thus becoming governor and leader of Bayt al-Maqdis. Then Herod learned that Caesar Augustus, king of Rum, was on his way to Egypt in search of Cleopatra. He met him in ar-Ramlah (9) bringing many gifts and he made with him a covenant of friendship. When he arrived in Egypt, Augustus had Anthony, Cleopatra’s lieutenant, killed, and he went to Alexandria in search of Cleopatra to seize her, and expose her to ignominy and show her at Rum. When Cleopatra heard that Caesar Augustus had killed her lieutenant Anthony, and had occupied Egypt, fearing to be exposed to mockery, and preferring to die, killed herself to avoid dishonour once she had fallen into his hands. But she called two of her handmaidens, one named Abra, who combed her hair and made her beautiful, and the other named Mitriya, who cut her nails and dressed her, and commanded them to go into the garden and bring her the snake was called bāsīlidah (10). That done, she tried it at first on the two maids who, bitten, died instantly. Seeing that the viper caused

death swiftly, [Cleopatra] took the crown, and she put on her head, every ornament of gold and silver, gems, corundum and chrysolido she had, then put on her royal robes, took the snake and pulled it to her left breast, because she knew that the heart is on the left side. The snake bit her and [Cleopatra] died instantly. When Caesar Augustus saw her, he was astonished by what she had done, and the fact that she had preferred death to a life of slavery and humiliation. They say that when King Caesar Augustus went in to her, he found her with her left hand grasping the crown, as to not have it fall from the head, and found her seated on a throne. Others have said that, she wanting to die, injured her arm with a knife, to bring out the blood, and then took some snake venom that she had with her and putting it on the wound, she died instantly. This took place in the twelfth year of the reign of Caesar Augustus. Thus ended the reign of Cleopatra.

**2.** From the reign of Alexander to the end of the reign of Cleopatra there were 289 years. While Caesar Augustus was returning to Rome from Egypt, Herod met him a second time, in ar-Ramlah (11), bringing many gifts. Caesar Augustus gave him power over the whole territory of Judah, and its provinces, and over Galilee, placing on his head the royal crown. Learning that Herod was in the Bayt al-Maqdis as king, the Jews refused to recognise him as their king. So Herod came upon them and made great slaughter; he threw down the wall of the city and the temple, and took the books that Ezra had rewritten, with their lineages, and had them burned, so that no-one would know any longer from which tribe he originated or who his ancestors were (12). Then he took all the furnishings and utensils of the priests, and sold them, and the vestments of the priests and placed his seal on them. Then he started to sell the office of priest, so that, if anyone wanted to become a priest, he demanded a lot of money from them before the charge could be conferred upon them. He administered the kingdom with cruelty and despotism.

**3.** In the 40th year of his reign, Caesar Augustus issued an edict which ordered that the name of every man in his kingdom throughout the world should be registered, together with his wife. This was an ancient custom, and he also took a census of the population of his kingdom. So he sent his general, named Quirinius, to undertake the census of the population of Syria and Judaea (13). In the 41st year of his reign there was announced, to the Lady Mary the virgin, pure and immaculate, [the nativity] of Christ, our Lord. In the 42nd year of the reign of Caesar Augustus and the 33rd year of the reign of Herod, son of Antipater, in the land of Syria [in another text "of Israel"], was born Christ, our Lord, on the 25th December, or the 29th Kihak.

**4.** From the end of the reign of Cleopatra, to the birth of Christ, our Lord, had passed 30 years; from the reign of Alexander to the birth of Christ, our Lord, 319 years; from the deportation by Bakhtanassar of the Jews to Bābil, to the birth of Christ, our Lord, 582 years; from the reign of David to the birth of Christ, our Lord, 1059 years; from the Exodus of the Israelites out of Egypt to the birth of Christ, our Lord, 1665 years; from Abraham to the birth of Christ, our Lord, 2172 years; from Fāliq to the birth of Christ, our Lord, 2713 years; from the flood to the birth of Christ, our Lord, 3244 years; from Adam to the birth of Christ, our Lord, 5500 years.

**5.** In the 44th year of the reign of Caesar Augustus and the 35th of the reign of Herod, son of Antipater, there came from the east into the land of Judah three magi, astrologers, who asked where the great king had been born. Herod felt afraid, and the whole land of Judah was troubled. Herod summoned the Magi, and asked them about what they had said. They answered, "We saw a great star in the east, and we have learned that a great king was born. We therefore

come to worship him. The star has gone before us and walked with us always, but just as we arrived here we lost sight of it.” Herod then questioned the Jews, asking, “Where will the messiah be born?” They told him, “In Bethlehem, of Judah.” (14) Then Herod summoned the Magi secretly and sent word to them asking in what place and time the star had appeared to them. They answered, “It appeared in the east, two years ago.” (15) Then he said to them, “Go and look for this newborn king. When you have found him, worship him, and then come back to me to let me know, so that I may go to worship him.” (16) The Magi left Herod, and the star appeared and went before them until they came to Bethlehem, the place where Christ our Lord was, with the Lady Mart-Maryam, his mother. They worshiped him, and offered him gifts of gold, myrrh and incense. They were then told in a dream to return to their country by another path, and not to return to Herod.

6. From the time when the star appeared to the Magi, to the time when they knelt before Christ, our Lord, and then returned to their country, was two years. It was told in a dream to Joseph, Mary’s husband, to take the child and his mother and escape into Egypt. Joseph did as he was told. Herod saw that the Magi were slow to return to him, and decided that they were mocking him. So he fell into a rage and ordered that all the boys in Bethlehem aged two years and under should be killed. So they slew all the children without sparing even one. But God poured out his anger and struck Herod with a grave illness. The pain did not leave him until he died, having reigned thirty-seven years. He left four children. The first was called Arshilāwus, the second Hīrūdus, the third Fīlippus and the fourth Usāniyūs (17).<sup>60</sup> They divided the kingdom between them, and each took a quarter of Judaea. Bethlehem and Bayt al-Maqdis belonged to Archelaus.

When Joseph heard that Herod was dead, he left Egypt, together with Christ, our Lord, and his mother. Christ, our Lord, was four years old. Joseph was afraid to dwell in Bethlehem because of Archelaus, and went to live in Nazareth (18). So Christ was called a Nazarene. In the eighth year of Archelaus, Christ, our Lord, was twelve years old, and sat in the temple among the doctors [of the law] and learned and taught.

7. Joseph, who raised the messiah, died (19). Archelaus also died, after a reign of nine years, leaving no-one to inherit the kingdom. Caesar Augustus also died, having reigned fifty-six years and six months. After him reigned over Rome his son Tiberius Caesar. Christ, our Lord, was then fifteen. The king Tiberius had a friend named Pilate, a native of an island in the sea near Rome. This island was called Buntah, so he was called Bīlātus al-Buntī (20).<sup>61</sup> [Tiberius] entrusted him with the government of Judaea in place of Archelaus. In the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar appeared John the son of Zechariah, called the Baptist, who baptised the Jews in the Jordan for the forgiveness of their sins. Christ, our Lord, presented himself to John and John baptised him in the Jordan. Christ, our Lord, was then thirty. Herod, son of Herod, son of Antipater, had put aside his wife, named Aritā (21),<sup>62</sup> daughter of the king of the Arabs (in another text it says “the Ghawr”), and took the wife of his brother Philip instead, even during his lifetime, by force. The woman’s name was Herodias. But John said, “It is not lawful to take your brother’s wife while he is still alive.” (22) So he commanded him to be thrown in jail. Then it happened that Herod gave a banquet for his friends, where they ate and drank. The daughter of Herodias danced in the middle of the room. He liked it a lot and said, “Ask of me whatever you like.” (23) And she asked him to give her

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<sup>60</sup> 17. Archelaus, Herod Antipas, Philip are the first three; is Lysanias perhaps the fourth?

<sup>61</sup> 20. Pilate belonged to the *gens* of the Pontii. Ponza is an island in the Tyrrhennian sea.

<sup>62</sup> 21. Aretas was the father’s name, in fact; in this case it means the Nabatean king Aretas IV.

on a platter the head of John the Baptist. So he ordered John to be beheaded and handed her his head. As for his wife Aritā, she went to her father. He was angry, gathered his men, and went out against Herod who fought back, killing many men and making many others prisoner and burning their villages. This happened in the eighteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar.

**8.** In the twenty-ninth year of the reign of Herod, son of Herod, son of Antipater, Christ, our Lord, was crucified. This was on Friday, March 23, i.e. 27 Baramhāt. Christ, our Lord, was celebrating the passover with his disciples on the Friday night, the day of Easter. One of his disciples, named Judas Iscariot, went to the Jews and said, "What will you give me if I deliver him to you?" (24) They gave him thirty dirhams. He then went with them in the night to the place where [Christ] was with his disciples. They took him, and carried him to the priests Annas and Caiaphas, their leaders, who disputed with him. The next day they handed him over to the governor, Pontius Pilate. But Pilate found no charge against him, and said to them, "You say that this man is the king of the Jews." They answered, "We have no king but Caesar." He replied, "What shall I do with him?" They told him, "Crucify him, because he has profaned our religion, has dissolved our law, and proclaimed himself son of God." (25) Pilate was saddened and washed his hands with water, declaring himself innocent of his blood. But the Jews invoked his blood on them and their children. Then [Pilate] ordered him to be crucified, and crucified with him were two robbers, one on his right and one on his left, at the sixth hour of Friday. There was a great darkness, or night, all over the earth. The sun was darkened and the stars appeared and the rocks were opened and many of the dead rose from their graves. Christ, our Lord, died on the cross; they opened his side with a spear and blood and water gushed out.

**9.** After his death, a man named Joseph went to Pilate and asked for his body. He was taken down from the cross, wrapped in a shroud, and buried in a new tomb that Joseph had had dug for himself, and he blocked the door with a stone boulder. The next day the Jews stood before Pilate and said, "We have good reason to fear that his disciples may come at night and take him away and tell people that he is risen. Would you order that the stone at the entrance to the sepulchre be sealed." But Pilate replied, "Go and do whatever you like." (26) So they got some guards and placed them to guard the tomb, then they sealed the stone and left. At midnight on Sunday some women came, bringing spices and incense to fumigate the tomb. They found before them an angel descended from heaven, who had rolled the stone away from the entrance of the tomb, and was sitting on it. [The angel] said to them, "Fear not; he is risen. Tell his disciples to go to Galilee, for there they will meet him." (27) The women came to the disciples and told them what they had heard from the angel. The guards who were responsible for monitoring the tomb fell into a deep sleep, like that of the dead, when they saw the angel and what he had done. Then they arose and told the Jews what had happened. [The Jews] tried to bribe them, saying, "Tell anyone who asks, 'His disciples took him away.'" (28) As for the disciples, they went to Galilee, and there they met Christ, our Lord. He blessed them, and sent them into all the world, to preach to the nations faith in the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

**10.** Forty days later, he ascended into heaven. He was thirty-three. Ten days later, while the disciples were gathered in the upper room of Zion (29), the Holy Spirit came upon them and they spoke in every language. The disciples used to go every day to the tomb and the place of crucifixion. When the Jews say what the disciples did, they said, "This place will not stay hidden [long] and they will certainly erect a building. Cover it with earth, so that nobody can see it and not

a trace remains. If the people can actually see the empty tomb, they will believe and embrace the faith [of the disciples], making vain our religion.” (30) So they covered the place with earth and turned it into a garbage dump.

## Chapter 9

Chap. IX Reign of Tiberius and Herod Agrippa – Arcadius first Patriarch of Antioch – Death of Agrippa – The apostle Mark in Alexandria: founding of the Patriarchate of Alexandria – Nero, the persecutor of Christians – Luke writes the Gospel and the Acts – The Crucifixion of Peter head down – Vespasian, Titus and the destruction of Jerusalem – in Rome Titus, Domitian, Nerva, Trajan, and Hadrian succeed one another – Hadrian destroys Jerusalem and builds a new city called Aelia – Successions of popes, patriarchs and emperors – question of the calculation of Easter, when it should be celebrated (p.157)

1. Pilate wrote to king Tiberius speaking of Christ, our Lord, and of his disciples and of the many miracles that they did, of how the sick were healed and the dead raised. He wanted to believe in Christ, our Lord, and to profess the religion of the Christians, but his advisors dissuaded him from doing such a thing. He was then enraged against Herod, because he killed John on account of Herodias, his brother's wife, whom he had taken by force and committed adultery with her, and for allowing the messiah to be crucified for his convenience. Tiberius sent word to Herod to appear in Rome, and exiled him to Spain, entrusting the government of his province to Pilate. The city of Tiberias, which was simply called Tībāriyādah (1), after the name of king Tiberias, was founded in the time of this king.

2. Tiberius Caesar died after a reign of twenty-two years and one month. After him reigned Gaius Caesar for four years and three months (2). He was a unmanly man, arrogant and extremely perverted. He recalled Pilate to Rome and had him killed. The Jews rose up so to be more wicked than they had been at first. The Romans attacked them, but [the Jews] made great slaughter of them. Having received news of this, king Gaius Caesar took one of his men, named Yirūdus, son of Aristobulus, also called Aghriyān (3), and entrusted to him the government of Jerusalem. He also entrusted him with the government of the four provinces which the sons of Herod, son of Antipater had divided among themselves. This Aghriyān was of evil conduct, extremely malicious and a relentless persecutor of the disciples. It was he who had Stephen killed, the first martyr and archdeacon, who was stoned to death. James the brother of John, son of Zebedee was also killed with the sword. He then put Peter in prison with the intent to kill him, but God came to his rescue, saved him from his hands, and took him far away from him to Antioch.

Arcadius was made patriarch of Antioch, and he held the seat for twenty-seven years (4). He was the first to be made patriarch of the city of Antioch. In the second year of the reign of Gaius Caesar, Peter went to Rome. Aghriyān was stricken with a serious disease, his flesh consumed him and his body was dehydrated until he died. When the king heard that Gaius Aghriyān had died, he appointed in his place another man, also named Aghriyān (5), and sent him to Jerusalem. In the second year of his reign there was made bishop of Jerusalem James, son of Joseph, called "brother of our Lord," who was the first of the bishops who then followed in Jerusalem. He held the seat for twenty-eight years. The disciples suffered great tribulations at the hands of the Jews and the Romans, and many of them were killed.

3. Gaius Caesar died, and after him reigned in Rome Claudius Caesar for fourteen years. In his time there was a severe famine throughout the land and many people died from the great famine and pestilence. In the times of Claudius Caesar, Matthew wrote his gospel in Hebrew in

Jerusalem, which the evangelist John then expounded in Greek. The Jews had meanwhile become much more wicked than they had been at first, to the point that they were killing each other in the markets and in the streets because of the evil and corruption which had come over them. Aghriyān fled far far away from them and fled to Rome, leaving as governor in Jerusalem a man named Qistus (6). Upon arriving in Rome, Aghriyān informed Claudius Caesar of the evil that the Jews were doing. Claudius Caesar then sent a large army to Jerusalem. Many Jews, men, women and children, were killed and [many] were deported to Antioch or Rome.

4. In the ninth year of the reign of Claudius Caesar, the evangelist Mark was in the city of Alexandria, preaching to the people the faith in Christ, our Lord. But as Mark was walking through the city of Alexandria he ripped, suddenly, a strip of leather from his sandal. So he stopped at a shoemaker, named Ananias, so that he could repair the sandal. Ananias took an awl to perforate the sandal, and in so doing wounded his finger, which began to issue a lot of blood with a throbbing pain. He asked Mark to heal him, but Mark said: "If you believe in Jesus Christ, the son of God, your finger will heal." Mark then took the finger of Ananias and said: "In the name of Jesus Christ, may your finger be healed!" The finger healed instantly and the blood ceased to flow. At the same time, Ananias believed in Christ, and Mark baptized him and made him patriarch of Alexandria. He was the first to be made patriarch of Alexandria (7). The evangelist Mark appointed, together with the patriarch Ananias, twelve other priests who joined with him [in his ministry] and on the death of the patriarch could nominate, in his place, one of the twelve, the other eleven placing their hands on his head and blessed him and consecrating him patriarch. Their task was then to choose a man of proven virtue and ordain him priest with them, to replace the one that had been made patriarch, because they were always twelve in number. The twelve priests of Alexandria continued to elect the patriarch, by following this rule, from among the twelve priests, until the time of Alexander, Patriarch of Alexandria, who was one of the Three Hundred and Eighteen. In fact he forbade the priests to elect the patriarch, and also ordered that on the death of the patriarch the bishops should gather and elect the Patriarch. He ordered that on the death of the patriarch, there should be elected a man of proven virtue, no matter from what country, or one of the twelve priests, or another that had been found worthy, and that he should be consecrated as patriarch. In this way the old rule of electing the patriarch from the priests was interrupted, and the election went to the bishops.

5. As for those who wonder why the patriarch of Alexandria is called "Bābā", we answer: "Bābā" means "grandfather". But from the time when Ananias was made patriarch of Alexandria by the Evangelist Mark to the time of Demetrius, patriarch of Alexandria, who was the eleventh patriarch [of that place], there was never, in the province of Egypt, a bishop and the patriarchs who preceded him had never consecrated bishops. But when he became patriarch, Demetrius consecrated three bishops and it was he, in truth, who was the first patriarch of Alexandria to consecrate bishops. At his death there was made patriarch of Alexandria Heraclas, who consecrated twenty bishops. One of these bishops, named Eumenius, transgressed the law, and the news came to the patriarch Heraclas who immediately convened a group of bishops, went to the city [where was] Eumenius, and made some inquiries about him; and he pondered the case thoroughly and worked out the truth. It was then that, hearing the people call the bishops "Ab" [or "father"], the patriarch thought: "If we call the bishop "Ab" and the bishops themselves call the patriarch "Ab", then we call the patriarch "Bābā", or "grandfather", for he is the father of fathers." The Patriarch of Alexandria was so called, from the time of Heraclas, "Bābā", or "grandfather". Ananias, patriarch of Alexandria, whom the evangelist Mark had made the patriarch of that time, remained in office for twenty-two years and

died. The evangelist Mark went to Barqah (8), exhorting the people to embrace the faith in Christ, Son of God.

6. Claudius Caesar died, and there reigned after him, in Rome, his son Nero Caesar for thirteen years. He was the first to procure serious evils and misfortunes for the Christians. He was an extremely bad man and of wicked habits. At the time of Nero Caesar, Peter, chief of the Apostles, wrote in the city of Rome the Gospel of Mark, at the hands of the latter, in Latin, and attributed it to Mark.

It was also at the time of this king that Luke wrote his gospel in Greek for a Roman nobleman named Theophilus and it was also he who wrote the "Praxis", i.e. "The Acts of the Apostles" (9). The evangelist Luke was the companion of the Apostle Paul, and remained with him for a long time. We know this because the apostle Paul says in his letter: "The doctor Luke greets you" (10). Nero Caesar took Peter, crucified him with his head down, and had him put to death, because Peter had asked him: "If you want to crucify me, crucify me with my head down, because my death is not the same as that of Christ, my Lord, who was crucified in the upright position" (11). Then [Nero] beheaded Paul. Peter was put to death twenty-two years after Christ, our Lord, was put to death. After Peter, Linus was made patriarch of Rome (12). He held the office for twelve years and died. He was the first to be made patriarch of Rome. The evangelist Mark preached to the people the faith in Christ, Son of God, in Alexandria and Barqah for seven years. In the first year of the reign of the aforementioned Nero Caesar, Mark was put to death in Alexandria, and his body was set on fire (13). In the twelfth year of the reign of Nero Caesar Ignatius was made Patriarch of Antioch. He held the seat for thirty-two and was put to death.

7. Qistus, governor of Jerusalem, died and the city was without any authority or sovereign to govern it. The Jews then arose and rioted and killed James, son of Joseph, known as the "brother of the Lord", stoning him to death (14). Then they harassed a group of disciples and expelled them from the city. The Christians abandoned Jerusalem, crossed the Jordan and settled in those places (15). Informed of this fact, Nero Caesar sent word to the commander stationed in the East, named Vespasian, to rally his troops and go to Judea with orders to kill all the inhabitants, sparing none, and to destroy the houses. Having heard these things, the Jews gathered together and those who among them were wealthy offered their goods to build three citadels around the city. They equipped them with towers, fortified them, and castellated them. Vespasian arrived in Judea after spreading destruction in every town of Galilee and burning it. But against Jerusalem he could not do anything, because it was well fortified and strengthened. He spent a year besieging it. The Jews made nocturnal sorties, in secret, and spread death among the Roman soldiers.

8. At the time of Nero Caesar, there lived a sage named Andrūmākhus who prepared for king Nero a very effective theriac, called by the Arabs "Diryâq" (16). King Nero was killed in Rome. When he learned that the king had been killed, Vespasian lifted the siege of Jerusalem, returned to Caesarea and halted there. After him [=Nero], there reigned Ghalyās (17) for seven months, and he was killed. After him reigned Unūn (18) for three months and he was deposed. After him reigned Nibtāliyūs (19) for eight months, and he was killed. The empire of the Romans was violently shaken and the peoples revolted. After violent strife and great trouble, all the generals, commanders and officials of the territories of Rome and the East were unanimous in designating as king Vespasian, who had besieged Jerusalem. He left Caesarea and went to Rome. He had already reached the outskirts of Rome, when the generals who were in the city rose up against a general named Artitin,



who wanted to take possession of the kingdom, and killed him. Then they came out from the city to meet Vespasian and put on his head the crown of the kingdom. After he entered into the city and sat on the throne of the kingdom, Vespasian put to death every person who was dangerous and lawless in Rome, so that the Roman territory was once more stable and peaceful. He had two sons: one was called Titus (20) and the other Domitian. He sent Domitian with a large army against the barbarians and the nations: he killed them, subdued them and wiped them out. And he sent Titus, after giving him a large army, to Jerusalem. He besieged it for two years, and all those who were in the city died from hunger, even coming to eat the flesh of corpses and the flesh of their children because of the great famine.

Eventually Titus conquered the city and killed all the men and women that were there. His soldiers gutted pregnant women and killed little children by banging them against the rocks. [Titus] destroyed the city and dedicated the Temple to the fire. He then counted those who had been killed by his efforts, and counted three million. The survivors fled either to Syria, Egypt or Ghor (21).

9. From the birth of Christ, our Lord, to when Titus destroyed Jerusalem, there passed 70 years; from Alexander to when Titus destroyed Jerusalem, 389 years; from the Babylonian captivity to when Titus destroyed Jerusalem, 652 years; from the kingdom of David to when Titus destroyed Jerusalem, 1129 years; from the exodus of the children of Israel out of Egypt to when Titus destroyed Jerusalem, 1735 years; from Abraham to when Titus destroyed Jerusalem, 2242 years; by Fāliq when Titus destroyed Jerusalem, 2,783 years; from the flood to when Titus destroyed Jerusalem, 3314 years; from Adam to when Titus destroyed Jerusalem, 5570 years.

10. When the Christians, who fled away from the Jews and had crossed the Jordan and settled in those places, learned that Titus had destroyed the city and killed the Jews, they returned to Jerusalem, which was in ruins, and lived there and built a church and put at its head a second bishop named Simon, son of Cleophas. This Cleophas was the brother of Joseph who had brought up Christ our Lord. This happened in the fourth year of the reign of Vespasian. Vespasian had ruled for twenty-six years old when he killed the king Trajan (22). In the third year of his reign there was made patriarch of Rome Daklītiyūs (23). He held the office for two years and died. In the fifth year of his reign was made [patriarch] Clement of Rome (24). He was a Kātib (25). He held the office for nine years and died. In the ninth year of his reign there was made patriarch of Alexandria Filftiyūs. He held the office for thirteen years and died. Vespasian reigned with power and authority for nine years and seven months and died.

11. After him his son Titus reigned for three years and two and a half months and died (26). After him reigned his brother Domitian for fifteen years (27). He was so ruthless towards the Jews that not even one could be seen in his day. He had proposed to kill all the kings and their children, so that there would be on earth no king but him. He therefore killed the sons of the sons of kings and killed many kings. He was then told that the Christians were saying that Christ was their king, and that his kingdom would last forever, and it was also learned that they formed a large army and were otherwise numerous. Great was his indignation and he ordered the Christians to be put to death, if any of them were found in his realm.

12. The Evangelist John was then at Nīshas (28). Hearing this, he felt great fear, and fled to Ephesus. The king sent his men to Jerusalem, arrested the children of Judah, son of Joseph, one of the disciples, and they bound them and took them to Rome. Having asked them about Christ and his

kingdom, they then said to him: "His kingdom is a heavenly [kingdom], not of this world. At the end of time he will come with great honour and glory, to judge the living and the dead, and give each one his own reward according to the deeds of each person."(29). Hearing them speak in this way, he felt great fear, let them go on their way and ordered that the Christians should no longer be persecuted. In the second year of his reign Evaristus was made patriarch of Rome (30). He held the office for eight years and died. In the tenth year of his reign Alexander was made patriarch of Rome (31). He held the office for ten years and died. In the fifteenth year of his reign Kurdiyūs was made patriarch of Alexandria (32). He held the office for ten years and died. In the fifteenth year of his reign Primus was made patriarch of Alexandria. He held the office for twelve years and died.

13. The king Domitian Caesar died. After him there reigned in Rome Nerva Caesar, called Barastiyūs Caesar (33), for a year and five months and died. After him there reigned in Rome Trajan Caesar, called Hadrian Caesar, for nineteen years (34). This king procured for the Christians serious misfortunes, long affliction and great tribulations. He put to death many martyrs, and at Rome he had Ignatius, Patriarch of Antioch, executed. And he had killed Simon, son of Cleophas, Bishop of Jerusalem, on the cross, at the age of one hundred and twenty years (35). He ordered that the Christians should be enslaved because in his opinion they had neither religion nor law (36). Despite the seriousness of what the Christians were suffering, and the many killings suffered by them, the Romans showed their piety, and the ministers of the king, together with his generals, pleaded their case before him, asserting that they had a steadfast religion and a good law, and therefore that he should no longer continue to oppress them. [The king] then gave the order not to persecute them, and desisted from harming them.

14. At the time of King Trajan Caesar, John wrote his Gospel in Greek in an island called Patmos, in Asia, a territory under the jurisdiction of the Romans. Also in his time lived a remarkable Roman philosopher named Commodus (37). In the sixth year of his reign Judah was made bishop of Jerusalem. He held the seat for seven years and died. In the fourteenth year of his reign Zacchaeus was made bishop of Jerusalem. He held the office for nine years and died. In the sixth year of his reign Brūn was made patriarch of Antioch (38). He held the office for twenty years and died. In the fourth year of his reign Sixtus was made patriarch of Rome (39). He held the office for ten years and died. In the fourteenth year of his reign Telesphorus was made patriarch of Rome (40). He held the office for eleven years and died. In the eleventh year of his reign Justus was made patriarch of Alexandria. He held the office for ten years and died.

15. At that time the Jews returned to Jerusalem. They then became so numerous that they filled the city, they decided to give themselves a king. Hearing about this, Trajan Caesar sent one of his generals to Jerusalem at the head of a large army (41). Countless Jews were killed in that way. Now it happened that at Babylon a rebel rose up against this king Trajan. The king Trajan marched against him, and between the two there was a violent combat. Many men fell on both sides in that war, and the king Trajan was killed (42).

16. After him reigned Aelius Hadrian Caesar for twenty years (43). He waged war on the rebel of Babylon and defeated him. He then passed into Egypt; he subjected the population to severe hardships, forcing people to worship idols and for this reason he put to death many Christians, including Eustathius, his wife and their two children: he dropped them in a copper kettle, poured water on them, lit a fire under the boiler and made them die groaning in agony (44). The king Aelius

Hadrian Caesar was hit by a horrible disease that spread throughout the body, and he began to go from one country to another in search of some medicine able to heal his body and cure his disease. Finally it was suggested that he go to Jerusalem. But having arrived there, and found that the city was all a mass of ruins and that there was nothing but the church of Christians, he ordered that a city be built around the temple, and furnished with a strong tower. Having heard this, the Jews flocked from every country and city. In a short time the city was full, and they were many, and gave themselves a king named Barġūziyā (45). The king Aelius Hadrian, being made aware of the fact, sent one of his generals at the head of many men who besieged the city. All those who were there died of hunger and thirst. Then he conquered it, killed many Jews and destroyed the city, leaving it empty (46).

This was the final destruction of Jerusalem. Some of the Jews fled to Egypt, others in Syria, others to the mountains and others to Ghor. The king ordered that no Jew should live in the city. He ordered to kill the Jews and annihilate the race. He then ordered that the city should be inhabited by Greeks and called Aelia (47), from the name of the king. After that, in fact, Jerusalem was called the city of Aelius. The Greeks lived there and built a tower at the door of the temple called "The Splendour". On it they put a large tablet on which was written the name of King Aelius. The tower, today, is the one that is close to the gate of the city of Jerusalem called "Mihrāb Dāwud" (48).

17. From the previous destruction by Titus, to this one, fifty-three years had passed. Soon Jerusalem was populated by Greeks. But seeing that Christians used to go to pray to the place of garbage, under which the Holy Sepulchre was found, and the place called The Skull, the Greeks prevented this and built on that place of garbage a temple dedicated to Venus; this was so that no Christian could go any more close to the unclean place (49). In the sixth year of the reign of Hadrian, Hyginus was made patriarch of Rome (50). He held the office for four years and died. In the tenth year of his reign Marcus was made patriarch of Rome (51). He held the office for fifteen years and died. In the ninth year of his reign Cornelius was made patriarch of Antioch. He held the office for sixteen years and died. In the second year of his reign Eumenes was made patriarch of Alexandria. He held the office for twelve years and died. In the fourteenth year of his reign Marcian was made patriarch of Alexandria. He held the office for ten years and died. In the fourth year of his reign Tobias was made bishop of Jerusalem. He held the office for three years and died. In the seventh year of his reign Benjamin was made bishop of Jerusalem. He held the office for three years and died. In the tenth year of his reign John was made bishop of Jerusalem. He held the seat for two years and died. In the thirteenth year of his reign Matateus [or Mattias] was made bishop of Jerusalem. He held the office for two years and died. In the fifteenth year of his reign Philip was made bishop of Jerusalem. He held the office for two years and died. In the seventeenth year of his reign Seneca was made bishop of Jerusalem. He held the office for only one year and died. In the eighteenth year of his reign Justus was made bishop of Jerusalem. He held the office for five years and died.

18. The king Aelius died, and after him reigned in Rome Antoninus Caesar for twenty-two years (53). In the fifth year of his reign Anicetus was made patriarch of Rome (54). He held the office for eleven years and died. In the sixteenth year of his reign Soterus was made patriarch of Rome (55). He held the office for eight years and died. In the fourth year of his reign Celadio was made patriarch of Alexandria (56). He held the office for eleven years and died. In the fifteenth year of his reign Agrippinus was made patriarch of Alexandria (57). He held the office for twelve years and died. In the third year of his reign Arus was made patriarch of Antioch. He held the office for

thirteen years and died. In the sixteenth year of his reign Theophilus was made Patriarch of Antioch. He held the office for twenty-one years and died. In the first year of his reign Levi was made bishop of Jerusalem. He held the office for five years and died. In the sixth year of his reign Ephrem was made bishop of Jerusalem. He held the seat for two years and died. In the eighth year of his reign Arsenius was made bishop of Jerusalem (58). He held the office for three years and died. In the eleventh year of his reign Judah was made bishop of Jerusalem. He held the office for two years and died.

From James, first bishop of Jerusalem, to this Judah, Bishop of Jerusalem, the bishops who had succeeded to the See of Jerusalem were of the circumcision (59). In the thirteenth year of the reign of Antoninus Marcus was made bishop of Jerusalem. He held the office for eight years and died. In the twenty-first year of his reign Cassianus was made bishop of Jerusalem. He held the office for five years and died.

19. Antoninus Caesar died. After him reigned Marcus, called Aurelius Caesar and also called Antoninus swrs (60). He reigned for nineteen years and died. He procured for the Christians great misfortunes and long affliction. Many Christians found martyrdom in his day. There was, in his day, severe famine, drought and pestilence. For two years no rain fell and the king and the people of his kingdom were about to die by famine and pestilence. Therefore he asked the Christians to invoke their Lord so there would be rain. The Christians then lifted up imploring voices to their Lord: God made a lot of water rain on them, and the pestilence and drought disappeared (61).

20. At the time of this king the sage Meghitiyūs lived in Greece (62). In the second year of his reign Eleuterius was made patriarch of Rome (63). He held the seat for fifteen years and died. In the seventeenth year of his reign Victor was made patriarch of Rome (64). He held the office for ten years and died. In the fifth year of his reign Julian was made patriarch of Alexandria (65). He held the office for ten years and died. In the fifteenth year of his reign Demetrius was made patriarch of Alexandria (66). He held the office for forty years and died. He was the first patriarch to ordain bishops in the province of Egypt. In the fifteenth year of his reign Maximus was made patriarch of Antioch. He held the seat for nine years and died. In the fourth year of his reign Eusebius was made bishop of Jerusalem (67). He held the seat for two years and died. In the sixth year of his reign Būliyūs was made patriarch (sic!) of Jerusalem (68). He held the office for five years and died. In the eleventh year of his reign Maximus was made bishop of Jerusalem. He held the office for four years and died. In the fifteenth year of his reign Julian was made bishop of Jerusalem. He held the seat for two years and died. In the seventeenth year of his reign Gaius was made bishop of Jerusalem (69). He held the office for three years and died.

21. At that time Demetrius, patriarch of Alexandria, wrote to Gaius, bishop of Jerusalem, Maximus, Patriarch of Antioch and Victor, Patriarch of Rome, on the calculation of Easter for the Christians, and on their times of fasting, as well as how to calculate the time starting from the passover of the Jews. He drew up in this regard many writings and letters which established that the Christian Easter is celebrated according to the practice still in use today. This is because the Christians were accustomed, after the ascension into heaven of Christ, our Lord, to celebrate the feast of his Baptism (70) starting from that day to fast for forty days, after which they broke the fast precisely as Christ our Lord had done. For Christ, our Lord, having received baptism in the Jordan, retired to the desert and stayed there, fasting, for the period of forty days. The Christians were accustomed thus

to celebrate their Easter in the same period in which fell that of the Jews [the passover]. Those patriarchs settled thus the calculation of Easter, so that the Christians fasted for forty days and broke the fast on Easter Day (71).

22. The king Marcus [Aurelius] Caesar died. After him there reigned at Rome Commodus Caesar (72), son of Antoninus, for twelve years. In his time there lived in Greece, in the city of Pergamum, the physician Galen, initiator of the medical art. Among other things Galen records, in the index of his own books, that he was the tutor of king Commodus. And likewise Galen tells us, in the first treatise of [his] book known under the title of Kitāb Akhlāq an-Nafs (73), that there was in the days of King Commodus a man named Perennis (74) whom the king Commodus sent to call to him, intending to kill him. But [Perennis] fled. [This Perennis] had two servants, and the king had them flogged to make them show him where their master could be found. But from nobility of mind, and wanting at all costs to save the life of their master, they preferred to remain silent. From Alexander to Perennis five hundred and sixteen years had passed, since this incident is located in the ninth year of the reign of Commodus Caesar. So says Galen. In his day, the sage Dīmuqrātīs flourished. In the eighth year of his reign Fūrītūs was made patriarch of Rome (75). He held the seat for eighteen years and died. In the fifth year of his reign Serapion was made patriarch of Antioch. He held the office for ten years and died. In the first year of his reign Symmachus was made bishop of Jerusalem. He held the office for two years and died. In the third year of his reign Gaius was made bishop of Jerusalem (76). He held the office for three years and died. In the sixth year of his reign Julian was made bishop of Jerusalem. He held the office for four years and died. In the eleventh year of his reign Elias was made bishop of Jerusalem (77). He held the seat for two years and died.

## Chapter 10

Chap. X Under the rule of Ardashir the Persians reappear – In Rome Pertinax, Julian, Severus follow one another: new persecutions against Christians – Sequence of kings of Persia: rule of Sapor – Maximinus Caesar persecutes the Christians – The persecution of Decius – Legend of the Seven Sleepers – Sequence of Persian kings and Roman emperors (p.173)

1. In the tenth year of his reign the Persians appeared, who conquered Babil, Amid (1) and Persis. Their king was Azdashir, son of Tabak, son of Shashan (2), a native of Istakhr (3), who was the first king to reign once again over Persia. He sent letters to all the kings of Persia near him, and to the rulers of distant lands, asking them to recognize him as their king and give him their support, warning those, who dared oppose him, with threats of death and punishment. When the edicts and letters came to these kings, great was their fear. Some hastened to promise obedience and to assure him of their support; others waited until he went personally to them: then he made them pay obedience and submit themselves, some by love and some by force; others, however, refused to do what he had commanded them, and they were killed and destroyed. To those who had immediately given him obedience, he rewarded them with magnanimity and elevated their position, denying, however, to everyone the title of king, because only he, and no other, could reign. He moved continuously from one kingdom to another, from one king to another and from one country to another, until he came into the city of Zahl (4), which is in front of Maskin (5), also known as al-Hisn, within which was the King of as-Sawad (6). Azdashir besieged it long, without being able to take it. Then out of the citadel, to watch the soldiers of Azdashir, came the daughter of the king – I mean the King of as-Sawad. Seeing Azdashir, she was taken with the attractiveness of this man, and she fell in love. Therefore she took an arrow and wrote on it: "If you promise to marry me, I will show you a place from where you will be able to conquer this city." Then she shot the arrow in the direction of Azdashir. He found that he liked what she had written. He wrote this reply on the arrow: "I promise that I will do what you asked me," and shot it in the direction of women. When she had read it, she wrote: "This city has a small gate, built of unbaked bricks, in this place," and described him the place. Azdashir immediately sent some of his men to that place, while he kept the others engaged on another front, and he was able in this way to go through that place without the knowledge of the inhabitants of the city. So he killed the king and had the better of all those who were in the city. Afterwards Azdashir married the daughter of the king, as he had promised. But one night, while he slept in his bed, [the woman] arose, and went out all night. Looking around, on the next day, Azdashir saw, under the outer garment of the woman, on the bed, an olive leaf that had left its mark on her skin. Azdashir asked her then with what her father nourished her, and she replied: "Mostly on the cream of milk, honey and marrow." Azdashir said: "I do not know if anyone can give you as much love and honour as your father gave you. Yet you repaid him, contrary to what you should have rather done, with death. You are not worthy of being in the world. And I will avenge him. If love blinded you, and took away your mind enough to make you forget your duty to your father, I am afraid that you will do the same thing to me also". So saying, he ordered them to tie her hair to the tail of a big horse and let him run. This was done as [the king] ordered, and she was torn apart (7).

2. Commodus Caesar, king of the Romans, died. After him reigned Bartinfqūs (8), king of the Romans, for three months and was killed. After him reigned over the Romans Julianus Caesar (9) for

two months and was killed. After him reigned over the Romans, in Rome, Severus Caesar (10) for seventeen years. This happened in the fourth year of the reign of Azdashir, son of Tabak. This king Severus was wicked and procured for the Christians great misfortunes and much affliction. In his day, many Christians found martyrdom everywhere. Then he went to Egypt and had killed all the Christians who were in Egypt and Alexandria, destroying the churches. At Alexandria he built a temple and called it the "Temple of the Gods". In the fourteenth year of his reign Callixtus was made patriarch of Rome (11). He held the office for six years and died. In the third year of his reign Asclepiades was made patriarch of Antioch. He held the office for nine years and died. In the twelfth year of his reign Philetus was made patriarch of Antioch. He held the office for thirteen years and died. In the first year of his reign Capito was made bishop of Jerusalem. He held the office for four years and died. In the sixth year of his reign Maximus was made bishop of Jerusalem. He held the office for four years and died. In the tenth year of his reign Antoninus was made bishop of Jerusalem. He held the office for five years and died.

3. As for Azdashir, son of Tabak, king of the Persians, he attempted to administer his people as justly as possible. He founded six cities, namely the city of Gawr (12) and the city of Azdashirākhurrah (13), both in Persia; [the city of] Bahman-Azdashir (14), i.e. Furat al-Basrah, [the city of] Astādābād (15), i.e. Baysan Karkh in the district between the Tigris, the town of Souq al-Ahwaz (16) and one of the three cities that are in as-Sawad. He rebuilt three cities, one of which is al-Khatt (17) to the west of the transfluvial region, the second is Bahārsamir near Karman, and the other is the city of al-Aylah (18).

4. Having reigned for fourteen years and six months Azdashir died. There reigned after him his son Sabur, son of Azdashir (19), for thirty years and one month. This was in the twelfth year of the reign of Severus Caesar, King of the Romans. Severus Caesar died and reigned in Rome, after him, Antoninus Caesar Caracalla, the Bald (20), for six years. In the third year of his reign Uryānūs was made patriarch of Rome (21). He held the office for four years and died. In the first year of his reign Valens was made bishop of Jerusalem. He held the office for three years and died. In the fifth year of his reign Dulichianus was made bishop of Jerusalem (22). He held the office for four years and died.

5. As for Sabur, son of Azdashir, king of the Persians, as far as he could he ruled the people with justice. He dedicated himself to visit the provinces and to support the urban system of the countries. After eleven years of his reign, he marched with his soldiers to the city of Nisibis (23), in which were garrisoned many soldiers of Antoninus Caracalla, King of the Romans, and he besieged it for some time without being able to conquer it. Once aware of being unable to get the better of it, he ordered a large, spacious well-fortified siege-tower to be built next to the city. After it was completed, he climbed up with the generals of his army, and looked down from the height into the inside of the city. They shot arrows, so that no one dared to go into the open. Eventually the besieged decided to surrender the city. Meanwhile, it was reported that an enemy out of Khurasan had attacked the people of his kingdom. For this reason, he sent messengers to the nobles of Nisibis, proposing to them either to give entry to the soldiers there that had kept them engaged in combat until his return, or to enter into a covenant with him, by which they agreed not to remove the siege-engine unless he did not return. They preferred to enter into a covenant with him, and an agreement whereby they undertook to leave the bastion where it was, and the king left. However

the people of Nisibis poured out of the walls of the city, opened a gap in the wall near the place where the seige-engine was, took it inside the city, and surrounded it with a well fortified wall.

6. Antoninus Caesar, King of the Romans, died. After him reigned over the Romans Marcianus Caesar (24), for a year and two months. He was killed, and after him reigned another Antoninus Caesar (25) for three years and nine months. This happened in the fourteenth year of the reign of Sabur, king of the Persians. [Antoninus Caesar] sent a huge army to Nisibis to defend and protect the city. In the first year of the reign of Antoninus Caesar Bitiyanus was made patriarch of Rome (26). He held the office for five years and died. In the second year of his reign Zebennus was made patriarch of Antioch. He held the office for nine years and died.

7. Quanto a Sābūr, figlio di Azdashir, re dei Persiani, tornato che fu a Nissibin e visto quel che gli abitanti avevano fatto del propugnacolo, li tacciò di tradimento e disse:

7. As for Sabur, son of Azdashir, king of the Persians, he returned to Nisibis and saw what the people had done to the seige-engine, he spoke of betrayal and said: "You have been rebels, and have broken the covenant." So he besieged the city. But since already a long time had passed, without having found a way to get the better of the city, he was worried and said to his men, "Come, let us see if there is any of our soldiers who are not worrying at all about how long this is taking!" They made a tour of the field and found two men intent on drinking wine and singing. [The king] said to them: "Seemingly you have no right to be with us, since you behave in this way and you stand on the sidelines." They answered: "O king, however worried you are about how to conquer this city, we have a good chance of success, if you do what we tell you." "How so?" asked the king. They replied: "Advance with your soldiers in close order, and raise invocations to your Lord, to make you conquer the city." Sabur ordered that it should be done as they had said. But since that was no good, he said to them: "We have implemented your advice, but we have not seen any results. What have you to say to us now?" They answered: "We fear that what we suggested doing has just been taken lightly. But if you think it's possible to get them to be sincere in what they do, and to invoke their Lord all together, as if it was the invocation of one man, then you'll get what you want." Sabur then summoned his men and urged them to do what they were going to do with sincere intention and firm conviction. It is said that they had not yet raised the second invocation when the wall fell down from top to bottom, leaving open a passage through which the men were able to enter the city. Great was the dismay of the inhabitants and they exclaimed: "This is what we deserve for our treachery!" Sabur entered the city and killed as many warriors as he could. Then he captured the rest of the inhabitants, and took away with him many riches. He left just as it was the gap that had opened in the walls, because people saw it and it was a lesson to them. Next he stormed several cities of Syria, slaughtering the inhabitants and taking away great plunder. He overran the territories of the Romans and made great slaughter, occupying Qalawniyah (27) and Cappadocia.

8. Antoninus Caesar, King of the Romans, died. After him reigned over the Romans, in Rome, Alexander Caesar (28) for thirteen years. This was in the seventeenth year of the reign of Sabur, son of Azdashir, king of the Persians. In his day the Christians lived peacefully and were left in peace. His mother's name was Marna (29) and he was very fond of the Christians. In the first year of his reign Heraclas was made patriarch of Alexandria. He held the office for thirteen years and died. It was in his time that the Patriarch of Alexandria was called "Baba", or "grandfather". In the third year of his reign Antis was made patriarch of Rome (30). He held the office for twelve years



and died. In the eighth year of his reign Babilas was made Patriarch of Antioch. He held the office for eight years and died. In the second year of his reign Narcissus he was made bishop of Jerusalem. He held the office for twelve years, and fled.

9. Alexander Caesar, King of the Romans, died. After him Maximinus Caesar (31) reigned over the Romans, in Rome, for three years. This happened in the thirtieth year of the reign of Sahur, son of Azdashīr, king of the Persians. This king Maximinus procured serious misfortunes and long affliction for the Christians. Many Christians were killed and people began to worship idols that they thought were gods. Many bishops were killed, and Babila, Patriarch of Antioch, was killed as well. When Narcissus, bishop of Jerusalem, heard that Babila, Patriarch of Antioch, had been killed, he fled and abandoned the see. In the second year of his reign Diyūs was made bishop of Jerusalem (32), instead of Narcissus. He held the office for three years and died. In the third year of his reign Fabianus was made patriarch of Rome (33). He held the office for thirteen years and was killed. In the second year of his reign Dionysius was made patriarch of Alexandria. He was a Katib. He held the office for seventeen years and died. In the second year of his reign Sabur, son of Azdashīr, king of the Persians, died. After him reigned Hurmuz, son of Sabur (34), i.e. Hurmuz al-Hurri, for one year and ten months and died.

10. In the third year of the reign of Maximinus Caesar Bahram, son of Hurmuz (35), reigned over the Persians. He reigned for three years and three months. In the third year of the reign of Bahram, king of the Persians, Maximinus Caesar, King of the Romans, died. After him reigned Pupienus Caesar (36), called Julianus Caesar, for three months and was killed. After him Gordian Caesar (37) reigned over the Romans, in Rome, for four years. In the first year of his reign Flavian was made patriarch of Antioch (38). He held the office for eleven years and died. In the second year of his reign Germanus was made bishop of Jerusalem. He held the office for four years and died. In the third year of his reign Bahram, son of Hurmuz, king of the Persians, died.

11. After him Bahram, son of Bahram (39), reigned over the Persians for seventeen years. In his day appeared a Persian named Mani (40), who spread the Manichaeen religion by going around claiming to be a prophet. Bahram, son of Bahram, arrested him and cut him in two. He then captured two hundred of his disciples and followers, and he put them in the ground up to neck until they died, saying: "I set up a vegetable garden, and instead of planting trees I planted men" (41). His followers and supporters of his doctrine were called Manichaeans, after Mani's name.

12. In the third year of the reign of Bahram, son of Bahram, Gordian Caesar, King of the Romans, died. After him Philip Caesar (42) reigned over the Romans, in Rome, for seven years. He embraced the faith in Christ, our Lord. In the first year of his reign Gordian was made bishop of Jerusalem. He held the office for five years and died. In the fourth year of his reign Narcissus (43), the Bishop of Jerusalem that had escaped, came back, and together with Gordian administered the bishopric for a year. Then Gordian, Bishop of Jerusalem, died and Narcissus, bishop of Jerusalem, held the seat for [another] ten years until he died, at the age of one hundred and sixteen years. As for the King Philip Caesar, his general named Decius revolted and killed him and took possession of the kingdom.

13. Decius Caesar (44) reigned over the Romans in Rome for two years. This was in the tenth year of the reign of Bahram, son of Bahram, king of the Persians. The Christians suffered many hardships and grave evils at the hands of Decius who killed an incalculable number. Many people were martyred in his day, including Fabianus (45), patriarch of Rome. Then Decius left the city of Carthage

(46) and traveled to Ephesus where he built, at the center of the city, a large temple in which he placed the idols, ordering the population to worship them and offer sacrifices. Those who refused would be killed. For this reason he put to death many Christians, crucifying them on the walls of Ephesus. Decius then took seven young men from among the families of some magnates of Ephesus and entrusted to them the care of his clothing. The names of these young men were: Maximian, Amlicus, Dianus, Martinus, Dionysius, Antoninus and John. And since these seven young men were not accustomed to bow down before idols, the spies of the king made him aware of this. The king went into a rage and ordered them thrown into jail. Then having to go away for an expedition, he set them free with the intention to defer to his return the decision on their fate. When the king left the city, the young men took all they had and gave it away for charity. Then they went up onto a high mountain, called Khāws (47), to the east of Ephesus. There was on that mountain a large cave, and they hid themselves. Each day, one of them in turn left that place and went into town to hear what people said of them, to buy food and to inform the others when he returned. The king Decius returned and asked for news of the young men. They told him that they were on the mountain, in the cave. He ordered that the entry should be blocked so that they should die. But God caused a deep sleep to descend on the seven youths and they fell asleep so that they almost seemed dead. A general of the King picked up a sheet of lead and wrote on it their history and what there was between them and the king Decius. Then he put the plate of lead in a copper box, and he left it inside the cave when the entry was blocked.

14. The king Decius died. After him two kings reigned in Rome, over the Romans: Ghalliyūs Caesar and Yūliyānūs Caesar (48) for two years. This was in the twelfth year of the reign of Bahram, son of Bahram, king of the Persians. In the first year of their reign Cornelius was made patriarch of Rome (49). He held the see for two years and died. In that same year Demetrianus was made patriarch of Antioch. He held the office for eight years and died.

15. The king Yūliyānūs died and eighteen days afterwards the king Ghalliyūs, his partner, was killed. After them reigned over the Romans Ghalititūs Caesar, called Alāriyānūs Caesar (50), for fifteen years. This happened in the fourteenth year of the reign of Bahram, son of Bahram, king of the Persians. In the first year of his reign Maximus was made patriarch of Alexandria. He held the office for eighteen years and died. In the same year Lucius was made patriarch of Rome (51). He held the office for eight months and died. After him Ustātiyūs was made patriarch of Rome (52). He held the office for six years and died. In the eighth year of his reign Sixtus was made patriarch of Rome (53). He held the seat for nine years and died. In that same year Domnus was made patriarch of Antioch. He held the office for three years and died. In the twelfth year of his reign Timothy was made patriarch of Antioch. He held the office for three years and died. In the fifth year of his reign Alexander was made bishop of Jerusalem (54). He had held the seat for seven years when this king had him killed in the city of Caesarea in the eleventh year of his reign. In the fourteenth year of his reign Marzābān was made bishop of Jerusalem. He held the seat for twenty-one years and died. In the seventh year of the reign of Ghalinītūs Caesar the martyr Cyprian was killed in a village named Arshaginnah (55). 'Alitinūs Caesar was very cruel towards Christians and procured them many evils. His son (56) went out to war against the Persians, but they took him prisoner and brought him to Bahram, son of Bahram, king of the Persians, who had him beheaded. When Ghallitinūs Caesar learned that Bahram, son of Bahram, king of the Persians, had beheaded his son, he felt great pain and desisted from doing harm to the Christians. In the fifth year of his reign died Bahram, son of Bahram, king of the Persians (57). After him reigned Bahram, who is also the son of

Bahram, called Shashan Shah (58), for four months and died. After him reigned his brother Narsi (59), son of Bahram, son of Sabur, son of Azdashir, son of Babak, son of Shashan. He reigned over the Persians for nine years and died. In the fourteenth year of his reign, i.e. the reign of Ghallitinūs Caesar, Hurmuz, son of Narsi (60), reigned over the Persians for seven years and five months and died.

16. Ghallitinūs Caesar, King of the Romans, died. After him Claudius Caesar (61) reigned in Rome, for one year only. This happened in the third year of the reign of Hurmuz, king of the Persians. In the first year of the reign of Claudius Caesar, Paul was made patriarch of Antioch. He held the office for eight years and died. He was called Paul of Samosata because he was from the city of Samosata and it was he who gave rise to the sect of the Paulicians. The followers of his religion and the supporters of his doctrine were in fact called Paulicians from his name, i.e. Paul. Paul of Samosata maintained that Christ, our Lord, was a man and was created by the Deity, just as each of us is, as to the substance, which is the principle of the Son of Mary, and that he was to be chosen to become the saviour of the human substance, was visited by divine grace that entered him by means of Love and Will, and was therefore called the Son of God. He went further by saying that God is one substance and one person, and he did not believe in the Word or in the Holy Spirit. After his death thirteen bishops gathered in the city of Antioch, examined the case and the doctrine, and after excommunicating him and the advocates of the doctrine, they returned each to his own home.

17. Claudius Caesar, King of the Romans, died. After him Aurelian Caesar (62) reigned over the Romans, in Rome, for five years. This happened in the fourth year of the reign of Hurmuz, son of Narsi, king of the Persians. In the first year of the reign of Aurelian Caesar Dionysius was made Patriarch of Rome (63). He held the office for eight years and died. In the fourth year of his reign Neron was made patriarch of Alexandria. He held the seat for nineteen years and died. The Christians of Alexandria had been accustomed to pray in quarries and houses, secretly, for fear that the Romans might kill them, and the patriarch of Alexandria until then never appeared in public. But as soon as Neron became patriarch, he began to be seen in public and always treated the Romans with so much grace that he obtained the right to construct a church in Alexandria in honor of the Lady Martmaryam. In the fifth year of his reign [i.e. Aurelian Caesar], Hurmuz, son of Narsi, king of the Persians, died, without leaving a son to take his place. But one of his wives was pregnant, and when the people asked: "Can you tell us if you bear a male or a female child?" "I feel," she said, "that the baby moves to the right, even though it does not weigh much. So this is a sign that it will be a male child." Great was their joy, and they put the crown on the lap of the woman. In fact, she gave birth to a male child, whose name was Sabur (64), and he is the one who was later nicknamed "Dhu'l-Aktāf" [i.e. "detaching from behind"] because every time he conquered a king, he dislocated his shoulder blades. So the joy of the Persians was great, because of her.

18. Aurelian Caesar, King of the Romans, died. After him reigned Tacitus and Qūrinūs (65) for nine months and they were killed. After them Marūnus Caesar (66) reigned over the Romans for six years. This happened in the third year of the reign of Sabur, son of Hurmuz, king of the Persians. In the third year of the reign of Marūnus, Felix was made patriarch of Rome (67). He held the office for five years and died. In the second year of his reign, Cyrillus was made patriarch of Antioch. He held the seat for fifteen years and died.

19. Marūnus Caesar, King of the Romans, died. After him Farus (68) Caesar reigned, along with his two sons Fan (69) and Nūmāziyānūs (70), for two years. This happened in the ninth year of the reign of Sabur, son of Hurmuz. He was cruel against the Christians, and it was he who put to death the two brother-martyrs Cosmas and Damian.

The king Farus died and his two sons were killed. After him Diocletian Caesar (71) reigned over the Romans, in Rome.

20. From the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus in the reign of Diocletian had passed two hundred and six years; from the birth of Christ, our Lord, to the king Diocletian had passed two hundred seventy-six years; from the reign of Alexander to the reign of Diocletian there passed five hundred ninety-five years; from the captivity of Babylon to the reign of Diocletian had passed eight hundred fifty-eight years; from David to the reign of Diocletian had passed thirteen hundred thirty-five years; from the exodus of the children of Israel from Egypt to the reign of Diocletian had passed nineteen hundred forty-one years; from Abraham to the reign of Diocletian had passed two thousand four hundred forty-eight years; from Faliq to Diocletian had passed two thousand nine hundred eighty-nine years; from the flood to Diocletian had passed three thousand five hundred twenty years; from Adam to Diocletian had passed five thousand seven hundred seventy-six years.

## Chapter 11

Chap. XI Reign and persecution of Diocletian – Arian heresy arises – Phenomenon of the Tetrarchy – persecution suffered by Christians at the hands of Maximian and Galen – Constantine becomes emperor and took over the command of his father Constantius – Galerius contracts a nasty disease – Sapor secretly visits the Roman lands – Constantine’s vision of the Cross – the Martyrs of Sebastia – Schism caused in the church by Arius and Meletius – the Council of 318 – Helena in the Holy Land: the discovery of the Cross – Constantine gives instructions to rebuild the churches of Jerusalem – Synod of Tyre and consecration of the church of Jerusalem – Constantine persecutes the Jews (p.187)

1. Diocletian began to reign in the eleventh year of the reign of Sabur, son of Hurmuz, king of the Persians. Together with Diocletian reigned Maximian called Ilkūriyūs (1). They reigned over the Romans for twenty years. They inflicted on the Christians great misfortunes and long affliction, painful suffering and great tribulations, too great, in truth, to be described. They caused the Christians all kinds of evil by killing them and confiscating their property. Only God knows how many Christians they put to death! In their days there were thousands and thousands of martyrs (2). They tortured St George in various ways and put him to death in Palestine. Saint George (3) was a native of Cappadocia. They also put to death St. Menna, Sts. Victor, Fikiniyūs, Abimacus and Mercurius. In the tenth year of their reign Peter was made Patriarch of Alexandria. He held the office for ten years. In the twentieth year of their reign this Peter was beheaded in Alexandria. In the first year of their reign Eutygianus was made patriarch of Rome (4). He held the office for eight years and died. In the ninth year of their reign Gaius was made patriarch of Rome (5). He held the office for twelve years and died. In the tenth year of their reign Awriyus [=Tyrannus] was made patriarch of Antioch. He held the office for eleven years and died. In the fifth year of their reign Māmūnis was made bishop of Jerusalem (6). He held the office for thirteen years and died. In the eighteenth year of their reign Zabdas was made bishop of Jerusalem. He held the office for ten years and died.

2. Peter, patriarch of Alexandria, had two disciples: one was called Ashillà (7) and the other Alexander. There also lived in Alexandria, a heretic named Arius who said: “Only the Father is God, and the Son is a created being and made. The Father has always been, but the Son was not”. Then the patriarch Peter said to his two disciples: “Christ, [our] the Lord has cursed this Arius. Beware, therefore, from accepting him or his doctrine. In truth I have seen in a dream, while I was sleeping, Christ with his clothes torn and asked him: “Who has torn your clothes, my Lord?” And he answered me: ‘Arius’. Beware then of bringing him into the church with you.” Five years after the murder of Peter, Patriarch of Alexandria, his disciple Asilla was made patriarch of Alexandria. He held the office for six years and died. Arius pleaded the cause of his friends before the patriarch Asilla, giving proof that he had repented of his perverse doctrine and his wickedness. Asilla had then welcomed him and admitted in his church as a consecrating priest. Diocletian, meanwhile, was trying the Christians and putting them to death.

He was busy hunting them down when he came to a place called Dalmatia (8). Here the vengeance of God fell upon him, and his body began to decompose and he was suffering from a horrible disease and such great wounds that of his flesh was filled with worms which fell to the ground. Finally even his tongue and palate broke away and he died. As for Maximian, called Herculeus, he also

contracted a disease that burned his body to a crisp, and he died in Tarsus (9). After them reigned Maxentius (10), son of Maximian. Joining with him another Maximian called Galerius (11) reigned, for nine years. This happened in the thirty-second year of the reign of Sabur, son of Hurmuz, Persian. The two divided the kingdom between them: Maximian, called Galerius, reigned over the east, over Syria and the territory of Rum, while Maxentius ruled over the city of Rome and its territories. Both acted towards the Christians like beasts and inflicted on them indescribable misfortunes and extermination like no other king before them had ever done. Reigning with them over Byzantium and its territories was Constantius (12), father of Constantine. He was a peaceful man, pious, a hater of idols and a lover of the Christians. Constantius went into Mesopotamia and ar-Ruha (13). Stopping in a village of the district of ar-Ruha, named Kafr-Fakhkhār, he happened to come across a handsome woman named Helena, who had received baptism at the hands of Barsiqā, bishop of ar-Ruha, and had learned to read the sacred books. Constantius asked her father for her hand, and he gave her to him as his wife. The woman became pregnant by him, and Constantius returned to Byzantium. Helena gave birth to a son, fine-featured, gentle, intelligent, reluctant to do evil, and a lover of wisdom, named Constantine, who was educated in ar-Ruha and learned the wisdom of the Greeks (14).

3. Maximian, called Galerius, was a coarse, violent man, full of hatred against the Christians and their implacable enemy; a womanizer to the point that he wouldn't allow any Christian girl to flee without arresting, raping and killing her. And even as he and his men deflowered the Christian virgins, they took possession of their property and killed them. The Christians suffered at their hands enormous tribulations. It happened that one day someone spoke to Maximian of Constantine and described him as a quiet young man, who kept away from evil and was well educated. His astrologers even told him that he would become king of a great kingdom. He therefore thought to kill him, but Constantine heard of it and fled from the city of ar-Ruha, taking refuge in Byzantium, where he came to his father, Constantius, who gave him the kingdom. A little later Constantius, Constantine's father, died and God caused the king Maximian serious disease to the point that his decomposing flesh fell into pieces and rolled on the ground so that no-one could stand to be nearby: even his enemies had compassion on him because of the misfortune that had struck him. He came to himself and said: "Maybe this is my punishment because I killed the Christians." Letters were sent to all his provinces, ordering the release of the Christians, to honour them, not hurt them, and asked them to raise prayers of intercession for the king. The Christians prayed for the king and interceded for him. God gave him healing and then he became more vigorous and healthier than he had been at first. But being healed and recovered, he resolved to be more evil than usual and sent letters in all his provinces giving the order to put to death the Christians, to exterminate them to the last in his kingdom, not to allow them to live in any city and in any village and annihilate them wherever they were. Countless Christians, men women and children, were killed. And many were the dead that were loaded onto wagons and thrown in the sea or in the desert.

4. In the city of Cappadocia there were killed Sergius and Bacchus (15), both citizens of that city, and Saint Barbara. In the second year of the reign of Maximian Brtāliyūs was made patriarch of Antioch. He held the office for six years and died. In the third year of his reign Marcellus was made patriarch of Rome (16). He held the seat for two years and died.

5. As for Sabur, son of Hurmuz, king of the Persians, he grew up and become a young man, and, throughout his kingdom, order prevailed everywhere. Hearing one day someone speak of

Maximian, King of the Romans, and what he did to the Christians, he said to his men: "I want to go alone into the territory of the Romans so that I can see personally what is the condition of their kings, their armies and the streets of their countries. When I have done this, I will return to my kingdom, filled with all the things that I have learned from them, and which I can use to attack them." But his men tried to dissuade him from the perils and the dangers which he might encounter. He, however, did not accept their advice and, journeyed until he reached the heart of the territory of the Romans. He continued for some time to wander from place to place when suddenly there came to him the news that a son of Maximian had offered a banquet, and that his father had given orders that the rabble and the poor should gather with him and sit with him at table, after the nobles had eaten their meal. Sabur went there then, begging to be also present at the banquet. As he sat at the table, there was carried to Maximian a glass of Sabur, on which was engraved the image of the Persian king. The servants served drinks to the king and the nobles who were sat about, until the cup came into the hands of a sage, who could read the fate of men through the stars and had excellent knowledge of physiognomy. He looked carefully at the effigy – he had already happened to see the face of Sabur sitting among the other guests -, and he said: "I see a man among the guests who looks similar to the image on this cup. If this man is not Sabur, there is nobody in the world like him." King Maximilian said: "What do you mean?" He answered: "I see on this cup the image of Sabur, and that this man is he," and so saying he took Sabur by the hand and led him before the king. The king then asked him who he was and Sabur said: "I am a poor Persian". But being suspicious as he looked at him, Maximian suspected that he had not told the truth. Therefore he persisted in his request, and Sabur said to them: "If you really want to know the truth, know then that I come from a state of Persia. My father committed a grave offense against our king who had him killed and confiscated his goods. And since I had good reason to fear of my life, I have come here to you with the hope of obtaining protection in your country. Having fallen into poverty and been made destitute, I have come here to you from famine, and extreme poverty". They took pity on him, and, thinking that he told the truth they decided to let him go. But the sage opposed this, saying: "He is definitely Sabur. Put him to the test until you learn who he really is." Then King Maximian resorted to harsh measures, and threatened to kill him, but promised him safety provided that he revealed his true identity. Sabur said: "It is strange that you can think that Sabur would prefer misery and hardship in your country, rather than occupy the place in his kingdom that is his." But they did not believe his words. Eventually he confessed that he was Sabur in person. King Maximian then ordered him to be thrown into the belly of a statue in the shape of a cow, covered with cowhide, and he had him locked up, putting guards and custodians. Maximian then marched against the land of the Persians, wrought carnage among their population, destroyed their city, cut down their trees and their palms, taking Sabur with him, wherever he went. He continued so until he came to Gunday-Sabur (17) where leaders of Persia had fortified themselves. He then built catapults and managed to destroy half the city without being able, however, to enter. It was on that occasion that one night the keepers of Sabur relaxed their guard on the prisoner, forgetting to close the door, by which he brought food inside the statue. It was the night of Ashan (18) (In another text [it says]: "It was the night of a party"). There were around him, many residents of al-Ahwaz that the Romans had made prisoners. Sabur heard their words and he understood their language. There were, nearby, wineskins full of oil and when night fell [Sabur] rose, called to a prisoner and said: "Get one of these skins and empty it out." The prisoner did as he asked, and the strap with which he was held bound was all soaked. He went out crawling like a reptile until he came to the gate of the city and gave a cry. The sentries responded to

his shout, and also he told them his name. They recognized the voice and opened the gates of the city.

Great was the joy they felt for him, when he entered the city, and they raised their voices praising and glorifying God. The men of Maximian awoke, and thought that reinforcements had arrived on the opposite side. Sabur said to those who were in the fortress: "Get ready, and when you hear the sound of the nāqūs, attack". They did as he had told them, and broke out on the Romans, making great slaughter and seizing their property and all that they had accumulated. Then Sabur penetrated the territory of the Romans, sowing death everywhere, and he destroyed many cities and picked up a huge booty. On the lands of the Romans there then followed a severe famine and pestilence and plague, so that they were no longer able to bury the corpses because there were too many deaths. So it was that the war of Sabur, the famine and the pestilence prevented the Romans from killing the Christians.

6. As for Maxentius, king of Rome, he was the most wicked of the kings who had reigned before him and angered all who were in Rome, particularly the Christians, confiscating their property and killing men, women and children. When the inhabitants of Rome heard about Constantine, of how he hated evil and loved good and that the people of his kingdom lived in peace and quiet, the leaders of the city of Rome wrote him a letter asking him to free them from the tyranny of Maxentius. Reading their letter, Constantine was greatly worried and was perplexed, not knowing what to do. As he was so full of thought, there appeared in the sky at noon, a cross of stars shining, around which was written "In this conquer"(19). Then he came out and said to his men: "Did you see what I saw?" "Yes," they answered, and at that time he embraced the Christian faith. This happened six years after the death of his father Constantius.

7. Constantine made the necessary preparations and prepared to fight against Maxentius, King of the Romans. He had prepared a large cross, placed it on top of a standard, and went against Maxentius, king of Rome. Having heard that Constantine had moved to fight against him, Maxentius prepared to face him, and chose a bridge over the river in front of Rome as the place of battle. Then he came out with all his men, and fought against Constantine, who conquered and triumphed making a great slaughter of his men. Maxentius tried to return into the city with the rest of the soldiers, but the bridge gave way and he drowned with all his men: the river was choked with drowned and killed men. With golden crowns and every kind of music, the inhabitants of Rome poured out of the town to meet Constantine and celebrated the triumph with great jubilation.

On entering the city, [Constantine] ordered that the bodies of the Christian martyrs, and those who were crucified, should be buried. All those who had fled, and those whom Maxentius had exiled, returned to their country and to their homes, and those who had seen them confiscated got them back. The inhabitants of Rome made festival for seven days in honour of Constantine and the Cross, eating, drinking and rejoicing. On hearing these things Maximian, called Galerius, was furious, gathered his troops and went out to fight against Constantine. Hearing about this, Constantine also prepared his army and went to fight him. But when the men of Maximian saw the cross on the banner they fled: many were killed, others were taken prisoner and others begged to be spared. Maximian fled away naked, and passed as a traveller, from place to place until he came to his city. Here he called the priests of his gods, the magicians, the soothsayers that he loved so much, and whose recommendations he followed, and had them beheaded so that they would not fall into



the hands of Constantine and serve him. God sent down into the body of Maximian a devouring fire, so that his bowels were falling to pieces from the intense burning sensation that he had inside. His eyes swelled to the point that they fell out, coming out of their sockets, and his flesh was burned so much as to break away from the bones, and he died the worst of deaths.

8. Constantine ruled all the territories of the Romans, in tranquility and peace. This was in forty-first year of the reign of Sabur, son of Hurmuz, king of the Persians. Constantine was the son of Constantius, son of Wālantiyūs, son of Arsis, son of Decius, son of King Claudius, who lived in Rome at the time of the Apostles. Constantine had a general whom he loved and preferred to the others, named Licinius. He gave him his sister Constantina, entrusted him with the government and ordered him to honour the Christians, to love them and not to hurt any of them. When he came into his kingdom, Licinius returned to the worship of idols and ordered that the Christians should be put to death. In his day found martyrdom the soldier Theodorus, Metropolitan of Barqah, and the Forty Martyrs, originating in the city of Sebastia of Cappadocia (20). Licinius had in Sebastia a lieutenant named Agricolaus. He had the Forty Martyrs brought outside the city of Cappadocia, and thrown naked into a pool of water, where on account of the excess cold, because of the snow, they died of frostbite. Only one of them got out of the pool and headed for a tepidarium which was located at the shore of the lake to warm up, but the tepidarium collapsed on him, killing him instantly. The captain of the guard guarding the Forty then saw forty crowns of light coming down from heaven and resting on the heads of those martyrs, but one of these was suspended in the air. The guard then stripped off his garments, and threw himself into the pool and believed in Christ, earning for himself the crown of light. Then they took them out of the pool and loaded them on to a cart. There was, among them, a young man who had not yet died and was left aside. His mother, who was standing beside them, had in fact picked him up to put him on the cart with the others, but would not release him because he was still alive. He expired on her shoulder and only then could she place him on the cart along with the martyrs. Then they took them out of the city of Sebastia and burned them. Informed of the fact, King Constantine wrote a letter to Licinius in which he rebuked him for what he had done. But [Licinius] did not repent; indeed he gathered a large army and went to fight against Constantine who confronted him with his own soldiers in Bithynia. [Licinius] was defeated; he was taken prisoner and was brought before Constantine who demoted him then to the city of Thessaloniki and designated him as his prefect. Here he tried to gather a new army among the people of Thessaloniki with the intent to set out again against Constantine who, having heard about this, sent some of his men and killed him, cutting off his head.

9. Constantine was baptized in a town called Nicomedia, in the twelfth year of his reign. He gave orders to build churches in each country and to take from the Crown Treasury the money with which to make enough vessels for the churches. In the first year of his reign Eusebius was made patriarch of Rome. He held the office for six years and died. In the seventh year of his reign Miltiades was made patriarch of Rome (22). He held the office for four years and died. In the eleventh year of his reign Sylvester was made patriarch of Rome (23). He held the office for twenty-eight years old and died. In his ninth year in office the council was held in the city of Nicaea (24). In the third year of the reign of Constantine Filūniqūs [= Philogonus] was also made patriarch of Antioch. He held the office for five years and died. In the ninth year of his reign Paulinus was made patriarch of Antioch. He held the office for five years and died. In the fifteenth year of his reign Istāt [=Eustathius] was made patriarch of Antioch. He held the office for eight years and died. In his fifth year in office there was the council in the city of Nicaea. In the first year of the reign of Constantine Asun was made bishop

of Jerusalem (25). He held the seat for nine years and died. In the tenth year of his reign Macarius was made bishop of Jerusalem. He held the seat for nineteen years and died. In his tenth year in office there was the council in the city of Nicaea. In the fifth year of the reign of Constantine there was also made patriarch of Alexandria Alexander, a disciple of Peter Martyr, the patriarch of Alexandria who had been killed, a companion of Ashillā, patriarch of Alexandria. He held the seat for sixteen years and died. In his fifteenth year in office there was the Council of Nicaea in the city because Alexander, Patriarch of Alexandria, had forbidden Arius to enter the church, and excommunicated him saying: "Arius is accursed because the patriarch Peter, before his martyrdom, told us: "God has cursed Arius: do not receive him and not let him go in with you into the church." At the head of the city of Asyut (26), in the province of Egypt, there was a bishop named Meletius who shared the doctrine of Arius. The patriarch Alexander excommunicated him. There was at Alexandria a great temple that Queen Cleopatra had built in honor of Saturn, inside which was kept a large bronze idol which was called Mika'il. The inhabitants of Alexandria and Egypt were accustomed, every twelve month of Hathor, i.e. Tishrin ath-Thani (27), to celebrate, in honor of this idol, a great festival during which they offered many sacrifices. When he became Patriarch of Alexandria and having everywhere publicly professed the Christian religion, Alexander decided to destroy the idol and to put an end to the sacrifices. But since the people of Alexandria objected, he tricked them by saying: "From this idol can be expected neither utility nor profit. I would suggest, therefore, that you celebrate this feast in honor of the angel Michael and offer him these sacrifices that you may intercede for you before God, and so benefit you better than this idol." Having them willingly accepted his words, [the patriarch] demolished the idol and put up a cross, and he called the temple "the church of [St] Michael" which is the church now called "al-Qaysariyyah", which was burned and destroyed at the time of entry into Alexandria of Magharibah. The festival and sacrifices were thus dedicated to the archangel Michael. Even today the Copts of Alexandria and Egypt are accustomed to celebrate on this day the archangel Michael, cutting the throat of many animals in his honour.

10. When Alexander, Patriarch of Alexandria, interdicted Arius from entering the church and excommunicated him, the latter appealed to King Constantine, asking him to help him against the patriarch of Alexandria. With Arius joined two bishops, one of whom was called Eumenius, bishop of the city of Nicomedia (28), and the other Eusebius, bishop of the city of Phila (29). They appealed to King Constantine, and Arius said: "Alexander, Patriarch of Alexandria, has acted unfairly against me and wrongly expelled me from the church." And so saying, he asked him to convene the church in order to discuss the matter openly in the presence of the king. Constantine then sent his messenger to Alexandria and summoned the Patriarch in order to arrange a meeting between him and Arius and so to adjudicate the affair. King Constantine said to Arius: "Expound your doctrine." Arius said: "I assert that the Father has always been, before the Son was. Then it is fact that the Son is the Word but he is created and made. Then the Father gave the Son, who is named Word, the power to be creator of the heavens and the earth and what is between them, as he himself said in his holy Gospel in the passage where he says: 'I have been given all authority on heaven and on earth.' He was not, therefore, creator by his own power but by that which had been conferred on him. I assert that this Word then took on a body over time, in the womb of the Virgin Mary and by the power of the Holy Spirit so as to become one Christ. Christ, therefore, is the result of putting together the Word and the flesh, both, however, created".

11. To this Alexander replied, saying: "Tell us, what do you think is more important for us: to worship the one who created us, or to worship one who did not create us?" And Arius said: "Worshipping the one who created us." Alexander replied: "If the Son created us, as you assert, and the Son is [in his turn] created, it follows that to worship the Son who created us is more proper than to worship the Father, who is uncreated; indeed, to worship the Father creator would be an impiety and to worship the created Son an act of the pure faith. But that would be the most absurd of things." The king found the argument [of Alexander] was right, along with the others who were present with him, and found that the doctrine of Arius was instead absurd. There were many other questions and answers between the two, but in the end the king Constantine authorized Alexander, Patriarch of Alexandria, to excommunicate Arius and anyone who upheld his doctrine. Alexander then said to the king Constantine: "No, it is for the king himself to convene the patriarchs and bishops, so that there is a council at which to deliver a judgment, to excommunicate Arius and set forth the true faith, in order to present it with clear wording to all nations." Constantine then sent his messengers into all countries and gathered the patriarchs and bishops. Within a year and two months there gathered at Nicaea two thousand and forty-eight bishops of differing opinions and religions. For there were those who claimed that Christ and his mother are two other gods, and these were the Barbarāniyyah, also called Maryamiyyūn;(30) there were those who claimed that the Son comes from the Father like the flame of a fire fed by the same fire, and that the former is not subject to reduction by the fact that he depends on the second, and this was the doctrine of Sabellius and his followers; there were those who claimed that Mary had by no means kept Christ in her womb for nine months, but that he passed through her belly like water goes into the gutter (31), since the Word came in by her ear and immediately went out to where the baby comes out, and this was the doctrine of Ebanus and his followers; there were those who said that Christ is a man and was created by the Deity like each of us as to the substance, which is the principle of the Son of Mary, and that, having been chosen to be the saviour of the human substance by virtue of divine grace that came down and dwelt in him through love and will, for this reason he was called the Son of God. And there were those who said that God is one substance and one person, and that he was called by three names but they did not believe either in Word or in the Holy Spirit, and it was this, the doctrine of Paul of Samosata, Patriarch of Antioch, and its followers, that the Paulicians held. There were those who argued that there are three gods, one good, one bad and a third one sharing in both, and this was the doctrine of the excommunicated Marcion and his followers, who claimed that Marcion was the leader of the Apostles, denying that role to the Apostle Peter. And there, finally, those who supported the divinity of Christ, and this was the doctrine of the apostle Paul and the three hundred and eighteen bishops (32).

When King Constantine heard their doctrines, he was very surprised at many of their differences and put at their disposal a building where he gave them space, ordering them to talk to each other in order to determine on which side was the true religion to follow. Of these, the Three hundred and Eighteen found themselves unanimous on one doctrine and one religion, after discussing with each other and with the other bishops. They refuted the arguments of the others, and proclaimed the true faith, while the other bishops even among themselves held to conflicting doctrines and religions. The king then for the three hundred and eighteen bishops had a large room set aside, sat among them, and took his ring, his sword and his scepter and handed them to them, saying: "Today I have given you authority over my kingdom, to do what seems appropriate to you to do for the definition of right religion and for the good of the faithful." They blessed the king, girded on his

sword and said: "Profess publicly the Christian religion and be its defender." Then they wrote for him forty books containing the constitutions and laws, some of which related to what the king should know and do, and other related to the responsibility of making the bishops. The leader and president of the council was Alexander, Patriarch of Alexandria, along with Eustathius, Patriarch of Antioch, and Macarius, Bishop of Jerusalem. Silvester, patriarch of Rome, had sent as his representatives two priests, one of whom was called Vitus and the other Vincentius (33). [The Three hundred and eighteen] unanimously sanctioned the expulsion of Arius and his followers, excommunicated him and all those who supported his doctrine, and formulated the profession of faith by establishing that the Son was born of the Father before all ages, and that the Son is of the substance of the Father, uncreated. They appointed then Metrophanes as patriarch of Constantinople. They were also unanimous in stating that the Christian Easter should be celebrated on the Sunday after the Passover of the Jews, and that the Passover of the latter should not to be celebrated in place of the day of Easter for Christians. Also they confirmed what had been said on the Calculation of the days of fasting and Easter by Demetrius, patriarch of Alexandria, Ghayānūs (34), Bishop of Jerusalem, Maximus, Patriarch of Antioch and Victor, Patriarch of Rome, and that is that the fasting of Christians must end on Easter day, or on the Sunday after the Passover of the Jews.

12. Sa'id Ibn Batriq, the doctor, said: "I wanted to know on what day of the week Our Lord Jesus Christ was born, on what day was crucified, and in which months of the year these days took place (35). After careful research and having compared the years, I discovered that he was born on the twelfth of the solar cycle, in [9] of the number of the lunar cycle. The epact of the sun was one, and that of the moon [28]. Now December 1 was a Saturday, and the first of Kīhak was a Tuesday. Thus our Lord Jesus Christ was born on December twenty-fifth, that is the twenty-ninth of Kīhak and the day of the glorious birth of Christ our Lord was a Tuesday. The day he was baptized is then found in fourteen of the number of the cycle of the sun and in nineteen of the number of the cycle of the moon. And the epact of the sun was three and a half and a quarter, while that of the moon was [11]. The first of January was then a Thursday, and the first of the month of Tūbah was a Saturday. His glorious baptism took place on Tuesday, January 6th, therefore, i.e. on the eleventh of Tūbah. The day of his saving crucifixion fell on nineteen of the number of the cycle of the sun and in fourteen of the number of the cycle of the moon. The epact of the sun was seven and a half, as the moon was [14]. The first of March was then a Thursday and the first of the month of Baramhāt a Sunday. The Passover of the Jews then happened on Thursday March 22nd, i.e. twenty-sixth of Baramhāt. This means that our Lord Jesus Christ ate the Passover with his disciples on Thursday, was crucified on Friday March 23rd, i.e. 27 Baramhāt, and rose again on Sunday March 25, i.e. the twenty-ninth of Baramhāt (36). The Christians, however, as we have said, celebrated the feast of the Baptism, and began to fast from the end [of that feast-day] for the forty-day period after which they broke their fast, and celebrated their Passover when the Jews did, the day on which they stopped fasting. After the three hundred and eighteen Fathers forbade them to do this, and arranged that Easter for Christians should be celebrated on the Sunday following that of the Jews, thus forbidding them to celebrate it together with them or before them, and taking care to celebrate it always after the Passover of the Jews.

They forbade bishops to have a wife. This is because from the time of the apostles to the council of three hundred and eighteen of them, they had wives, and if anyone of them was made bishop

and was married, the wife was left with him and was not sent away, except for the patriarchs: as, in fact, those without a wife never elected as patriarch one that was married.”

13. As for Alexander, he deprived of the patriarchal dignity Ashillā his companion, who had been patriarch of Alexandria before him, for he welcomed Arius and contravened what his master, the martyr Peter, patriarch of Alexandria, had told him to do.

As for the three hundred and eighteen, they each returned to their homes with great honour. King Constantine issued three edicts (37): in the first he required the tearing down of idols and putting to death all those who worshiped them; in the second he provided that rhetoric was limited to children of Christians and that only they might be designated as prefects and generals, and he ordered that the third Friday in Easter and after people should refrain from work and war. King Constantine commissioned Macarius, Bishop of Jerusalem, to search for the site of the tomb and the Cross and to build churches there (38).

14. Helena, mother of Constantine, said: “I made a vow to go to Jerusalem, to find the holy places and rebuild them”. Constantine then gave her a lot of money and Helena, together with Macarius, Bishop of Jerusalem, went to Jerusalem with the intent to seek the Cross. Finding the place, Helena collected a hundred men from among the Jews who lived in Jerusalem and Galilee, and she selected ten. Of these she chose three, one of whom was called Judas. She asked them to indicate the [holy] places but they refused saying: “We do not know anything of this place.” [Helena] had them thrown in a dry water well and left them there for seven days, without food or water. The one of them who was called Judas told his companions that his father had shown him one day the places that the woman wanted to know from them, and which his father had learned from his grandfather. Then the two cried out from the well, were pulled out and told Helena that Judas had told them. Helena gave orders to whip him until he decided to confess his knowledge of the places. They went out together and he led them to the place where they found the Sepulchre and the Cranion, now reduced to a great garbage dump. Then [Judas] prayed saying: “Lord God, if this is the place where is located the Sepulchre and the ground shakes violently, and fire comes out because of this, I shall believe.” The ground shuddered, there came out a fragrant smoke and the man believed. Helena then ordered area of earth that covered it to be removed, and there came to light the Sepulchre and Cranion and three crosses were found. Helena said: “How will we know which of these three crosses was that of Christ the Lord?” There was, near there, a man suffering from a serious illness, of which he despaired that he could be healed. On him were laid the first and second crosses, but he was not cured and only when the third cross was laid on did the patient get up, completely healed (39). Helena realized then that this was the cross of Christ, our Lord, to be exposed to the veneration [of the faithful]. She enclosed it in a case of gold, and took it with her, along with everything that had been buried, and that had belonged to Christ our Lord, to bring everything to Constantine, her son. She had built the Church of the Resurrection, built Golgotha, and the church of Constantine, and leaving, ordered Macarius, Bishop of Jerusalem, to build other churches. This happened in the twenty-second year of the reign of Constantine. From the birth of Christ, our Lord, to the finding of the Cross had passed three hundred years.

15. In the twenty-first year of the reign of Constantine Athanasius was made patriarch of Alexandria (40). He was a *Kātib*. He held the office for forty-six years. In the twenty-third year of his reign Ulāriyūs was made patriarch of Antioch (41). He held the office for eleven years and died. He was an

Arian. In the twenty-ninth year of his reign Maqsimiyānūs was made bishop of Jerusalem (42). He was a gentle man and had lost his right eye at the time of the sedition. He held the office for twenty-three years and died. In the twenty-second year of his reign died Metrophanes, patriarch of Constantinople, after having held the office for three years (43). After him Alexander was made patriarch of Constantinople (44). He held the office for eight years and died. To King Constantine went Eusebius, bishop of Nicomedia, and his companion whom the three hundred and eighteen had excommunicated along with Arius, and appealing to the king, they asked him to receive them [into the church] and remove the excommunication, saying that they themselves excommunicated Arius and supporters of his doctrine and professed the same belief of the three hundred and eighteen. The king received them and removed their excommunication. Then Eusebius, bishop of Nicomedia, was taken and made patriarch of Constantinople (45). Helena, meanwhile, chose one of the generals and sent him to ar-Ruha to build the church. After the building was complete, and in the meantime the churches of Jerusalem had been built, the king wanted them to be consecrated. He sent therefore to say to Eusebius, Patriarch of Constantinople, to go to Jerusalem and there to convene a group of bishops to proceed to the consecration of the places. King Constantine wrote to Athanasius (46), patriarch of Alexandria, to be also present at the consecration, ordering him to willingly accept his order and not to disobey him (47). The king sent word to his sister's son, named Dalmatinus, to attend the session and to be in the city of Tyre (48). Once agreed on the conduct of the consecration, he traveled to Jerusalem and arrived in the city of Tyre. There were present Maximus the one-eyed, bishop of Jerusalem, Athanasius, patriarch of Alexandria, Ulāriyūs (49), Patriarch of Antioch, a multitude of bishops and many other people. Among the defendants there was a man named Eumenius with a group of people who supported the doctrine of Arius. Eusebius, patriarch of Constantinople, suggested to Eumenius that the latter put questions to Athanasius, patriarch of Alexandria. Eusebius, in fact, although he had represented himself to the king as being opposed to Arius, shared however the views of that man, and followed his doctrine.

16. Eumenius said: "Arius did not say that Christ created all things. But he said: "Through him all things were created", because He is the Word of God through whom were created the heavens and the earth. For God simply created things through His Word, but the Word did not create, as is clear from what the Lord Christ said in his Gospel: "All things were made through him, and without him nothing was made of anything that was made" (50). And he also said: "In him was life, and the life was the light of the world" (51). And he also said: "He was in the world and through him the world was made" (52). So saying, he wanted to express that all things were made through Him, and did not intend to say that it was He who created them." He concluded by saying: "This was the doctrine of Arius, but the three hundred and eighteen bishops were unjust to him and have unjustly and wrongly excommunicated him."

17. Athanasius, patriarch of Alexandria, responded by saying: "The three hundred and eighteen bishops have not condemned Arius speaking with falsehood nor acted unfairly against him because he simply said: "The Son has created things without the Father." Now if all things were created only through the Son without the [also] the Father to create them, He [i.e. the Father], would not have created even one thing. But in this regard we have the gospel as evidence that belies his words, such as the passage that reads: "The Father creates, and I create" (53). And also it is said: "If I do not do the works of my Father, do not believe in me" (54). And again: "As the Father creates and gives life to those he wants, and takes it away, so also the Son gives life to those he wants and takes it

away" (55). With these words he means that He gives life, makes die, and creates. In light of these words anyone must be considered a liar, who dares to say that He is not the creator and that things have simply been created through Him without being Himself the creator. As for your saying "all things were made through him," well we have no doubt in believing that the action in which they were made was by Christ himself, saying "Let there be...", and they were made, as can be deduced precisely from the passage in which he says: "I create and give life." If then your saying "through him all things were made" is to be understood simply in the sense that he has made them, then it is through him that they were made. If it were not so, the two statements are contradictory."

18. Then Athanasius replied further to Eumenius saying: "As for the assertion of the followers of Arius that the Father wills something and then the Son creates it, as if will was of the Father and creation of the Son, this is also false, as the idea that the Son created so would mean that the function of the one doing the creating would be greater than those of the creator, if he [i.e., the Son] willed and did it, while he [i.e. the Father], willed and did not do it. The functions of the first, therefore, in what he did, are more extensive than those of the second. And from this we should infer that the first in doing what the second wills, is in the same condition as any other agent of creation in the face of what the creator wants from him, namely that he do the same with respect to compulsion and free will. But if he acted because he was coerced, he had no participation in the action; if he was free, he could obey or disobey, and therefore is deserving of reward or punishment. But to say such a thing [of Christ] would be absurd."

19. Athanasius replied again to Eumenius saying: "If the Creator created the world by means of a created being, [the Son], this created being is certainly different from the Creator. You have in fact argued that the Creator works through another. Now the one that operates by means of another needs to be complementary to this acting through him, since he can not take any action if not through him. But he who needs another is imperfect, and the Creator is far from that!" When Athanasius, patriarch of Alexandria, had thus refuted the arguments of his opponents and showed all the defendants the falsity of their doctrine, they were dumbfounded, they were ashamed of themselves and they attacked Athanasius, patriarch of Alexandria, covering him with a barrel so as to almost kill him. He was saved from their hands by Dalmatinus, son of the king's sister. Athanasius fled, went to Jerusalem, prepared the chrism without any bishop present, and consecrated the churches by the anointing of the [sacred] chrism. He then went to the king and informed him of what had happened. The king sent him back with honors to Alexandria and was angry with Eusebius, patriarch of Constantinople, repenting of having made him patriarch. Then the bishops who had gathered in the city of Tyre went to Jerusalem, and found that Athanasius, patriarch of Alexandria, had preceded them and had consecrated the churches. They celebrated a big party for the dedication of the churches, with great joy, and returned each to his own see. This happened in the thirtieth year of the reign of Constantine (56).

Eusebius, patriarch of Constantinople, died excommunicate, having held the office for two years. After him Paul was made patriarch of Constantinople, in his place (57). He held the office for four years and King Constantine deposed him.

20. The King Constantine gave orders that no Jew should live in Jerusalem or pass through it, and he also ordered to put to death all those who refused to become Christians (58). Many pagans and Jews then embraced the Christian faith and Christianity took root everywhere. It was then told to king

Constantine that the Jews had become Christians for fear of being killed but that they continued to follow their religion. The king said: "How will we know?" Paul, the patriarch of Constantinople, said: "The Torah forbids [eating] pork and it is for this reason that the Jews do not eat meat. Order that the throats of pigs be cut, that the meat should be cooked, and fed to the members of this community. In this way you will find that all those who refuse to eat are still tied to their religion." King Constantine replied. "But if the Torah forbids the pig, why is lawful for us to eat its flesh and make others eat it?" Patriarch Paul replied: "You must know that Christ our Lord, repealed all provisions of the Torah and gave us a new law which is the Gospel. He said in the Holy Gospel: "Not everything that enters the mouth defiles a man (and he meant any food). What defiles a man is just what comes out of his mouth" (59), i.e. folly and wickedness, and all that is similar to this. The apostle Paul said so in his first letter to the Corinthians: "Food is for the stomach and the stomach is for food, but God will destroy both" (60). And it is also written in the Acts: "Peter, chief of the Apostles, was in the city of Jaffa (61) in the house of a tanner named Simon. At the sixth hour of the day he went out on the terrace of the house to pray, but a deep sleep fell upon him and saw the sky open. From the sky he saw a mantle descend to earth in which there was every kind of quadruped, wild beasts, flying things and birds of the air, and he heard a voice saying: 'O Peter, get up, kill and eat.' Peter replied: 'O Lord, I have never eaten anything unclean.' But a second time the voice said: 'Eat, what God has cleansed you must not consider unclean.' The voice repeated it three times. Then the mantle was taken back into heaven." (62) Peter was amazed and wondered what it meant. Because of that vision and because of what Christ our Lord said in the Holy Gospel, Peter and Paul ordered us to eat the flesh of every quadruped and therefore it is not wrong to eat pork or any other animal." The king then ordered him to kill the pigs, cook the meat and put it at the doors of the churches in all his kingdom on Easter Sunday. To everyone coming out of the church a bite of pork was given, and those who refused to eat it were killed. Thus it was that many Jews were killed in that circumstance. Constantine erected a wall around Byzantium and called Constantinople. This was in his thirtieth year of the reign. Helena, mother of Constantine, died at the age of eighty years. Constantine reigned for thirty-two years and died. He lived in all for sixty-five years. He left three children. The first was given his name, Constantine, he had called the second with the name of his father, Constantius, and the third was called Constans (63). To Constantine he gave the city of Constantinople, to Constantius Antioch, Syria and Egypt, and Rome to Constans.

21. As for Sabur, son of Hurmuz, king of the Persians, he founded near Susa a city called Khuwwat-Sabar (64), and he founded another in the region of as-Sawad called Firūz-Sabur (65) and he founded many others in Sind (66) and in Sigistān (67). He also had many streams dug out and built many bridges and viaducts. Growing old, his strength failed him, his vision blurred and his eyelids drooped over his eyes. So he sent his messenger to the king of India because he was searching for a good doctor and the king of India sent him a doctor named George who treated him in a way that let him regain his sight and enable him to ride. As a sign of gratitude the king ordered him to choose a city to live in, and he chose Khuwwat-Sabur, also known as al-Karkh (68), which is near the city of Susa, and he lived there until he died.



## Chapter 12

Chap. XII Murder of Constantine – Apparition of the Cross on the Mount of Olives – Cyril of Jerusalem interprets the meaning – Dissemination of the doctrine of Arius – Heresy of Macedonius – Reign of Julian the Apostate: persecution of Christians and attempt to re-establish the worship of gods – the monastic movement in Egypt and Palestine – Reigns of Valentinian and Valens – Cycle of Theophilus and Theodosius (p.209)

1. Sabur lived for seventy-two years in all, and died. After him there reigned over the Persians Azdashīr, son of Sabur (1), for four years and died. This was in the first year of the reign of King Constantine, son of Constantine, King of Rūm. After him there reigned over the Persians, for five years and four months, his brother Sabur, son of Sabur (2). This happened in the fifth year of the reign of Constantine, the son of Constantine, King of Rūm. In the fifth year of his reign there rebelled against his brother Constans, in Rome, a general named Maghniyūs (3) who killed him. When Constantine, son of Constantine, learned that his brother had been killed, he sent a large army, killed Magnentius, together with all those who had supported him in conspiring against his brother, and appointed as his representative in Rome a man who reigned in his name. In the seventh year of his reign there was made patriarch of Rome Marcus (4). He held the office for two years and died. In the ninth year of his reign there was made patriarch of Rome Būliyūs (5). He held the seat for fifteen years and died. In the twenty-fourth year of his reign there was made patriarch of Rome Līnāriyūs (6). He held the office for six years and died. In the twentieth year of his reign there was made bishop of Jerusalem Cyril (7). He held the office for five years and fled.

2. At that time the followers of Arius and all those who professed the doctrine went to King Constantine; after having presented their religion in a good light and expounded their doctrine in enticing colours they said: “The three hundred and eighteen bishops, who gathered at Nicaea, made a mistake and have turned away from the truth by claiming that the Son is consubstantial with the Father. Please, order that such a thing is no longer upheld because it is an obvious mistake.” The king agreed to their request.

3. At that time there appeared on the site of Cranion, i.e. on Golgotha, at noon, a cross of light which rose from earth to heaven, until it reached the top of the Tūr-Zaytā: (8) for the intensity of its glow even dimmed the sunlight. All the inhabitants of Jerusalem, large and small, were spectators of this. Cyril, Bishop of Jerusalem, also witnessed the phenomenon and hastened to inform the king, writing to him a letter in which he said: “In the days of your father, O blessed king, the cross of Christ, our Lord, appeared, made of stars, at noon, in the sky. And in your days, O blessed king, there has appeared at noon, on the site of Cranion, a cross of light so intense that it exceeds that of the sun” (9). In the same letter among other things he urged him not to welcome the doctrine of Arius and his supporters, or of his followers, because they were far from the truth and wicked, and had already been excommunicated by three hundred and eighteen bishops together with all those who professed the doctrine. The king received willingly the letter of Cyril and rejoiced at what he had written, and turned back to the truth and decided not to accept the doctrine of Arius.

4. At that time, the doctrine of Arius had almost taken over Constantinople, Antioch, Babil, and Alexandria: the followers of the religion of Arius and the supporters of his doctrine were called Arians, from the name of Arius. In the second year of the reign of Constantine, the son of

Constantine, Cyprian was made patriarch of Antioch (10). He was an Arian. He held the office for two years and died. In the fourth year of his reign Blāsiyūs was made patriarch of Antioch (11). He held the office for four years and died. He was an Arian. In the eighth year of his reign Ustātiyūs was made patriarch of Antioch (12). He held the office for five years and died. He was an Arian. In the thirteenth year of his reign Lāwn was made patriarch of Antioch (13). He was also an Arian. He held the office for nine years and died. The king then sent for Eudoxius (14), bishop of the city of Girmāna (15), and made him patriarch of Antioch. He was a Manichaeen. He held the See of Antioch for two years. Then the king sent him to Constantinople, where he remained for ten years and died as patriarch (16). In the twenty-second year of his reign Athanāsiyūs was made patriarch of Antioch (17). He was a Manichaeen. He held the office for four years and died. In the first year of his reign, the king deposed Paul, the patriarch of Constantinople and made Eusebius patriarch of Constantinople, in his place (18). He was a Manichaeen. He held the office for three years and died. At his death the king reinstated in his own see the patriarch Paul, whom he had deposed. He held the office for three years and died (19).

5. In the tenth year of his reign Macedonius was made patriarch of Constantinople (20). He asserted that the Holy Spirit is a created being. He held the office for ten years and died. In his twenty-first year of his reign, the king called to Constantinople Eudoxius, Patriarch of Antioch, and appointed him patriarch of that city (21). He was a Manichaeen. He held the office for ten years and died. Of the population of Egypt and Alexandria, most were Arians and Manichaeen. They occupied the churches of Egypt and Alexandria and took possession of them. Then they made a raid against Athanasius, patriarch of Alexandria, with the intention of killing him, but he managed to escape and hide. Up to that time he had been Patriarch for ten years. Gregory was then made Patriarch of Alexandria (22). He was a Manichaeen. He held the office for twelve years and died. At his death Athanasius, patriarch of Alexandria, reoccupied his own place. He held the office for three years. In that time there came from Constantinople to Alexandria a general named Sawīriyānūs that, being an Arian, confined Patriarch Athanasius in a place called Tībāriyādah and appointed Khurayḡ as patriarch of Alexandria (23). He was an Arian. He held the seat for six years. The general Sūriyānūs then left Alexandria bound for Constantinople. When he left Alexandria, the Melkites of the city revolted against the patriarch Gurayh and killed him and then burned his body. Patriarch Athanasius again reoccupied his see. At that time there was a terrible tsunami and many places and many churches of Alexandria were submerged.

6. The King Constantine, son of Constantine, died after a reign of twenty-four years. After him reigned over Rum Julian, the apostate King (24). This happened in the twenty-first year of the reign of Sabur, son of Sabur, king of the Persians. This king Julian was a renegade from the Christian religion, who wanted to return people to the worship of idols and killed a large number of martyrs. In the first year of his reign the Arians who were in Jerusalem rose against Cyril, Bishop of Jerusalem, with the intent to kill him. [Cyril] fled and Heraclius was elected bishop of Jerusalem (25). He was an Arian. He held the office for three years and died. In the second year of his reign Milītiyānūs was made patriarch of Antioch (26). He was an orthodox (27). He held the seat for twenty-five years. In his twenty-first year in office there was the second council in Constantinople (28).

At the time of this king there lived at Alexandria the patriarch Athanasius, at Constantinople the Manichaeen patriarch Eudoxius, and at Rome the patriarch Līnāriyūs (29).

At the time of this king lived the blessed Basil, Bishop of Caesarea in Cappadocia, a territory subject to the jurisdiction of Rum, and Gregory, bishop of Nazianzus. The inhabitants of the city of Nazianzus were all Sabeans. Gregory, bishop of Nazianzus, composed the sermon on the birth of Christ, our Lord, which begins: "Christ is born, glorify [him]; Christ [is] from heaven: welcome Christ on earth: glorify [him]"(30), and while he was reading to them, they mocked him and started laughing. On the feast of the Baptism, Gregory wrote another sermon in which reviewed the religion of the Sabeans and illuminated its errors. This was the sermon that begins with the following words: "And again, my Jesus, and still a mystery" (31). At the time of Julian the Apostate there lived Anba Antonius, who was the first monk to live in the desert of Egypt, where he founded the monasteries and gathered monks there. Anba Hilarion lived in Syria (32), who was the first monk to live in the desert of Jordan where he collected the monks and founded the monasteries and many other places.

Learning that Sabur, son of Sabur, king of the Persians, was preparing to invade his territories, Julian the Apostate made the necessary preparations and went out against him. Meanwhile he had spread his cult and his wicked religion everywhere, carrying out his perverse intention and proposal to return people to the worship of idols. But Sabur, son of Sabur, king of the Persians, defeated him and killed him in battle, making great slaughter of his men.

7. Basil, Bishop of Caesarea in Cappadocia, has handed down to us that, one day while he was sitting in his room in front of a painting depicting the martyr Mercurius, he realized, suddenly, that the image of the martyr was missing from canvas. He was very surprised. After just one hour the image of the martyr had reappeared on the canvas but now, on the tip of the spear in his hand, was something like blood. The wonder of Bishop Basil at the sight of this increased, and he remained deep in thought, until the news came that the King Julian the Apostate had been killed in the war in that hour. Basil then understood that the martyr Mercurius had killed him, that Julian had been put to death on account of the animosity he felt toward Christians, and because of his firm resolution to restore everywhere the worship of idols (33).

8. After Julian the Apostate had been killed, there reigned over Rum, for one year only, Jovian (34). This happened in the twenty-first year of the reign of Sabur, son of Sabur, king of the Persians. The king Jovian was of excellent faith and a staunch defender of the religion of the Christians. A rebel rose up against him a rebel, and Jovian made war on him, but died on the way at a place called Daris (35).

After him there reigned for twelve years over Rum Valentinian (36). This happened in the twenty-fourth year of the reign of Sabur, son of Sabur, king of the Persians. In the third year of his reign Damasus was made patriarch of Rome (37). He held the seat for twenty-eight years and died.

9. In his seventeenth year in office there was the second council at Constantinople. In the fourth year of the reign of Valentinian Demophilus was made patriarch of Constantinople (38). He was a Manichaeon. He held the office for eleven years and died. In the first year of his reign Irnis was made bishop of Jerusalem (39). He was a Manichaeon. He held the office for five years and died. In the seventh year of his reign Hilarius was made bishop of Jerusalem (40). He was an Arian. He held the office for four years and died. On his death there returned to his own see Cyril, Bishop of Jerusalem, who had fled because of the Arians. He held the seat for sixteen years and died. The entire period for which Cyril was bishop was thirty-three years.

10. In his twenty-seventh year in office there was the second council at Constantinople. The population of Alexandria rebelled again against the patriarch Athanasius and decided to kill him. But [Athanasius] fled and hid. They therefore made Lucius Patriarch of Alexandria (41). He was an Arian. Five months later there gathered, along with a large group of Melkite Christians, a good number of bishops who excommunicated the patriarch Lucius and deposed him. The patriarch Athanasius returned to his own see and remained there until his death. He was patriarch for forty six years.

11. In the eighth year of the reign of Valentinian Peter was made Patriarch of Alexandria (42). But the followers of Arius rose up against him, with the intention of killing him, and he fled away from them. Lucius was then recalled, who had been deposed, and he held the office for three years. But since the Melkites rose up against him with intent to kill him, he fled away from them. The patriarch Peter then returned to his place. He held the office for six years and died. In the Maghrib a rebel rose up against Valentinian. Valentinian went out against him at the head of a huge force but was killed in the war (43).

12. After him his brother Valens (44) reigned over Rum for three years. This was in the thirty-sixth year of the reign of Sabur, son of Sabur, king of the Persians.

At the time of Valens, king of Rum, there lived in Alexandria, a man named Theodore who disputed and fought in defense of the doctrine of the Melkites, refuting the assertions of the Aryans. The followers of the excommunicate Arius took him, tied his hands and tied him to the feet of a horse that they drove off at full speed in the direction of the desert. He thus had all his limbs dislocated and died a martyr for the faith. In the second year of the reign of Valens, king of Rum, Timothy was made patriarch of Alexandria (45), Peter's brother, former patriarch of Alexandria before him. He held the seat for seven years and died.

In his sixth year in office there was the second council in Constantinople. The patriarch Timothy had built many churches in Alexandria and numerous tombs, and converted many people from Arianism to the Melkite religion. In the third year of the reign of Valens, king of Rum, Evagrius was made patriarch of Constantinople (46), of the Melkite religion. He held the seat for two years and was removed. The king Valens sent for Gregory, bishop of Nazianzus, and ordered him to take care of the see of Constantinople. Gregory administered it for four years and died.

At the time of Valens, king of Rum, St Euthymius was born (47). In the West there rose up against Valens a rebel and Valens came out against him with his forces. After many days of fighting, in a place called Tarāqā, Valente, king of Rum, was defeated and fled to a village in the province of Adrianople where they set fire to him and to the village (48).

13. After him reigned over Rum his son Valentinian (49) together with Gratian (50) for three years. The king Gratian died a few days after the king Valentinian. Then arose within Rum much contention about to whom to entrust the kingdom. Some said: "One of the sons of the great king Valentinian should reign over us". Others said: "Only a man who shares our faith should reign over us, to fight for the Christian faith." The opinions of many Christians and their doctrines were varied, but the doctrine of the Arians and followers of Macedonius won out. They remained prey to confusion for six months without being able to give themselves a king, nor was there, then, a patriarch in Constantinople, because after the death of Gregory (51), bishop of Nazianzus, who had

held the seat of Constantinople, another patriarch had not yet been made. Then the ministers and generals went to one of the bishops of Constantinople, named Cyrus, excellent man, and full of virtue, and said: "We will rely on you because you can judge what is best for us in such a predicament. Choose from your full and unconditional initiative a man of your own faith and make him our king, because, if we continue to be without a king, the Persians or others could invade our country and subjugate us, because of our many doctrines and bitter disputes, and destroy us". The bishop replied, "If I choose for you a man, and I make him your king, this will leave some happy and others not, and thus there may be more fighting between you and more dead. I can only give you some advice, that if you follow it will be more useful both to me and to you." They said to him: "What?" And the bishop replied: "Send around the city of Constantinople an crier and tell people to gather, at sunset, in the church where we will pray all night. Tomorrow we will celebrate the Mass and ask our God and our Lord Jesus Christ to choose for us a king. Whom He will choose, we will welcome him as our king." They welcomed his advice.

14. There lived in Constantinople two men, poor and of low condition, bound together by friendship. One was called Theodosius, and was bald and thirty years old, and the other Theophilus, who was a sage and a philosopher and was twenty-five. Both, every day, went out early from Constantinople in search of wood, which they carried on their heads and then sold, giving half of the proceeds in alms to the poor. With what was left they bought something to eat and whatever they needed. Only night separated them, when each went to his home and returned to their accustomed place. That day Theophilus went early in the morning to Theodosius to wake him and go out in search of firewood. When he called, Theodosius came out and said: "My brother, I was having a strange dream when you called me and woke me up in the throes of my turmoil. If I can find someone who will give me an interpretation, I will give all him earn throughout the week, allowing that I am poor and have no other source of income except what I procure by selling the wood." Theophilus said: "I know how to interpret dreams. Tell me what you have dreamed of, and also, Christ, our Lord, willing, I'll give an explanation, without you having to give anything to the person who would explain it."

Theodosius said: "While I was sleeping, I heard a great voice and I awoke in the grip of turmoil. Then I said to myself: "The soldiers of the Persians have come to Constantinople" and I rushed into the street, but I did not see anyone and I did not hear any voices. So I went back to bed and I fell asleep and I dreamed that I was in a vast desert full of big rams, sheep, cows and beasts, lions and birds and animals of every race and species, of leafy trees and large and most numerous heaps of grain, and I said: "I wish I could have a bit of that grain I, who are so poor!" And as I looked at the animals, the trees and the vast harvest of wheat, behold I saw a tall man fifty cubits high, whose body shone like pure gold in his right hand and wore a double-edged sword, on which were engraved four seals that shone like gold, and in his left hand he had a golden shield. When I saw him come near me, I was afraid and fell face down. But he took me by the hand, raised me up and told me: "Fear not. Would you like to have all that is in this wilderness?" I replied: "My Lord, I just want a bit of wheat." And he answered me: "Everything you see in this wilderness will be yours from now on, and under your power." Then he told me: "Follow me," and I followed, as I walked here and I saw the rams, sheep, cows, the beasts and the birds and the trees fall down before me and reverence me. The lions, however, greeted me with roars and I had great fear. But he told me then: "Fear not, take this sword and shield and keep them tight in your hand." The sword was double-edged and there were four seals on it. I took them from him, therefore, the sword and the shield, and I kept them tight in

hand. When the lions saw the sword and shield in my hands, they bent their legs to the ground and prostrated themselves before me. Then he took me to the sea and I saw come out of it a column of light. The man stretched out his hand, took the column and it covered me, and in doing so the column was divided into three stars. The first star was similar to the earth, and he wrapped me up in this light around the chest; the second was like beryl and he wrapped this light around my thighs, and the third was similar to ruby and he wrapped this around my foot. Then I was taken by the hand and taken back in that great wilderness and he told me: "Lift up your eyes to the sky." I looked up, and I saw a big star like lightning which is divided into two parts falling on my head. Then he led me to a corner of the wilderness, and I saw thick briars and brambles sprouting in the middle of fruitless trees. Then I was led into a wide and beautiful tent. I looked into the tent, and there I saw in the centre a lamb, and a spring of water, as white as milk. Then that lamb became like the flame of a fire, and ascended to heaven together with the water. I came out of the tent, and I saw the man holding a long key which was a cubit wide, which he gave me and I said to him: "My Lord, how can I hold the shield, the sword and this key?" He replied: "This is what you are commanded to do." I am left to speculate on whom to entrust the key. And I saw you, standing to my right, wrapped in a white pallium and beautiful, and with a tiara on your head. I handed the key to you, and then I saw only the man. Then we headed home, but along the way we came across a wall that blocked the road, two hundred cubits long. And I said: "How will we overcome this wall?" And as we were halted, I saw a light descending from heaven like lightning. The wall collapsed and we passed through. Then I woke up to the sound of your shout."

Theophilus said: "If you have described your dream accurately, know that it will be you that is chosen as king. There, now I'll explain. The great wilderness is the world. The sheep and the sheep are men, both the good and the bad, living in the world. The beasts are the Greeks and the birds represent every town and village. The trees are the ministers and generals. These all shall bow down before you in your kingdom. The lions are the enemies of the king. The double-edged sword is the Torah and the books of the Old and New Testaments. The four seals of the sword are the four evangelists and the piles of grain represent the enormous wealth of your kingdom. The column of light with which you have been covered is the mercy of God that has fallen upon you, and that your days will abound. The three stars that have fallen on you represent the baptism that you received in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. The star then that fell from heaven alighting on your head is the crown of your kingdom. And as you saw it split in two, you will have two children in your kingdom. The brambles and fruitless trees represent the people who do not believe in Christ, our Lord. The tent is the church and the lamb you saw in the middle of the tent is the Eucharist. And the water was like milk is Baptism. And as you saw the lamb like the flame of a fire with water ascend to heaven, so the Eucharist will rise to heaven. The key, then, is the authority that was assigned to you, to give the church a leader who will govern according to your mandate. You gave me the key, and that means that I will be made patriarch. The wall, finally, is the peace and tranquility that there will be in your kingdom. And this is the interpretation of your dream."

Theodosius said: "That's very nice, my brother, your interpretation of my dream! But that I become king, and that you will become patriarch, this will never be possible! Come on, get up, let's go to work." As they were going out, they saw people heading to church and asked: "What day is this?" "We go to church," they answered, "to see who God will choose as our king." Theophilus said to Theodosius: "Let's do the same ourselves and go to church. It could also be that your dream will

come true.” They entered the church and having prayed, Theodosius said Theophilus: “Our clothes are shabby and worn. Let’s get behind everyone and let ‘s see what happens.” The mass ended, and people were about to leave, when suddenly a large bird appeared, carrying in its beak a crown of light.

The people watched it for a couple of hours and began to shout: “O Lord, have mercy on us!” The bird then moved toward Theodosius and dropped on his head a crown of light. He was immediately brought to the altar, where the bishop took away the worn and shabby clothes, covered him with the royal robes and put on his head the crown of the kingdom, calling on him the blessing of God. Then he was made to mount on one of the king’s horses – Theodosius still did not believe his eyes seeing himself surrounded by ministers and generals – and introduced him to the court, that the king’s palace, going then each their own way.

## Chapter 13

Chap. XIII Reign of Theodosius the Great – Still more Arianism – Council of 150 on the teaching of Macedonius, Apollinaris and of Sabellius – Of the Manichaeans: their habits and customs – Theophilus, former friend of Theodosius, became patriarch of Alexandria – Arsenius, tutor of Arcadius and Honorius, emperors, one of the East, the other in the West – Still more on Arsenius – Disagreement between John Chrysostom and Theophilus, Patriarch of Alexandria – The Queen Eudoxia – Epiphanius and John Chrysostom – Third ecumenical Council – Nestorius and his heresy (p.223)

1. Theodosius, called Theodosius the Great (1), reigned over Rum for seventeen years. This happened in the fortieth year of the reign of Sabur, son of Sabur, king of the Persians. The ministers and generals presented themselves before the king Theodosius and said: "The doctrine of the population has become corrupt and infested with the doctrine of Arius and Macedonius. Take to heart the matter and take it upon yourself to defend the Christian faith and to present it in all clarity. Write therefore to all the patriarchs and bishops telling them to come together, to examine the issue and to set forth with clear wording the true Christian faith." King Theodosius then wrote to Timothy, patriarch of Alexandria, to Milātiyūs (2), Patriarch of Antioch, to Damasus, patriarch of Rome and Cyril, Bishop of Jerusalem, ordering them to go with their bishops to Constantinople in order to discuss the Christian faith and present it in clear terms to the people. The patriarchs went to Constantinople, together with their bishops, except for Damasus, patriarch of Rome. In fact, although he did not go there personally, he wrote to Theodosius a letter in which he explained and expounded in clear terms the true faith. At Constantinople there gathered in council a hundred and fifty bishops. The presidents were Timothy, patriarch of Alexandria, Meletius, Patriarch of Antioch and Cyril, bishop of Jerusalem. King Theodosius gave them the letter of Damasus, patriarch of Rome, in which the latter had set out and explained in clear terms the true faith. They read it, expounded the doctrine of the faith and confirmed that it had been expounded.

Then they went on to examine the doctrine of Macedonius who said: "The Holy Spirit is not God, but [was] created and made." Timothy, patriarch of Alexandria, said: "When we speak of the Holy Spirit, we intend to speak of God's Spirit. The Spirit of God is nothing more than his life. So if we were to say that the Holy Spirit is created, we would say that the Spirit of God was created. And if we say that the Spirit of God is created, that would be to say that his life is created. And if we say that his life is created, we would be affirming that He is not living [by his own power]. And if we say that he is not living [by his own power] we would be committing an impiety against him. For those who deny God are worthy of excommunication." They were therefore unanimous in excommunicating Macedonius, and excommunicated him along with his followers and the patriarchs who had followed after him and had not followed [true] doctrine. They also excommunicated Sabellius, bishop of Lūbiya (3), and his followers. He actually said that the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit are a single person. They excommunicated also Apollinaris and his followers because they claimed that the body of Christ, our Lord, was devoid of intellect. They established thus that the Holy Spirit is the creator, uncreated, true God, of one substance with the Father and the Son, one substance and one nature, adding to the Symbol of faith drawn up by the three hundred and eighteen bishops who had gathered at Nicaea, the words: "And in the Holy Spirit, Lord and Giver of life, who proceeds from the Father, who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified," where the three hundred and eighteen had said, in the creed they composed, only "and in the Holy Spirit". They also



established that the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit are three persons, three substances and three properties, Unity in Trinity and Trinity in Unity, one essence in three persons, one God, one substance and one nature. They also confirmed that the body of Christ, our Lord, possessed an intellectual and rational soul. Then they made patriarch of Constantinople, from the guards of the king, a man named Fiqtūriyūs (4). They defined the primacy of the Patriarch of Rome, placing in second place the patriarch of Constantinople, the patriarch of Alexandria in the third and in fourth the Patriarch of Antioch. They elevated to the rank of patriarch, the bishop of Jerusalem, which had been until then only a bishop — Jerusalem had never had a patriarch before then —, and placed him in fifth place.

Then each returned to his own see.

2. From the first council of three hundred and eighteen bishops who had gathered in the city of Nicaea, to this council of the hundred and fifty bishops who had gathered in Constantinople excommunicating Macedonius and his sect, there had passed fifty years. Timothy, patriarch of Alexandria, allowed the patriarchs, bishops and monks to eat meat on the feasts of the Lord because of the Manichaean so-called as-Siddīqūn (5) in order to know which of the patriarchs and bishops were Manicheans. He intended, in fact, by making them eat flesh to making vain their religion and to abolish it. This is because Manichaeans are not allowed to slaughter animals and eat them, nor themselves to eat meat from animals in any way. Most of the metropolitans of Egypt and their bishops were Manichaeans. Now the Orthodox patriarchs, with their bishops and monks, ate meat at the feasts of the Lord. The Manichaean metropolitans, however, and their bishops and monks did not eat meat and replaced it with fish, placing it instead of meat, fish being [also] an animal. This custom was observed at the time of the heretical and impious Mani. On the death of Mani and his followers, the Orthodox patriarchs, with their bishops and monks, returned to their ancient custom and abstained from meat on the feasts of the Lord.

3. Sa`id ibn Batrīq, the doctor said: “Timothy, patriarch of Alexandria, allowed the eating of meat on the feasts of the Lord in view of the fact that the Manichaeans such as-Siddīqūn used to eat fish instead of meat. When he speaks of “eating meat” he refers to a slaughtered animal, and a fish is not considered a slaughtered animal. And in fact another sect of Manicheans, called the as-Sammākūn, (6) ate fish because it cannot be considered a slaughtered animal, while abstaining from eating meat from a slaughtered animal. And yet they were in error even the Manichaeans called as-Siddīqūn, who had replaced meat with fish, because Christ, our Lord, ate meat, and it is therefore the duty of all who profess the Christian religion in imitation of Christ, our Lord, to eat meat at least one day a year, to remove from their hearts any kind of scruple and confirm, before all, their contempt for this wicked sect of Manicheans. In Acts it is written that Peter was in the city of Jaffa in the house of a tanner named Simon. Peter was on the housetop to pray at about six in the morning. There fell on him a deep sleep and fell asleep, and he saw the heavens opened to him, and there came down from the sky a sheet, touching the ground, in which there were all kinds of four-footed animals of the earth, wild beasts, and flying birds of the sky. And he heard a voice say: “O Peter, get up, kill and eat.” But Peter said: “No, Lord, I have never eaten anything impure or unclean.” The voice told him for the second time: “What God has made clean do you not treat as unclean.” And the voice repeated it to him for the third time. Then the sheet rose up to heaven” (7). These words of Peter support this, he being one of the leaders of the Apostles and a founder of our religion, as well as one from whom you have to take and accept, what Christ our Lord, has

done in eating the meat of slaughtered animals and in making all animals lawful. So it is necessary to be wary of those who abstain from eating meat and act differently from how Christ, our Lord, and Peter, the head of the Apostles, behaved. Therefore, anyone who refuses to eat meat from slaughtered animals is for us a transgressor of the Christian law and is to be counted among the followers of the doctrine of Mani, with the exception of the patriarchs, bishops and monks, for they do not refrain from the use of meat as prohibited but only for abstinence and to honor God.”

4. “The people of Rum also began not to wash themselves with water because most of them were Manichaeans. The Manichaeans, in fact, do not believe that it is good to wash with water. Having therefore for a long time continued to maintain their custom, they continue to this day to refrain from washing with water. Some have said that they stopped washing with water simply because of the intense cold that there is in their country and because the water was too cold, especially in winter, and that they could not bathe in cold nor could touch it as it was so cold” (8).

5. “The Manichaeans are, as we have said, of two species: the Sammākūn and the Siddīqūn. The Sammākūn fast on certain days of each month, while the Siddīqūn fast for life, eating only what the land produces. Having embraced the Christian faith, the Siddīqūn, fearing to be recognized and killed if they abstained from eating fish, also began to fast, and actually fasted on the Orthodox feasts of Christmas, the Virgin Mary and the Apostles, abstaining, in those days of fasting, from eating the flesh of fish. They adopted a similar behavior only so as to pass in fasting the day of the year and in these fasts did not refrain from eating fish only so that they were not discovered. Over time the Nestorians, Jacobites and Maronites adopted this custom, who made it a norm. Later also some Greek Melkites, especially those living in the territories subjected to Islam, adopted a similar habit, starting also to abstain from eating fish on the aforementioned days of fasting, although this was not included in their traditions nor in their precepts, since the Greek Melkites abstain from eating fish only on the two days reported, namely Wednesdays and Fridays throughout the year, and on the eve of Christmas and the eve of Baptism, days when they abstain from eating fish as they revere these in the same way as the great fast. The Greek Melkites, then, who prefer to fast for Christmas, [for the feast of the Madonna] and for the feast of the Apostles, fast in these three days by eating the flesh of fish, abstaining only on Wednesdays and Fridays. Similarly, if someone wishes to fast on Wednesdays and Fridays throughout the year, they can fast until the ninth hour without eating fish. And yet this is not obligatory and no one is obliged to fast and abstain from these fasts to make use of the meat of fish, except for Wednesdays and Fridays, as we said at the first, for the great fast and for two vigils of Christmas and Epiphany. Some Greek Melkites also refrain from eating fish on the fast of the feast of Our Lady, following their custom in this the holy Typicon of St. Saba (9), nor is there, in this abstinence, any shadow of sin. Only those who say otherwise sin, thus contravening the law and acting contrary to the divine precept.”

6. But let’s return to what we were saying about Theodosius and Theophilus. Theophilus, the friend of Theodosius, stood for a year at the door [of the palace of the king] without being able to see him. In fact, every day he went to the door [of the palace] of the king to ask the porters to deliver a written letter to the king, but they had always refused him, rejecting it. After a year, while King Theodosius was busy praying, that he heard a voice say: “O Theodosius, have you forgotten your friend and companion Theophilus?” Theodosius said: “My Lord, who are you?” He replied: “I am the man who was with you in the desert. And as I made you become king, I will make Theophilus become Patriarch.” Theodosius sent at once to call Theophilus, who came before him, and greeted

him. King Theodosius said: "Believe me, my friend, I had completely forgotten about you and never has the memory of you touched my mind; but yesterday, while I was praying, the man I had seen in the dream called me and made me remember you." Theophilus answered, "I saw yesterday in a dream a man who told me: "As I made Theodosius become king, so I will make you become patriarch." While they were talking thus, in came the chamberlain and said to the king: "The inhabitants of Alexandria have sent their men to tell you that the patriarch Timothy has died and they are looking for a man to make [their] patriarch." The king appointed Theophilus Patriarch instantly (10) and sent him to Alexandria. He held the seat for twenty-eight years and died. As soon as he arrived in Alexandria, Theophilus tore down the idols that were in the city. There was, in Alexandria, a large marble slab on which were written three Theta's and all around them was written: "He who can interpret the meaning of these three Thetas will come into possession of what they conceal." Theophilus said: "I will interpret it myself. The first theta means *theos*, or God. The second theta is for the king Theodosius while the third theta is for the Patriarch Theophilus"(11). He then removed the marble slab and under it there was a lot of money. He wrote to the king Theodosius making him aware and King Theodosius replied: "Build churches with the money." The Patriarch Theophilus did then build a large church in the name of King Theodosius and adorned it all with gold. He built other churches in Alexandria, including the Church of Martmaryam [i.e., Santa Maria] and the church of Mar Yuhanna [i.e., Saint John].

7. The King Theodosius had two children. He called the greater Arcadius and the lesser Honorius, and he took great care to find them a tutor. He sent to ask those of Rome to find him a wise man who could educate his children. They chose a philosopher named Arsenius (12), and sent him and he became tutor to the children of the king. One day the king surprised Arsenius in the act of teaching the children while standing, while the children were sitting. Then he chided him, saying: "Why are you acting in this way?" Arsenius said: "It is so that I can educate your children, O king." But the king ordered him to sit and the children to stand in front of him. Learning what they needed, Arsenius beat Arcadius so violently that he left a mark on the skin, and for this reason Arcadius harbored great resentment against him. But Arsenius beat him simply so that when he became king after his father, he would remember the pain of the beating when he happened to flog some of his subjects.

8. In the eighth year of the reign of Theodosius the Great, the young men who had fled away from the king Decius by hiding in the cave, in the city of Ephesus, reappeared (13). In fact the shepherds, as time passed, had ended up removing, one after another, the bricks with which the entrance of the cave had been blocked, so much as to leave an opening like a door. The youths believed that they had slept for only one night and said to their companion who was to buy them food: "Go, buy us something to eat and try to learn something of the king Decius". When he was at the entrance of the cave and saw that the building that had been there was demolished, he almost could not believe his eyes, but kept walking until he came to the gate of the city of Ephesus on top of which he saw erected a large cross, and, doubting himself, he said: "I am just dreaming", and began to rub his eyes and look to the right and left to find something known to him, but he saw nothing and was disconcerted. Then he said to himself: "Maybe I've gone the wrong way, or maybe this is not the city of Ephesus." He went into the city, took a dirham he had with him and handed it to the baker to get bread. Seeing the man, so strangely dressed, panicked and terrified, with a coin on which was engraved the image of King Decius, the baker was confused and thought that he was dealing with someone who had found a (buried) treasure. So he said: "Where did you get this money?" But the

young man did not answer. The baker then called other people, who came forward and spoke with him, but he did not give any response. Then they took him to the patrician, the governor of the city, named Antipater. The patrician questioned him but the young man did not answer. He threatened him, but he still did not open his mouth. Then there went to him Mark, the bishop of the city, who spoke to him, but he did not answer. Then he tried to frighten him by saying: "Talk to us, and tell us where you got this money, otherwise we will kill you." But the young man continued to stay silent for fear of the king Decius, because he thought that he was still alive. Then they tortured him, and, forced by the great pain, he said to them: "Where is the king Decius?" They answered: "The king Decius is long dead! Many other kings reigned after him and the official religion is now Christianity and our king is Theodosius the Great." Having been thus reassured, the young man told them what had happened. Those that were with him went to the cave, they saw his companions and found the copper box with inside it the lead sheet on which Thaddeus, patrician of the king Decius, had written their story and their misadventures with the king Decius. Great was their wonder and they wrote to King Theodosius, informing him of the matter. The king immediately set out, arrived in the city of Ephesus, saw them and talked with them. But three days later, returning to the cave, he found them dead. He then decided to leave them where they were and to give them burial in that cave, and he constructed a church in their name, and they began to celebrate a festival in their honour, every year, on the same day. King Theodosius then returned to Constantinople.

From the time the youths had fled away from the king Decius into the cave and had slept, until the time when they were dead and reappeared, as we read in the history of their martyrdom, there had passed three hundred and seventy-two years. In the thirteenth year of the reign of Theodosius the Great Sirnīqun was made patriarch of Rome (14). He held the office for twelve years and died. In the seventeenth year of his reign died Niqtāriyūs (15), the patriarch of Constantinople, after having held the office for sixteen years. After him John Chrysostom was made patriarch of Constantinople (16). He held the office for five years and six months, was sent into exile and died there. In the sixth year of his reign Flavian was made patriarch of Antioch (17). He held the office for six years and died. In the twelfth year of his reign Porphyry was made patriarch of Antioch (18). He held the office for ten years and died. In the eighth year of his reign John was made patriarch of Jerusalem (19). He held the office for sixteen years and died. At the time of King Theodosius lived Epiphanius, Bishop of Cyprus. King Theodosius had built the church of Gethsemane in Jerusalem in which was the tomb of Martmaryam (20). It was destroyed afterwards by the Persians, when they invaded Jerusalem, along with the other churches in the city, and still lies in ruins today.

9. In the tenth year of the reign of King Theodosius died Sabur, king of the Persians, son of Sabur. After him reigned Bahram (21), son of Sabur, king of the Persians, for eleven years. The reign of Theodosius was a reign of tranquility and peace. On the death of King Theodosius reigned his sons Arcadius and Honorius. Arcadius (22) reigned over Rum in Constantinople for thirteen years, and his brother Honorius (23) over the city of Rome for eleven years. This was in the seventh year of the reign of Bahram, son of Sabur, king of the Persians. The king Arcadio sent for his preceptor Arsenius to kill him, because of his smoldering resentment against him. But Arsenius heard of it and fled to Alexandria, embracing the monastic life in the monastery which is located in Wadi Habib, near Tarnūt, named al-Asqīt (24). When later Arcadius had a son that he named Theodosius, he asked after his tutor Arsenius because he was concerned with the education of his son, and he was told that he had become a monk in the monastery of Scete. The king then sent for him and assured him that he would never and in no way make an attempt on his life. But Arsenius

refused. He was indeed so sweet and good to the messenger that the latter left him in peace and departed. Fearing, however, that the king might try to take by force, Arsenius went to Upper Egypt and found a home on Mount al-Buqattam (25), at a village called Tura (26). He stayed there for three years and he died. Then the king Arcadius sent another messenger with the task of taking Arsenius by force, but when he came to the monastery of Scetis he was told that Arsenius was already dead on Mount al-Buqattam (27) The messenger returned from king and told him what he had heard. The king then sent for a monk named Tarāsiyūs, and giving him a large sum of money said: "Go and build at the tomb of Arsenius a monastery that bears his name." Tarāsiyūs went to Egypt and erected over the grave of Arsenio a monastery on Mount al-Buqattam (28), which is still called "Dayr al-Qusayr" (29).

10. There lived in Egypt a bishop who had died leaving three children, who then all three became monks who were going to live in the monastery of Scete. Theophilus, Patriarch of Alexandria, took one and made him bishop of a certain city of Egypt, then appointed the other two as deacons and kept them with him as disciples. In fact, they remained in the service of Theophilus, Patriarch of Alexandria, but just three years afterwards, the two young men manifested a desire to return to Scete. Theophilus, Patriarch of Alexandria, was opposed to their request, but the two young men went away without his permission. Then [the patriarch] forbade them to approach the Eucharist for the period of three years, and the two went to John Chrysostom asking him to write to Theophilus, Patriarch of Alexandria, a letter requesting him to allow them to receive the Eucharist. John Chrysostom sent them, accompanied with a letter from him, to Theophilus, Patriarch of Alexandria, asking him to welcome them, but the patriarch was adamant. The two then went back to John Chrysostom, and he allowed them to communicate. Thus it was that the disagreements arose between Theophilus, Patriarch of Alexandria, and John Chrysostom.

11. At the time of Arcadius, king of Rum, there lived a very wealthy man, named Thāwkatistus. Because of some envy, with false witnesses, he was accused before the king, saying that he had renounced the Christian faith and insulted the king. So the king sent him into exile and confiscated his goods. The wife [of Thāwkatistus] owned a vineyard. Happening to pass before the vineyard, and finding it so beautiful that she wanted it, Queen Eudoxia asked: "Whose is this vineyard?" They told her that it belonged to the wife of the man whom the king had sent into exile. The queen then said: "I wish it were mine and I could make my walks in it!" Some ministers told her: "It is the custom that everything belongs to a king that is under his feet." On hearing these words the queen took possession of the vineyard. The woman then had recourse to John Chrysostom, and John sent word to the queen to return the vineyard to the legitimate owner. And because the queen refused to do so, he went personally to talk to her, but the queen did not deign to make any response. He then appealed to the fear of God and said: "Take care that there doesn't happen to you what happened to Yezabel, wife of Akhāb, king of Israel." The queen did not agree and ordered John to be driven from the building. John went away saddened and gave orders to his deacons to close the door on the queen if she presented herself to enter the church. They did as ordered and the queen retired in anger.

12. Epiphanius, Bishop of Cyprus, was in Constantinople, to attend to some of his business with the King. The queen summoned him and said to him: "John has turned against the truth and has meddled in affairs that do not concern him, and set himself as my accuser. How can I remove him from the office he is occupying?" "If things are as you say," replied Epiphanius, "I will urge him to

repent. If he repents, then it will be better for him, otherwise I will destroy him". But the queen insisted: "If he is not destroyed, then I will open the temples of the idols and I'll make people worship them." Then the queen commissioned some bishops and deacons to go to the king to testify before him against John, telling him that he was a transgressor of the law and that the population would not support him and hated him. And since those bishops envied John, because of his great learning, they lent themselves to the queen's game, and did just as she had taught them to do. The king Arcadius then ordered that John be removed from office. Then John Chrysostom wrote to Epiphanius, Bishop of Cyprus, saying: "You, Epiphanius, you have helped to send me into exile and you have supported the conspiracy against me, saying things about me unbecoming to the position you occupy. But know that you will not reach your city before you die." Epiphanius answered him saying: "O John, I said only good things of you, and I have made every effort just to defend you, and with all diligence I tried to avert your doom, but all was in vain. He who is present sees what the absent does not see. But as you accuse me of things that I do not know and I did not say, know that you will not reach the place to which you have been exiled before you die." Epiphanius then set off for Cyprus, and he died on the ship when there was just half a day to go before arrival. John Chrysostom, in his turn, died before reaching the place to which he had been confined. At Constantinople there was then a terrible earthquake, violent thunder and lightning, lightning and rain. The king said: "All this is because we have banished John Chrysostom". Therefore he gave orders to bring back the body to Constantinople and to bury it. This was in the sixth year of the reign of Arcadius. John was called Chrysostom, or "golden mouth", because a woman who was mourning the dead exclaimed in the lamentations: "O John, O golden mouth". So he was called "golden mouth". After him another John was made patriarch of Constantinople (30). He held the office for two years and died. After him Eusebius was made patriarch of Constantinople. He held the office for a year and died. After him Iġnādiyūs was made patriarch of Constantinople. He held the office for three years and died. After him Atticus was made patriarch of Constantinople (31). He held the seat for fifteen years and died. This was in the twelfth year of the reign of Arcadius. In the eighth year of his reign Anastasius was made patriarch of Rome (32). He held the office for three years and died. In the eleventh year of his reign Abrakītiyus was made patriarch of Rome (33). He held the office for fifteen years and died. In the eighth year of his reign Prailius was made patriarch of Jerusalem (34). He held the office for twelve years and died. In the fifth year of his reign Paulinus was made patriarch of Antioch (35). He held the office for four years and died. In the ninth year of his reign Aghrū was made patriarch of Antioch (36). He held the see for five years and died.

13. In the fourth year of his reign, i.e. the reign of Arcadius, king of Rum, there reigned over the Persians Yazdaġard (37), son of Bahram, called "the sinner", for twenty years. Theophilus, Patriarch of Alexandria, built a large church in Alexandria in the name of Arcadius, king of Rum (38). Arcadius, king of Rum, died after reigning for thirteen years. After him his son Theodosius, called Theodosius the Less (39), reigned over Rum for forty years. This happened in the eleventh year of the reign of Yazdaġard, son of Bahram, king of the Persians. In the ninth year of the reign of Theodosius, Yazdaġard, son of Bahram, invaded the empire and between the two there was a violent battle with many casualties on both sides, so that both withdrew. In the thirteenth year of the reign of Theodosius Zosimus was made patriarch of Rome (40). He held the office for only one year and died. After him Yūnūmātiyūs was made patriarch of Rome (41). He held the office for three years

and died. After him Celestine was made patriarch of Rome (42). He held the office for ten years and died.

14. In his fifth year in office there was the third council, against Nestorius, in Ephesus (43). In the first year of his reign, i.e. the reign of Theodosius the Less, Cyril of Alexandria (44) was made Patriarch. He held the see for thirty years and died. In his twenty-first year in office there was the third council, against Nestorius. In the first year of the reign of Theodosius the Less Alexander was made patriarch of Antioch (45). He held the office for four years and died. After him Baradūtus was made patriarch of Antioch (46). He held the office for six years and died. After him John was made patriarch of Antioch (47). He held the office for seventeen years died. In his eleventh year in office there was the third council, against Nestorius. In the seventh year of the reign of Theodosius the Less, Flavius was made patriarch of Jerusalem (48). He held the office for thirty-eight years and died. In his fourteenth year in office there was the third council, against Nestorius, and in his thirty-seventh year in office took place the fourth council, against Dioscorus, in the city of Chalcedon (49).

15. In the fourteenth year of the reign of Theodosius the Less, Sisinnius was made patriarch of Constantinople (50). He held the office for three years and died. After him Nestorius was made patriarch of Constantinople (51). He held the office for four years and two months, and then was excommunicated and deposed. Nestorius claimed that the Virgin Mary is not the true mother of God because this means that there would be two sons: the one, the God who is born of the Father, and the other, the man who was born of Mary. He argued then that this man, who claimed to be the Christ, was joined with the Son in virtue of love, and he was called God and Son of God, not in the proper sense, but as a gift and associate of the two names, as well as a title of honor, like one of the prophets. Cyril, patriarch of Alexandria, came to know what Nestorius was saying, and wrote him a letter, in which he highlighted the scandal of his doctrine and the perversity of his conduct, urging him to return to the truth. Many were the letters that he wrote, but Nestorius did not desist from his doctrine. Then Cyril, patriarch of Alexandria, wrote to John, Patriarch of Antioch, asking him to write to Nestorius, and show the monstrosity and absurdity of his doctrine, and why they were appealing to him to return to the truth. John, Patriarch of Antioch, then wrote to Nestorius telling him that if he did not return to the truth, they would meet and they would have him excommunicated. Many were the letters that he wrote, but Nestorius did not recede from his doctrine. Instead he persisted in his error and his depraved belief blinded him. Then John, Patriarch of Antioch, wrote to Cyril, patriarch of Alexandria, informing him that Nestorius remained firm in his depraved belief. Cyril wrote then to Celestine (52), patriarch of Rome, to Juvenal (53), Patriarch of Jerusalem, and to John, Patriarch of Antioch, asking them to come together in the city of Ephesus to examine the doctrine of Nestorius and to try to get him to recant. Otherwise he would be abandoned to his fate, excommunicated and deposed.

16. Two hundred bishops gathered in the city of Ephesus (54). There presided at that council Cyril, patriarch of Alexandria, Celestine, patriarch of Rome and Juvenal, Patriarch of Jerusalem. John had promised them that he would be present, but since he was late in coming, Cyril, patriarch of Alexandria, did not wait further. He gathered the bishops who sent word to Nestorius, who was in Ephesus, that he should also be present. But Nestorius refused to join them. They sent for him three times and since he lingered, and finally decided not to show up, they examined his doctrine, and, judging it worthy of excommunication, voted him anathema and consigned him to exile. They established thus that the Virgin is [true] Mother of God and that Christ is true God and [true] man,

with two natures and one in regard to the person: quite different from love. Nestorius was saying in fact that the unity is only a combination of the two persons and it was therefore necessary to assert that the true unity means that there can be only one person with two natures. They had already excommunicated Nestorius when John, Patriarch of Antioch, arrived. Seeing that they had already excommunicated Nestorius even before he was present, he was annoyed and said: "You have been unjust with him and have undeservedly excommunicated Nestorius." He sided then with Nestorius, gathered the bishops who were with him, and excommunicated Cyril, patriarch of Alexandria and Simon, bishop of Ephesus. Faced with the hostile behavior of John, the companions of Cyril dissociated themselves from the others and left Ephesus. The companions of Cyril and the Orientals formed thus two sides, and there were great struggles among them. But King Theodosius intervened promptly and re-established peace between them. The Orientals then drew up a paper in which they claimed that the holy virgin Mary gave birth [really] to our God and our Lord Jesus Christ, who is of the same nature with his Father, and of the same nature with men as to his humanity. They also recognized the two natures, one hypostasis and one person, and excommunicated Nestorius. They sent as bearer of the paper Paul, Metropolitan of Homs, to Cyril, patriarch of Alexandria, who read and approved it, responding: "My faith is in line with that expressed by you and contained in your paper." In this way agreement was re-established between Cyril and the Orientals. Some have said that when Cyril received the letter of the Orientals he did not find that it entirely conformed to the dictates of true faith in that he, personally, did not intend to assert "two natures and one hypostasis." But they are certainly wrong because all the writings of Cyril speak, in fact, in favor of this claim. Cyril wrote a copy of the paper of the Orientals to Hilary, bishop of the city of Corinth, to Acacius, bishop of Malatiah (55) and many other bishops in order to let them know that the Orientals had returned to the true faith, and that they did not at all share the doctrine of Nestorius, but that of the second council of the hundred and fifty bishops who had gathered in Constantinople to excommunicate Macedonius. From that second council to this third council of two hundred bishops, who had gathered at Ephesus and had excommunicated Nestorius, there had passed fifty years. This happened in the twenty-first year of the reign of Theodosius the Less, king of Rum.



## Chapter 14

Chap. XIV Refutation of Nestorius and Nestorianism by Sa`id ibn Batrīq – Against Nestorius, Eutyches, Dioscorus, Severus, Jacob Baradaeus and their followers – On the various types of union – The person, two natures, two wills of Christ (p.239)

1. Exiled, Nestorius fled to Egypt and he settled in the upper part of the country in a place called Ikhmīm, where he remained for seven years. Then he died, and he was buried in a village called Saqlān, where there occurred, especially in the place where he was buried, a heat wave so intense that no one could walk and travel in the area. The teaching of Nestorius was later forgotten, but it was revived long afterwards by Barsawmā, Metropolitan of Nisibis, at the time of Justinian, the king of Rum, and Qabād, son of Firuz, king of the Persians, and spread in the East, and especially among the inhabitants of Persia. It was for this reason that the Nestorians became numerous in the East, in Iraq, in Mosul, al-Furat and Mesopotamia. They were called Nestorians after Nestorius. After Nestorius, Maximus was made patriarch of Constantinople. He held the office for three years and died. Even before he was buried, Proclus was made patriarch of Constantinople. Proclus prayed over the body of Maximus and had him buried. He held the office after him, for thirteen years and died.

2. Sa`id Ibn Batrīq, the physician, said: “It seemed appropriate to respond to the Nestorians in this part of my book and to show the falsity and absurdity of their doctrine, because it is all a mistake, and in these days they have even misrepresented the original doctrine of Nestorius, asserting that he said that Christ is two Substances and two Persons, perfect God in his Person and in his Substance, and perfect man in his Person and in his Substance, and that Mary created the Christ in what is regarding his humanity, and not in respect of His divinity, as the Father, as they say, has begotten a God and not man, while Maria begot a man and not a God.” He answers them: “If things are as you say, then Christ should be two Christs and two Sons, or one Christ a real God and a real Son of God, and one Christ a real man and one Son a real man. Because it must have been necessary for Mary to have, or not to have, generated the Christ. But if He was generated, He was generated either spiritually or bodily. Now if He was generated regarding the body, [He] must be different from the one that generated the Father, and then you would need two Christs. If He was generated spiritually, Christ will then be one Son, one Person and one Christ. Proof of this is the example of an iron plate, which is put in the fire, and from which results a single sword, burning, cracking, sparkling and shining. It cannot be said that it is the part of the iron to burn and shine, because the iron without the fire does not burn, nor is the glowing part that cuts from the fire because the fire in itself can only light up and burn. In the light of this example it is so true what we Melkites say, namely that Christ is one Person, both perfect God and perfect man, and so is refuted the assertions of the Nestorians, that Christ is two.

3. He also asks them: “Tell us about the humanity of He who to whom the divinity is united and who was called Christ: did he continue to be Christ from the moment in which He was conceived in the womb of Mary, his mother, until she bore him, while she nursed him, while He became a young man, was crucified and buried? Or maybe until he reached the age of thirty he was like one of us men, and only then was united to humanity and became Christ?” If they answer that He was not Christ while he was in the womb of his mother Mary, and that Mary gave birth only to a man, who, until the age of thirty was like one of us and that only later the divinity was joined to humanity

and became Christ, they prove in this the reliability of their doctrine, but accuse of falsity the gospel, Paul and all the books of the church and all that arises out of the Christian faith. We respond that the divinity was united to humanity at conception and that He was Christ then, in birth and breast-feeding until he was crucified and killed, and we claim that the Virgin Mary gave birth to one God, one Christ and only one Person.

*\*\* The remainder of the chapter is devoted to theological arguments which I myself do not understand, so can hardly translate. I have therefore omitted them.*

*Section 21 finishes with the following words:*

To men of understanding and discernment, it is clear that Christ is One , in the union of a single Person to the Eternal Word, and that He has two natures:the divine, that has always been, and the human that he has created for himself; and the absurdity of what is professed by the Nestorians and Jacobites is also clear. Were it not for the reluctance that we felt from the fact that this would have made our book too long, and run the risk of moving away from the goal that we have set ourself, I would have explained and proven more than I have done. But those who wish to learn these things in abridged form and clearly set forth, should read my book entitled "Book of the Dispute between the Heretic and the Christian."<sup>63</sup> In this book, in fact, I have demonstrated the validity of the Christian doctrine, namely that of the Melkites, refuting the assertions of its opponents.

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<sup>63</sup> Pirone adds that this book referred to is probably the "*Kitāb al-gadal bayna'l-mukhālif wa'n-nasrām*", attributed commonly to Eutychius and published under the title of "*Kitāb al-Burhān*" (The Book of Demonstration) in CSCO, vol. 209, tome 22, Louvain 1961. Reservations about the authenticity of the work are expressed by "Breydy, *op. cit.*, pp. 77-82 and cap. VI."

## Chapter 15

Chap. XV End of Yazdagard and reign of Bahram Gor – Heresy of Eutyches – The Synod of 8 November 448 against Eutyches – The robber-synod of Ephesus: August 449 – Eudoxia, wife of Theodosius – Marcian reigns in Constantinople – the Council of Chalcedon in 451 against the heretic Eutyches and Dioscorus – Repercussions within the realm (p.259)

1. Let us return now to our purpose and to the place in history where we were. As for Yazdagard, son of Bahram, called “the Sinner”, king of the Persians, he was a brutal man, rough and of perverse conduct. [The Persians] regretted making him their king, but nevertheless they were unhappy at the idea of killing him, because they did not want to accept that their kingship could degenerate so in their king. It was therefore said that they saw a horse go forward and stop at the door [of the palace] of the king. The people came around, admiring the beauty of its figure and the perfection of its features, and they informed the king. He came out, admired it and felt great joy. He ordered them to saddle it, because he wanted to ride it, then he approached it, stroked its head and took it by the forelock and mane. Then he tried to stroke its back, but when he was behind [the horse], it kicked him, striking him in the liver and killed him. Then the horse, as if satisfied with what it had done, began to run and no one could catch it. Then the people exclaimed: “God did this for us, moved with compassion toward us.”

2. The reign of Yazdagard “the Sinner” lasted twenty years, five months and eighteen days. When Yazdagard died, the leaders of Persia came together and said: “We do not intend to elect as our king any of his family that would treat us the same way.” Yazdagard had a son named Bahram, whom they did not permit to attend at any of their actions. He then said to some of them: “Do not elect anyone as your king unless he has these seven qualities: that he is better than all of you for: [his] skill in governing, in considering things, for the truth of what he says, for [his] strong courage, for [his] eloquence, for [his] clemency in ‘administration and for [his] knowledge of the treachery that an enemy may attempt”. They answered: “And where would we ever find such a man?” He said to them: “Promise me, on your honour, that if I show you, you will make him your king.” They promised him, and having full security in their sincerity he told them: “I am the man.” And so it was that they elected him their king. Bahram, son of Yazdağard, called Bahram Gur (1), reigned over the Persians for eighteen years and eleven months (2). This was in the twelfth year of the reign of Theodosius the Lesser, king of the Rum.

He reigned over the Persians, treating them well, and they loved him. Later, however, he preferred to abandon himself with young and entertaining company, to the point that the people began to disapprove, and neighboring kings thought they might take possession of his territory. In fact, he was attacked by Khagan the Great (3), king of the Turks, at the head of twenty-five myriads of soldiers. Each king of the Turks was called Khagan. He marched until he was encamped at as-Sa`id. Then Bahram was told: “O king, we must tell you to put aside your pleasures. Come, take care of yourself and the people, look after business, defend and throw off fear”. Heedless of their words, Bahram left the country and went to the regions of Adharbayğān and Armenia, to live life as a hermit at the local fire temple. But the people had no doubt that he had behaved in this way just to escape. Then they met in council and said: “We can not do anything against Khagan. Let us pay a personal tax as a ransom for our people and our land.” But Marsi (4), brother of Bahram, and the judge Azadnār (5) said: “We are not willing to participate in this matter.” At the news of the

submission of the population of Persis, Khagan abandoned his military preparations and put down his arms. Then there went to Bahram a man who told him the news, how the Khagan believed everything peaceful and that he was safe from any surprise. Bahram then marched against him and surprised him in the night, killed Khagan with his own hands and then exterminated the men who had fled. Bahram then returned safe and sound, and he took the family of Khagan, his soldiers and their wives, who had been taken prisoner, and put them at the disposal of the population. When the news spread in the territory of the Turks of what had happened to Khagan, they fled to their more remote lands. Bahram I commended the governor of Khurasan and his brother Marsi (6) and retired to Adharbaygān. He stopped nowhere, nor did he enter into any dwelling except as a hermit and offered sacrifices of thanksgiving to God. When he came to the fire temple of Adharbaygān, he dismounted and walked on foot, until he entered, thus showing the deep respect he had for that place and to thank God. He then gave orders to hang on the door of the temple the pearls, rubies and precious stones from the sword of Khaqan, a set of pearls. He then went into Iraq, where he remained for a few days. Then he marched towards [the country] of Rum with the intention to invade.

When Theodosius, king of Rum, heard the news, he sent a man named Istrātiyūs to see in what state was the kingdom of Bahram. He returned to the king, and he told him that it was poorly defended. King Theodosius then thought to raise his hands against Bahram, and he made the necessary preparations and went out against him at the head of his soldiers. The battle between the two was hard-fought, and many fell on both sides, and both fled. King Theodosius returned to Constantinople, while Bahram, in disguise, walked and entered the territory of India.

He stayed there for some time without anyone knowing who he was, and they respected him for his strength, for his courage, for his skill in killing wild animals and for his boldness in dealing with them. One day he learned that there was an elephant in their land that had attacked and killed many people. He asked them to lead him to it, but they said to him; "You are a foreigner and it is not right to expose you to danger." Learning this from the king [of the Indians], he took with him a man to lead him to the neighborhood where was the elephant. As soon as he saw it, Bahram threw a spear that lodged between the eyes of the elephant, then hit it with a dart and then another, until he killed it. He cut off its head and brought it to the king. The king felt great admiration and asked him who he was. "I", replied Bahram, "am a Persian nobleman. But I fell from grace in the eyes of my king, and I have fled away from him, coming here to you, attracted by the fame of your power and your mercy." The king had an enemy who had previously spared his life. Then he threatened him and sent to him to demand tribute. The king was deeply distressed. But Bahram encouraged him and said: "Do not worry any more, because I will prevent him from hurting you." Bahram rode with the king and his army to fight against the enemy. Then Bahram said to the generals of India: "Look at their backs, and do what I do." Bahram then attacked them, dispersed their troops, began to strike men from the shoulder to the back, splitting them in two with a single blow; cutting off the elephant's trunk with one blow and bringing it down, he unseated the rider, knocking him to the ground and killing him, he took two men by the head, gripping one with his right hand and the other with the left and striking them against each other he bashed out their brains. Bahram's men gave themselves to attacking and killing and they carried off great booty. Then the king and Bahram returned. The king gave to Bahram his daughter and gave him a gift of Danil (7), Makran (8) and the surrounding areas of Sind. Bahram asked him to put it in writing and seal it as a guarantee. The king did so. Bahram then returned to his own kingdom and imposed tribute on those territories

that had been given to him, causing their riches to flow into Persia. Some Persian [authors] have passed down that Bahram Gur was under the tutelage of an-Nu'man b. al-Mundhir the Lakhmid (9), king of the Arabs of the desert, and when Bahram had news of the death of his father Yazdagard, he marched with the Arabs who had followed him up to camp in as-Sawad (10), where he remained to dispute the realm with the noble Persians until they recognized his right and elected him king.

3. Bahram Gur reigned over the Persians, after his father Yazdagard, son of Bahram, for eighteen years. This happened in the thirtieth year of the reign of Theodosius the Less, king of the Rum. In the twenty-seventh year of the reign of Theodosius, king of Rum, Sixtus was made patriarch of Rome. He held the office for eight years and died. In the thirty-fifth year of his reign Leo was made patriarch of Rome. He held the office for twenty-one years and died. In his ninth year of office there was the fourth council, in the city of Chalcedon. In the twenty-eighth year of the reign of Theodosius Domnus was made patriarch of Antioch. He held the office for twenty-one years and died. In the thirty-ninth year of his reign Flavian was made patriarch of Constantinople. He held the office for two years and died. In the one [same] year the Jacobite Dioscorus was made Patriarch of Alexandria. He held the office for six years, was excommunicated and banished.

4. There was in Constantinople a monastic physician named Eutyches, who was saying that the body of Christ is different from our [bodies] in terms of its nature, and that Christ had two natures before the incarnation and after the incarnation one nature. This is the doctrine of the Jacobites. This monk Eutyches was the first to formulate such a doctrine. Having heard of this, Eusebius, Bishop of Dorilea, went to him, argued with him, set forth his arguments and refuted the doctrine. Then Eusebius went to Flavian, Patriarch of Constantinople, spoke of Eutyches, the falsity of his doctrine and of how he had sowed confusion in the doctrine of the population of Constantinople. Flavian, Patriarch of Constantinople, sent for Eutyches, telling him to come to him, and he called a council in Constantinople (17) in which he disputed with him. Eutyches said: "If we were to say that Christ has two natures, we would be supporting what Nestorius says. We say instead that Christ has only one nature and one person, because he is the result of two natures that existed [as such] before the union. But when he took a body, he has ceased the duality and became one nature and one person." Flavian, Patriarch of Constantinople, answered him, saying: "If, as you argue, the Christ had only one nature, then the nature existing from eternity was made again, and that the nature that always was would be the nature that was not. But if it were possible that the nature that has always been is [also] made again, then he who is standing is also sitting, heat is cold, light is dark, and so we might say of other nonsense that can not coexist in a one part." He [= Eutyches] however, refused to withdraw from his doctrine and Flavian, Patriarch of Constantinople excommunicated him, but did not remove him from Constantinople, because he was a physician and people needed him. King Theodosius heard the doctrine. Eutyches spoke in his defense before the king Theodosius, saying that Flavian had unfairly excommunicated him, and he asked the king to write to all the patriarchs, [ordering them] to get together and to review his case. The king then wrote to Dioscorus, Patriarch of Alexandria, Domnus, Patriarch of Antioch, to Leo, patriarch of Rome and Juvenal, Patriarch of Jerusalem, to present themselves together with their bishops in order to examine the case of Eutyches. They gathered together in the city of Ephesus.

5. This was the second council which was held in the city of Ephesus. Presiding at this council were Dioscorus, Patriarch of Alexandria, Domnus, Patriarch of Antioch, Juvenal, Patriarch of Jerusalem and the legates of Leo, patriarch of Rome. They examined the case of Eutyches along with that of

Eusebius, bishop of Dorilea, and Flavian, Patriarch of Constantinople. Dioscorus, Patriarch of Alexandria, confirmed the doctrine of Eutyches and excommunicated Flavian, Patriarch of Constantinople, and Eusebius, bishop of Dorilea. But Domnus, Patriarch of Antioch, Juvenal, Patriarch of Jerusalem, Modestus, bishop of Ancyra, and Asa, Bishop of Edessa, along with many other bishops and the legates of Leo, patriarch of Rome, disapproved of the behavior of Dioscorus and rejected his doctrine as absurd. Dioscorus then excommunicated them and wrote to Leo, patriarch of Rome, and to all the priests, imposing excommunication and interdiction from the celebration of the Eucharist, if they refused to embrace the doctrine of Eutyches. Convinced of this doctrine, Dioscorus left the city of Ephesus. This happened in the fortieth year of the reign of Theodosius the Less. The true faith was thus corrupted and the doctrine of Eutyches became the creed and [official] doctrine, especially in Egypt and Alexandria. Even King Theodosius embraced the doctrine of Eutyches.

6. In the fortieth year of his reign, Flavian, Patriarch of Constantinople, who had excommunicated Dioscorus, died. After him Athanasius was made patriarch of Constantinople. He held the office for nine years and died. In his fourth year in office there was the fourth council, in the city of Chalcedon. In the forty-first year of the reign of Theodosius Domnus, Patriarch of Antioch, who had excommunicated Dioscorus, died. After him Maximus was made patriarch of Antioch. He held the office for four years and died. In his third year in office there was the fourth council, in the city of Chalcedon. King Theodosius had a wife named Eudoxia. The king was given an apple out of season and the king gave the apple to his wife Eudoxia. One day when he was at the house of one of his nobles, he found the apple that had given to his wife. The king reluctantly endured it, he was sad, and he thought that his wife Eudoxia was the mistress of the patrician. So he exiled her to Jerusalem.

7. Theodosius the Less, king of Rum, died and after him Marian reigned over Rum, for six years. This happened in the fourteenth year of the reign of Yazdagard, son of Bahram, king of the Persians. When Marcian became king, the bishops of each country came to him, wished him a prosperous reign and spoke of the injustice that Dioscorus, Patriarch of Alexandria, had done at the second council held in Ephesus, the excommunication that had launched against the patriarchs who had died from the abuse they suffered because of him, of his adherence to the doctrine of the wicked Eutyches, his statement made of this, how he had introduced corruption into religion and the creed and how the doctrine of Eutyches had gained the upper hand among the people. King Marcian ordered [his scribes] to write to Leo, patriarch of Rome, to Maximus, Patriarch of Antioch and to Juvenal, Patriarch of Jerusalem, who were noted by him along with their metropolitans and bishops. He ordered [them] also to write to the bishops of the land of Rum, to gather in the city of Chalcedon to consider and examine the doctrine of Eutyches, what Dioscorus, Patriarch of Alexandria, had done, in adhering to the doctrine of Eutyches and excommunicating the patriarchs who were dead, and to define the Creed in light of what had been laid down by the three holy councils. Six hundred bishops gathered in the city of Chalcedon. Anatolius, patriarch of Constantinople, Maximus, Patriarch of Antioch and Juvenal, Patriarch of Jerusalem, presided over the meeting. Leo, patriarch of Rome, wrote a letter to the king Marcian in which he set forth the true faith, that is the creed of the Melkites, and sent it to him by means of a priest chosen from among his disciples, named Boniface. King Marcian sent the letter with the priest Boniface to the city of Chalcedon, to the bishops gathered there, and the priest Boniface was counted with the six

hundred and thirty. There were at the council the disciples of St Euthymius, i.e. Stephen, bishop of Barabiyā, and John, Bishop of the Barbarians.

Having gathered, they examined the falsity of the doctrine of Dioscorus, Patriarch of Alexandria, and took note of his adherence to the doctrine of Eutyches. Dioscorus was then excommunicated, and Eutyches was excommunicated, and they confirmed that Jesus Christ our Lord, is man and God, sharing in the same substance as the Father in his divinity and of the same substance with our humanity, with two natures, perfect in his divinity and perfect in his humanity, one Christ. Also they confirmed what the three hundred and eighteen bishops who had gathered in the city of Nicaea had already said, and embraced their doctrine, that is to say that the Son is consubstantial with the Father, light from light, true God from true God. They excommunicated Arius and confirmed what the second council of the hundred and fifty bishops who had gathered in Constantinople against Macedonius had said, saying that the Holy Spirit is God, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit are one God, one nature, three persons and three substances, and they excommunicated Macedonius. They confirmed what the Third Council of Two hundred bishops who had gathered in the city of Ephesus for the first time against Nestorius had defined, saying that the Virgin Mary gave birth to God, i.e. our Lord Jesus Christ, who is of the same divine nature as the Father and of the same human nature as men, and testified that Christ is two natures, one person and one substance. So they excommunicated Nestorius, and they excommunicated Dioscorus and anyone who professed his doctrine and deposed them. They excommunicated the second council which was held at Ephesus. At this council the archdeacon of Alexandria, named Prūtāwus, was present, and they made him patriarch in place of the wicked and excommunicated Dioscorus. From the third Council of Ephesus of two hundred bishops, who gathered at Ephesus for the first time and who had excommunicated Nestorius, to this Fourth Council, in which there were six hundred and thirty bishops who excommunicated Dioscorus and Eutyches and which was held in the city of Chalcedon, there were twenty-one years.

The inhabitants of Egypt and Alexandria had embraced the doctrine of Dioscorus and Eutyches and believed that Dioscorus had been excommunicated unfairly. But through fear of king Marcian they did not dare to openly profess their doctrine. As for Dioscorus, after being dismissed he went to Palestine and Jerusalem, and he corrupted the faith of those who were in Palestine and Jerusalem to the point that he professed his doctrine and there appointed his own bishops. When Eudoxia, wife of King Theodosius, heard talk of the doctrine of Dioscorus, she embraced it and sent him many gifts. At Jerusalem St Euthymius battled, and defended the doctrine of the Melkites. So St Euthymius sent a message to Eudoxia: "Do not embrace the doctrine of Dioscorus because he has been deposed and excommunicated, he and all those who hold this doctrine. Return then, to the truth into which you were at first." Eudoxia welcomed the words of St Euthymius, abandoned the doctrine of Dioscorus, returned to the truth and sent him many gifts. Eudoxia then had many churches and monasteries built in Jerusalem.

8. In the third year of the reign of Marcian Anastasius was made patriarch of Jerusalem. He was a Jacobite. He held the office for nineteen years and died. In the [same] year Basil was made patriarch of Antioch. He held the office for two years and died. In the fifth year of his reign Martyrius was made patriarch of Antioch. He held the office for eight years and died. In the sixth year of his reign Gennadius was made patriarch of Constantinople. He held the office for ten years and died. At the time of King Marcian lived Simeon the recluse, called Stylites. He was the first monk to live in a

*sawma'a*, (32)<sup>64</sup> in the rural district of Antioch, on the mountain known as “al-Gabal al-mu’gib” [= Mount Admirable]. At that time St. Theodosius, the founder of the monastery of ad-Dawākis, left his country and went to Simeon the recluse at Antioch. He stayed for a few days with him, then he went to Jerusalem and embraced the monastic life.

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<sup>64</sup> 32. A term indicating a column with a habitation on the top.



## Chapter 16

Chap. XVI Reign of Firuz over the Persians – The coming to the throne of Leo the Great – Rioting in Alexandria: the murder of the patriarch Proterius – Basilicus usurps the throne – Succession of Patriarchs in the various locations – The figure of Patriarch Elias I – Firuz at war with the king of Hephthalites – Death of Firuz and the kingdom of Qabād – Anastasius, king of the Byzantines, abandons the doctrine of the Melkites and embraces that of the Jacobites – Opposition of the monks of Laurium, supported by Elias and guided by their superiors Theodosius, Chariton, Saba – the heresy of Severus and the support given to it by the king Anastasius – the monks of Palestine against the king – Eutychius refutes the doctrine of the Jacobites – A famine at Jerusalem – Justin becomes emperor of Constantinople (p.269)

1. In the sixth year of the reign of Marcian, king of Rum, Yazdagard, son of Bahram, king of the Persians, died. On the death of Yazdagard, his two sons Firuz and Hurmuz contested the kingdom. Some took the side of Firuz and others the side of Hurmuz. After fierce fighting between the supporters of the two parties, Hurmuz was killed along with three members of his family. Firuz, son of Yazdagard reigned over the Persians for twenty-seven years. This was in the sixth year of the reign of Marcian, king of Rum. King Marcian had the true faith, and he defended and promoted the faith of the Melkites.

2. King Marcian died. After him Leo the Great reigned over Rum, for sixteen years. This happened in the second year of the reign of Firuz, son of Yazdagard, king of the Persians. Leo was of the true faith, a Melkite. When the inhabitants of Alexandria came to know of the death of Marcian, they rose up against Proterius, patriarch of Alexandria, and killed him in the church of Kūriyon; they brought his body on a camel to the great hippodrome that Ptolemy Lagus had built and they burned it. Then there appeared in the sky a cloud of fire and there was thunder, lightning and violent storms for forty days. Proterius was killed after having held the office for six years. After him Timothy, brother of Anatolius, better known as Yānūriyūs, was made patriarch of Alexandria. He was a Jacobite. He held the office for three years. Then a general named Balāwus came to Alexandria from Constantinople, who deposed Timothy, exiling him to a place called Marsūfin, a village on the coast of the Pontic Sea, and made another Timothy, better known as Swrs, Patriarch of Alexandria. He was a Jacobite. He held the seat for fifteen years and died.

3. In the sixteenth year of the reign of Leo the Great, Martin was made patriarch of Jerusalem. He was a Jacobite. He held the office for eight years and died. In the tenth year of his reign Acacius was made patriarch of Constantinople. He held the office for thirteen years and died. In the twelfth year of his reign John was made patriarch of Antioch. He held the seat for six years and died. In the thirteenth year of his reign Julian was made patriarch of Antioch. He held the office for five years and died. In the eighth year of his reign Hilary was made patriarch of Rome. He held the seat for six years and died. In the sixteenth year of his reign Sīlfnūs was made patriarch of Rome. He held the seat for fourteen years and died. This patriarch excommunicated Timothy, brother of Anatolius, Patriarch of Alexandria.

Leo the Great, King of Rum, died. After him Leo the Less reigned over Rum, for one year only. He was a Jacobite. This happened in the eighteenth year of the reign of Firuz, son of Yazdağard, king of the Persians.

4. Leo the Less, king of the Rum, died. After him his son Zeno reigned over Rum for seventeen years. He was a Jacobite. This was in the nineteenth year of the reign of Firūz, king of the Persians. While the king Zeno was out strolling in a place called Surah, a man named Basiliscus, along with his son Marcus, took over the kingdom for twenty months. The fighting between them did not stop until Zeno got the better of them, returned to Constantinople, killed Basiliscus and his son, confiscated their homes and possessions, and put to death all their supporters. At that time there was a great earthquake in the city of Constantinople; the sun was darkened, and the stars appeared in the sky in broad daylight. Many houses collapsed and many people died because of the violence of the earthquake. This happened in the ninth year of the reign of Zeno, king of Rum.

In the second year of his reign Timothy, patriarch of Alexandria, better known as *Swrs*, fled to Wadi-Habib, and Timothy, brother of Anatolius, returned from Marsūfin to the patriarchal see of Alexandria, held the office for two years and died. After him the archdeacon Peter was made patriarch of Alexandria. He was a Jacobite. He held the office for thirty-six days and fled to Constantinople. Then Timothy, better known as *Swrs*, returned from Wadi-Habib,<sup>65</sup> was patriarch for four years and died.

In the ninth year of the reign of Zeno, Ibn Ghustus was governor of Alexandria, on behalf of Zeno. Then John became Patriarch of Alexandria. He was a Jacobite. He held the office for six months. Then another governor came to Alexandria on behalf of Zeno, called Aughustāliyūs, together with Peter, the patriarch who had fled to Constantinople. The general Ibn Ghustus fled before Awghustāliyus and the patriarch John fled with him also. So the patriarch Peter, who had fled, reoccupied his own place. He held the office for eight years and died. In the sixteenth year of the reign of Zeno Abinās was made patriarch of Alexandria. He was a Jacobite. He held the seat for seven years and died. He built many churches in Alexandria and several burial sites.

5. At that time, the great hippodrome that Ptolemy Lagus had built in Alexandria, and where the patriarch Proterius had been burned, caught fire. In the seventh year of the reign of Zeno Militūs was made patriarch of Jerusalem. He was a Jacobite. He held the office for eight years and died. In the sixteenth year of his reign Elias was made patriarch of Jerusalem. He held the seat for twenty-four years.<sup>66</sup> He built churches and erected the church of Eleona, but did not finish it so it was [later] turned over to Aylah.<sup>67</sup> At that time there were in Jerusalem Anba Theodosius, the founder of the monastery of ad-Dawākis, Anba Chariton, founder of the monastery of the Old Laura and Anba Saba, founder of the New Laura.

6. In the sixth year of the reign of Zeno Iwfūtiyūs was made patriarch of Constantinople. He held the office for five years and died. In the eleventh year of his reign<sup>68</sup> Iwfathimiyūs was made patriarch of Constantinople. He held the office for ten years and died. In the first year of the reign of Zeno Peter, nicknamed the Fuller, was made patriarch of Antioch. He was a Jacobite. He held the seat for six years and was removed.<sup>69</sup> He was excommunicated and removed by Bāsīlīqūs, patriarch of Rome. Once removed, Stephen was made patriarch of Antioch. He held the office for only one year

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<sup>65</sup> Note by B. Pirone in the body of the text: 'In another text it says "Dayr Habib", which is undoubtedly more accurate'.

<sup>66</sup> Pirone: 'in another text it says "for fourteen years"'.

<sup>67</sup> Aqaba, location of a see in Byzantine times.

<sup>68</sup> Pirone: 'In another text he says "in the twenty-first year of his reign"'.

<sup>69</sup> Pirone: 'in another text it says "for two years"'.

and died. After him another Stephen was made patriarch of Antioch. He held the office for six months and died. After him Qalidiyūn was made patriarch of Antioch. He was a Nestorian. He held the office for four years and died. Then Peter the Fuller returned to occupy the Patriarchal See of Antioch. He held the office for eight years and died.<sup>70</sup> After him Palladius was made patriarch of Antioch. He held the office for ten years and died. This happened in the eleventh year of the reign of Zeno, king of Rum. In the thirteenth year of his reign Filnīqūs was made patriarch of Rome. He held the office for eight years and died.

7. As for Firuz, son of Yazdağard, king of the Persians, he built two cities near Kashkar, namely Duris-Firuz and Rām-Firuz. Then he went with the army towards Khurasan in order to occupy the territory of Khshunwār.<sup>71</sup> When Akhshunwār, king of the Hayātilah, in Balkh, heard this, he was afraid, and he called his experts and asked their advice about what to do. One of them spoke thus: “If you promise me with my peace and quiet that you will give me what will sustain my family and my descendants and that you will ensure them these necessities, I will show you a way in which God will grant you victory over Firuz”. Having received a full guarantee from the king, he said: “Tie up my hands and feet”,<sup>72</sup> then abandon me on the road that Firuz will take, and I will save you from his hands.” The king ordered that it should be done as requested, and they took him and threw him where he had told them, and they left. Curious about him, Firuz asked him the reason for his state, and [the man] replied: “I was one of the magnates of Hayātilah. As soon as news came that you were marching against us, Khshunwār consulted, among others, myself also, and I told him openly that he could do nothing against Firuz because of the great power of this man, and that it would be better for him if he sent word to be ready to pay tribute and the ransom. Great was his anger against me, and he ordered them to reduce me to the state in which you see me, saying: ‘Let it be with him as with so many.’ He gave instructions to some of his soldiers, telling them: ‘Go and carry him to Firuz’. O please, I beg you, have mercy and compassion on me, take me with you, so that I do not fall prey to the wild beasts in this deserted land. I will show you the shortest way, and how to defeat Akhshunwār without suffering damage, and I have my revenge on him through God. The road I will show you is only two days’ journey, but in the end you will get what you seek.”

On hearing this, the ministers of Firuz smelled the trap that Akhshunwār intended for them, and they said to Firuz: “This man has been asked for advice and he has certainly given according to his vast knowledge and intelligence. All this dramatic stuff is a trap, pure and simple. If fact Akhshunwār had reduced him to such, driven by anger, he would not bother to let us meet him in this deserted land. Put no faith in what he says. Perhaps Akhshunwār and his men have already visited the place that this man has shown us, and have deployed plenty of soldiers there.”

But Firuz was not of the same opinion, and he continued to walk in the company of this man for the two days but without arriving at the place indicated. Firuz asked him for an explanation, and [the man] replied: “I calculated the path wrongly, but today will end it.” When they had also walked all

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<sup>70</sup> Pirone: ‘In another text he says, “for three years”’

<sup>71</sup> Eutychius has access to an Arabic translation of a lost Persian chronicle of the Sassanid kings, and material from this is inserted at intervals. The major threat to the Sassanid realm during the 5th century was not the Romans, but rather the Ephthalites, or White Huns, here called the Hayātilah. These were a nomadic East Iranian nation (or so their names suggest) based in the area of modern Afghanistan. Eutychius, writing five centuries later, describes the two campaigns of King Peroz I (=Firuz) against them, which ended in his complete defeat and death in 483 AD at the battle of Herat. This left Persia tributary to the White Huns for a generation.

<sup>72</sup> Pirone: ‘In another text he says, “Amputate my [hands and feet]”, which is undoubtedly more accurate.

that day, asking all the time how much further they had to go, the man kept saying they were going to get there, and that he was not misleading them. When they realized that they were out of all the food and water they had, and that they were in a place where they could not go back, he told them the truth. Then the advisers of Firuz said: "We told the truth, O king, but you would not accept our advice. Now we must just continue, in the hope of finding water." So they carried on, dividing themselves to right and left, in search of water. Most of them died of thirst.

Firuz and a small number of brave warriors survived, who went with him until they reached their enemies, who met them that night, in the condition that they were in, and parlayed. Then Firuz asked Akhshunwār to grant him and the men that were left to return to their countries, and to enter into a covenant with him, in which they promised not to make war again for the rest of his life, establishing between him and his kingdom a border that neither would ever pass. Akhshunwār agreed. Firuz placed this in writing, making himself guarantor, and swore that it never would be broken, and returned to his own kingdom.

Time passed. Then Firuz remembered what had passed between him and Akhshunwār, and he felt annoyed and was afraid that there might be less loyalty [towards himself]. This motivated him to attack him again. But his servants said to him: "You have entered into a covenant with him and we are afraid of the consequences of the betrayal and injustice that you mean to perpetrate." But Firuz said to them: "I simply agreed with him that I would not pass the [border] stone. Well, I will take this stone with me on the cart in front of me, and never go beyond it." But they answered: "The deal is not based on your interpretation, but on what was clearly understood." Firuz paid no attention to their words and left to invade [the territory] of Akhshunwār. Hearing of this, Akhshunwār was extremely surprised, and had no doubt about the treachery. So he wrote to Firuz, reminding him what was assumed under the agreement entered into by him, and asking him to leave him alone. But Firuz ignored his words and continued on his way, until he came near to the territory of the Hayātilah. Akhshunwār had dug a ditch between his country and that of Firuz. Firuz ordered bridges to be built, so he could pass over, and flags to be hoisted on them that serve as signals in case of retreat. When the soldiers were deployed for combat, Akhshunwār sent word to Firuz to go outside with him, in the middle of the two sides, because he wanted to talk to him. Akhshunwār met him and told him: 'For my part, I believe that nothing has pushed to the point where you are but shame at your defeat. But, on my life, if you had been cheated as you think, we would certainly have demanded more than that. Yet the violation of the pact should be more shameful for you than that. Think of this, and distinguish between these two things, pondering which one is good for you because of shame: to say "He ordered them to achieve something but it was not realized and his enemy had the better of him and those who were with him, but he was generous with them and sent them away free, on conditions", or that they say "He broke the pact and the agreement, returned a favor with an insult"? Your men will know that you have involved them in a unjust business, even although you're not sure to win, and are trying to do something which others may do to you. If you win, you will not have a good reputation, nor will what is done will be worthy of praise. And if you lose, you will cover yourself and your soldiers with infamy. Be careful, then! I warned you! Telling you the words that you hear is not because of some weakness or fear for myself or my soldiers, but I want to say all these words to persuade, and not to save myself in some way.'

8. Firuz replied: "I am not one of those who, intimidated by menaces, allow themselves to be diverted from exactly the business that the intimidation is intended to counteract. If I had thought that I was intending to do something as a piece of disloyalty on my part, no one else would feel more shame than me. But I only signed the pact with you because of what I concealed within me. Do not be deceived by the inferiority and weakness in which we met the first time. Know that I will not leave you alone until I have got back what you got from me."

Akhshunwār replied: "Don't bother with the error with which you try to deceive yourself, carrying the boundary-stone in front of you. The terms and clauses of an agreement are according to words openly spoken, and not according to what they may be made to mean. And the worst condition is the violation of the terms and provisions of an agreement."

But Firuz ignored his words and so passed that day. Firuz said to his men: "Akhshunwār gave proof of a brilliant conversation, and I have never seen a mount like the horse he rode. In fact, it never moved its feet, nor raised its hooves from their position, or done anything to speak of for the entire time we faced each other."

And Akhshunwār told his men: "Finding myself at the front, I saw, and you've seen too, a Firuz all covered with arms. He never moved on his horse, never removed his foot from the stirrup, nor did he ever bend, or turn right or left, as I often supported myself on the one or the other hip, I bent over my horse, I have looked back and forward with my eyes, as he stood erect and motionless. "

Both Firuz and Akhshunwār resorted to these descriptions because they spread their words among the soldiers, and thus diverted them from inquiring about what they discussed.

When they awoke, Akhshunwār pulled out the sheet on which Firuz had put [the agreement] in writing, and had it raised on a spear, so that the soldiers could see it. Akhshunwār proclaimed victory over Firuz.

Firuz was defeated, and while fleeing started down a different path from the one with banners on the bridges to show him the way back; he took refuge in the ditch, in to which his men fell one after another. Akhshunwār took everything that was with Firuz and his sons, and distributed the property among his soldiers. Then Akhshunwār said the advisors of Firuz: "Why didn't you advise him and avoid this?" They answered, "We did, but he would not listen."

In Sigistān a member of the family of Azdashīr called Sūkhṛān was in command. He was a Persian nobleman and had with him a number of generals as his subordinates. When he heard the news of what had happened to Firuz, he moved at once with his men to the territory of the Hayātilah, where he soon gathered up the soldiers of Firuz. His power became great and strong. When he was in sight of the army of Akhshunwār, he sent him a message: "I did not come to fight you, but only so that you can return the property of Firuz, which you have, and release the prisoners that you have with you. Let this be the basis for peace among ourselves and for our part we will abstain from any belligerent actions towards you. If you agree, we will do the same, and we will withdraw; if you refuse then I fear that you will regret it." Akhshunwār agreed to what Sūkhṛān asked, freed their captives, returned their possessions, and departed, so that all ended with his and their satisfaction. Then Sūkhṛān retired to Ctesiphon. The people of Persia remembered what he had done for them and they were grateful.

9. Firuz died after reigning for twenty-seven years. Then the two sons of Firuz, i.e. Qabād and Balābis, contested for the kingdom. Balābis got the better of Qabād and drove him off, far away from him. Qabād repaired to Khurasan to ask Khāqān, king of the Turks, to help him against his brother.

10. Balābis reigned well, and he built a city, and called it Balāsūr. He reigned four years and died. This happened in the tenth year of the reign of Zeno, king of the Rum. When Qabād went to Khurasan he had with him Zarmihr, son of Sukhrān. Together they stayed at a remarkably large house, but did not reveal who they were. Then Qabād told Zarmihr: "Find me a woman of noble lineage. I have a keen desire for women and I would not lie with a nobody, maybe low-class, because if she were to give birth, this would be a disgrace for us." The owner of the house where he was staying had a daughter still unmarried. Zarmihr then approached the mother and spoke to her, spoke to her father and then also having presented them in good stead as he was asking, the two gave their assent. The woman slept with Qabād and became pregnant. When the time came to go away, [Qabād] commanded that she should be given a gift. Her mother had asked her questions about the [financial] condition of Qabād and she had told of having seen leggings brocaded with gold. The mother understood that he belonged to the royal house and was glad. Qabād came to Khāqān and said: "I am the son of the king of Persia. After the death of my father, my brother resisted me and seized the kingdom." [Khāqān] promised to help him to regain the kingdom. For four years [Qabād] stayed with him, waiting for him to decide to give him the promised aid. Then [Khāqān] gave him a strong army and Qabād departed and came to Abarsahr. [Here] he took up residence in the same house in which he had stayed and asked about the woman: She met him, holding the hand of a child of three years old. Qabād said: "Who is this child?" She replied: "He is your son." Zarmihr told him that she was the daughter of the landlord. [Qabād] was happy with this, and he took her along with the child whom he called Bābūdakht. Arriving at Ctesiphon, Qabād found that his brother was dead and he took possession of the kingdom.

11. Qabād, son of Firuz, reigned forty-three years. This happened in the twenty-fourth year of the reign of Zeno, king of the Rum. Qabād entrusted the administration of the kingdom to Sūkhṛān and his son, Zarmihr. He founded, between al-Ahwaz and Faris, a town called Qabād-Khurrah, namely ar-Ragan, in which he placed the deportees of Hamadan. He founded a city on the border of the territory of al-Mahat called Harawān, and another near Azdashīr-Khurrah, called Qabād-Khurrah, and then he founded many [others], built villages, dug rivers, opened canals and built arched bridges.

12. Zeno, king of Rum, died after a reign of seventeen years. This happened in the fifth year of the reign of Qabād, son of Firuz, king of the Persians. After him Anastasius reigned over Rum for twenty-seven years. He was a Jacobite, an opponent of the doctrine of the Melkites. He was from the city of Hamah. He ordered the [re]building of the city of Hamah and furnished it with walls. The construction of the walls took two years. He had reigned for ten years when the people of the East were affected by a severe drought and an invasion of locusts. Qabād, king of the Persians, invaded Amida and destroyed it, and he sent a large army against Alexandria, and the surroundings of Alexandria were set on fire. Between the men of Qabād, king of the Persians, and the men of

Anastasius, king of Rum, there were fierce wars and many deaths. Alexandria was ruled, in the name of King Anastasius, by a governor named Istat. As a consequence of all this, there fell upon Alexandria and Egypt a severe famine, to the point that people were dying of hunger, and Alexandria and Egypt were reduced to ruins by the pestilence, and the plague mowed down the population.

13. There lived in Alexandria, a wealthy Jew named Urib, who had become a Christian. He buried the abandoned corpses, and on Easter Sunday lavished abundant alms in the church of Arqādah. Three hundred men died in the rush and the crowds.

In the sixth year of the reign of Anastasius, king of Rum, John the monk was made patriarch of Alexandria. He was a Jacobite. He held the office for nine years and died. In the fifteenth year of his reign another John was made patriarch of Alexandria. He was a Jacobite. He held the office for eleven years and died. In the twenty-sixth year of his reign Dioscorus was made patriarch of Alexandria. He was a Jacobite. He held the office for only one year and died. In the twenty-seventh year of his reign Timothy was made patriarch of Alexandria. He was a Jacobite. He held the office for two years and was deposed. In the fourth year of his reign Timothy was made patriarch of Constantinople.<sup>73</sup> He held the office for four years and died. In the ninth year of his reign Timothy was made patriarch of Constantinople. He held the office for six years and died. In the fifteenth year of his reign John of Cappadocia was made patriarch of Constantinople. He held the office for nine years and died. In the twenty-fourth year of his reign Anthimus was made patriarch of Constantinople. He was a Jacobite. He held the office for five years and was deposed. In the fourth year of his reign Pelagius was made patriarch of Rome. He held the office for four years and died. In the eighth year of his reign Anastasius was made patriarch of Rome. He held the office for a year and died. In the ninth year of his reign Symmachus was made patriarch of Rome. He held the office for fourteen years and died. In the fourth year of his reign Flavian was made patriarch of Antioch. He held the seat for fourteen years and was deposed.

King Anastasius had abjured the doctrine of the Melkites and had become a Jacobite. Elias, Patriarch of Jerusalem, then wrote a letter to him on the validity of the doctrine of the Melkites and to tell him that anyone contradicting them was to be considered excommunicated. He sent it to the superiors of the monasteries, including Theodosius, the founder of the monastery of ad-Dawākis, Chariton, founder of the Old Laura, Saba, founder of the New Laura, which excelled over all the Lauras, the superior of the Old Laura, i.e. of the Laura of Chariton, and a group of superiors of monks and of priests, along with a letter in which he said: "I have sent you a group of the servants of God, and of the superiors of the monks of our desert including the distinguished Saba. He has transformed the desert into cities filling them with people and is the star of Palestine." When the monks came to Constantinople, they asked to be received by King Anastasius. The king gave them a hearing and they went into to him. Saba was wearing a worn robe, and after a delay the chamberlains would not let him in. After reading the letter from Elias, Patriarch of Jerusalem, the king Anastasius told the monks: "Which of you is Saba, who gets so much praise in the letter?" They looked at each other and they knew that he was not among them. They sent to look for him, and he came in to the king, who told him to approach and made him sit next to him, asking him news about Jerusalem and its inhabitants. Saba replied that both the city as its inhabitants fared well. Then he expounded the doctrine of the Melkites, showed him the merits and asserted that he had considered

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<sup>73</sup> Pirone: 'In another text it says "Macedonius"'.

excommunicated anyone who objected. Finally he said: "We ask you not to disturb the church, because as long as the church will have peace, there will be peace among ourselves. Not pander therefore to the doctrine of heretics." The king gave him willingly what he asked, gave gifts to the monks and ordered them to return to Jerusalem. He wrote to Elias, Patriarch of Jerusalem, in response to his letter, and ordered Saba to remain with him. So the monks returned to Jerusalem, while Saba was retained [with the king]. The following year, Saba asked the king whether he could leave. He granted this and handed him two thousand dinars, saying: "Use this money to build monasteries." Saba then went to Jerusalem.

14. There lived in Constantinople a man named Severus. He professed the doctrine of Dioscorus and Eutyches and he was saying that there is only one nature, one person and one will [in Christ]. [He] presented himself to King Anastasius and said: "The six hundred bishops, who in the past gathered in the city of Chalcedon and excommunicated Dioscorus and Eutyches, were wrong in what they did. The sound religion is solely that affirmed by Eutyches and Dioscorus. Don't follow what the monks that came to you from Jerusalem said, because their doctrine is false. Instead send letters to all the provinces, giving your instruction to excommunicate the six hundred bishops gathered in the city of Chalcedon, and ensure that people profess only one nature, one will and one person." King Anastasius agreed to do what he asked.

15. When Flavian, patriarch of Antioch, received the news of what the king Anastasius had set out to do, he wrote him a letter saying: "Do not act as Severus has said, because the six hundred bishops, gathered in the city of Chalcedon were in the truth, and he who is opposed to their doctrine is an excommunicate." King Anastasius was angry, and he sent to depose Flavian, Patriarch of Antioch, and in his place he made Severus Patriarch of Antioch.

16. When Elias, Patriarch of Jerusalem, learned that Flavian had been deposed and Severus had been elected in his place, he summoned the monks before the Tomb and Golgotha and excommunicated the king Anastasius, the patriarch Severus and anyone who professed their doctrine. On receiving the news of what Elijah, Patriarch of Jerusalem, had done, the king Anastasius sent to depose him and exiled him to Aylah [Aqaba]. This happened in the twenty-third year of the reign of Anastasius. He then made a man named John Patriarch of Jerusalem, because that John had assured him that he would excommunicate the six hundred bishops who had been at Chalcedon. When [John] arrived in Jerusalem, he went to the monks at Saba and said: "I do not accept the doctrine of Severus but rather defend the council of Chalcedon and I will remain on your side." He assured them that he would do this, contrary to what the king had ordered him to do. Learning of this, the king sent his general to John, Patriarch of Jerusalem, to hold him to the promise made to him and to disavow the resolutions of the Council of Chalcedon: and if he did not, to remove him from office. The commander came, arrested John, Patriarch of Jerusalem, and put him in prison. The monks went to visit him in prison, and they advised him to assure the general that he would do what he had first assured the king, and then, once outside, to excommunicate all those whom the monks excommunicated. He followed their advice. The monks gathered – there were about ten thousand of them, and with them Theodosius, Cantonus and Saba, the founders of the monasteries – and excommunicated Dioscorus, Eutyches, Severus and Nestorius; they also excommunicated anyone else who had not accepted the doctrine of the Council of Chalcedon. The envoy of the king was afraid of the monks. This was the son of the uncle of the king. Seeing himself cornered,



he assured the monks that the king would abandon that doctrine and return to that he had professed and to all truth.

17. When the son of the uncle of the king arrived in Constantinople, he made the king aware of what had happened. The king considered removing John, Patriarch of Jerusalem. The monks and bishops gathered and wrote to the king Anastasius saying that they would never accept the doctrine of Severus, or any of the heretics, even at the cost of shedding their own blood. They asked him also to desist from harming them. When Symmachus, patriarch of Rome, heard what Anastasius had done, he wrote him a letter in which he reproved the action and excommunicated him. Symmachus, patriarch of Rome, died after having held the office for fourteen years. After him Hormisdas was made patriarch of Rome. He excommunicated Severus, Patriarch of Antioch and all who professed the doctrine. This happened in the twenty-third year of the reign of Anastasius, king of Rūm. Hormisdas was patriarch of Rome for seven years and died. The excommunicate Severus was Patriarch of Antioch for six years and died. Severus had a disciple named James, who used to wear a garment made of pieces of saddles, the kind used for the beasts of burden, which he stitched together, and he was therefore called Jacob Baradaeus. According to the theory he supported, Christ has only one nature rather than two natures, [only] one substance rather than two substances and one will, in conformity with the doctrine of the excommunicated Severus, Dioscorus and Eutyches. By going to Mesopotamia, to Giza, Tikrit, Harran and into Armenia, he sowed corruption in the faith of those people causing them to profess his doctrine. Those who followed the religion of James, and professed the doctrine were called Jacobites, from the name of James.

18. Sa`īd ibn Batriq, the doctor said: "It seemed appropriate here to refute the Jacobites and show the falsity and absurdity of their doctrine. ...

*[The rest of section 18, and sections 19 and 20 are devoted to theology, and are omitted.]*

21. But let us return to the point in the history where we stopped. When Severus, Patriarch of Antioch, died, there was made patriarch of Antioch Paul. He held the office for five years and died (In another text it says "for two years"). After him there was made patriarch of Antioch Ifrūsīnūs. He held the office for five years and he died. That was in the twentieth year of the reign of Anastasius, king of Rum. In the twenty-third year of his reign, that is, after Elias, Patriarch of Jerusalem, had been deposed, the people of Palestine and Jerusalem met serious afflictions: famine, pestilence, a great epidemic, [an invasion of] many grasshoppers and death, and it did not rain for five years. In the fifth year of the drought the shortage of water in Jerusalem was so great that the spring of Siloam dried up, and the population began to dig everywhere without finding a bit of water. There was a terrible earthquake in Antioch, many houses collapsed and many people perished. Five years after Elias, Patriarch of Jerusalem, had been exiled to the city of Aylah, the superiors of the monasteries, including Saba, went to the Patriarch Elias in the city of Aylah. The Patriarch Elias welcomed them with great joy, and they stayed with him for seven days. Then he said, "The king Anastasius has just now died. I will join him in ten days, and contend with him in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ." Ten days after, the Patriarch Elias died, at the age of eighty-eight, after being Patriarch for twenty-four years. It is said that St Saba kept in mind the time [specified by Elias], and then having asked about the king Anastasius, the answer was that at that moment there fell on Constantinople lightning, followed by a terrible thunder from which the King Anastasius reported a discomfort in his brain: clutching his head in his hands, crying and asking

for help and running from apartment to apartment, he received God's punishment, and it killed him. Before dying, the king Anastasius had written a letter, [found] in his possession, to remove St. Theodosius, the founder of the monastery of ad-Dawākis, from Jerusalem. But the king Anastasius died before sending the letter to Jerusalem.

22. After him there reigned over Rum Justin, from the province of Thrace, for nine years. This happened in the thirty-second year of the reign of Qabād, son of Firuz, king of the Persians. King Justin was of the Orthodox faith, a believer in the truth. He ordered restored to their own places everyone that the king Anastasio had exiled and he sent an edict to Jerusalem in which he set forth his faith. The monks were reunited with cries of joy, and made publicly available the edict of the king, which they celebrated with a magnificent feast and they confirmed the fourth council of six hundred bishops who had gathered at Chalcedon. In the fifth year of the reign of Justin there was made patriarch of Rome, John. He held the office for two years and died. In the seventh year of his reign there was made patriarch of Rome Felix. He held the office for four years and died. In the second year of his reign there was made patriarch of Alexandria Theodosius. He was a Jacobite and a Katib. He held the office for three years and was deposed. In his place there was made patriarch of Alexandria Ghābiyūs. He was a Manichean and archdeacon. He held the office for two years and was deposed. Then Theodosius was reinstated in his office. He held the office for five years, was deposed and died. In the first year of his reign he was told that Antimus, the patriarch of Constantinople, was a Jacobite. He removed him and in his place he made Menna Patriarch of Constantinople. He held the office for eighteen years and died. In the fifth year of his reign Ephrem was made patriarch of Antioch. He held the office for eighteen years and died. John, Patriarch of Jerusalem, who had taken the place of the deposed Elias, held the office for seven years and he died.

In the third year of the reign of Justin, Peter, a native of Bayt Gibrīh, was made patriarch of Jerusalem. He held the office for ten years and died (In another text it says, "for twenty years and died"). King Justin sent an edict to all countries, providing that everyone should profess the faith promulgated by the Chalcedonian council.

## Chapter 17

Chap. XVII Justinian vanquishes the Jacobite heresy using Apollinaris and monitors the Samaritans of Nablus. – St. Saba at the court of Constantinople – Construction of the Basilica of the Nativity of the monastery of Sinai, and the houses for the keepers of the monastery – The heresy of Origen and the synod of Constantinople II on May 5 553 – Mazdak preaches in Persia and implements the equal distribution of property – The coming to the throne of Anūshirwān – Anastasius, Patriarch of Antioch – Doctrine of Maron – The robber of the city of Ifrīqiyah – War between the Persians and Khaqan – Kisra Abarwīz, king of Persia – Kisra marries the daughter of Maurice and becomes a Christian – Phocas Emperor of Constantinople – the Persians invade Palestine and Egypt – John the Almoner – The Jews of Tyre plot to annihilate the Christians – Heraclius becomes Emperor of Constantinople (p.291)

1. Justin, king of Rum, died. After him there reigned over Rum, for thirty-nine years, Justinian. This was in the forty-first year of the reign of Qabād, son of Firuz, king of the Persians. King Justinian was a relative of king Justin. In the first year of his reign, the king Justinian sent his messenger to Alexandria and summoned to him, at Constantinople, the patriarch Theodosius, whom he enjoined to renounce the doctrine of the Jacobites and to return to the truth. But he refused to do so, so [the king] decreed his death. Theodora, wife of the king, interceded for him, and the king let him go. [Theodosius] returned to Egypt, where he hid in a place called Masil or al-Lamīdas, villages in western Egypt, continuing to profess the doctrine of the Jacobites and gaining a lot of people to his cause. Having received news of this, the king sent one of his messengers, and condemned him to exile. At Alexandria there was made patriarch a man named Paul. He was a Melkite. He held the office for two years when the Jacobites rose up against him and killed him, making patriarch in his place a man named Dalmiyūs. He was a Melkite. He held the office for five years in between harassment and affliction from the Jacobites. They tried to kill him, but he fled. He remained a fugitive for five years until he died.

2. News came to king Justinian that the Jacobites had risen up in Alexandria and in Egypt, and that they were killing every patriarch who was appointed for them. The king was enraged, he chose one of his generals, made him patriarch of Alexandria, gave him a huge army and sent him there. Apollinaris was his name. When he arrived in Alexandria, the general made his entrance wearing the armour of a soldier, as a sign that he entered as the representative of the king. When he reached the church, he removed the clothes he wore, put on his patriarchal robes, stepped up to the altar and celebrated mass. The population of Alexandria rose up against him, throwing by hand from every side stones and rocks which almost killed him. He departed from them that day, but three days later reappeared telling them that he had received a letter from the king, and that he needed to read it to the people. So he had rung the bells, ordering the population to gather in church on Sunday, in order to listen to the letter of the king. As that was a Sunday, all the inhabitants of Alexandria, without exception, appeared. The patriarch Apollinaris had agreed with his men that when a signal was given, they would strike with the sword all who were in the church. Then he got onto the ambo, or pulpit, and said: "O people of Alexandria, if you return to the truth and abjure the doctrine of the Jacobites, it will be best for you, because I fear that otherwise the King will send against you someone who considers it lawful to pour out your blood, dishonour your women and make your children orphans." While he addressed these words to them, they began to stone him, so that he feared for his life. Then he made to his men the signal agreed, and

they began to strike with the sword all who were in church. Innumerable were those who were killed, in and around the church, and the soldiers sank to their knees in the blood of the people. A great of the population was able to escape to Wadi Habib, to the monastery of Abu Maqar. The doctrine of the Melkites was then triumphant. They recovered the churches that the Jacobites had taken away from them, and they seized theirs, and peace was re-established in the city. This was in the fifteenth year of the reign of King Justinian. Since then, the see of the Jacobites has continued to be in the monastery of Abu Maqar.

3. From the time when Proterius, patriarch of Alexandria, was killed and burned, to the time when Apollinaris killed the Jacobites and the doctrine of the Melkites triumphed, was thirty-five years (In another text it says "eighty-five years"). [All this happened] because the doctrine of the Jacobites had conquered in Alexandria and throughout Egypt. The successive patriarchs in Alexandria were in fact Jacobites, and also Jacobites were the kings in the land of Rum, including Leo the less, Zeno, Anastasius and others that we spoke of earlier. In the twenty-first year of the reign of Justinian the inhabitants of Samaria in Palestine revolted, destroyed and burned all the churches, killed many Christians subjecting them to serious afflictions and put to death the bishop of Nablus. Hearing of this, the king Justinian sent an great army and many Samaritans were killed. Then Peter, patriarch of Jerusalem, asked the holy Mar Saba to travel to Constantinople in order to ask the king to lighten the *kharāġ*—The *kharaj* or *kharatch* was the Islamic land-tax, here used for whatever Byzantine tax was its equivalent. *kharāġ* is apparently the Egyptian form of the word. — on the population of Palestine in view of the damage that the Samaritans had done there. Mar Saba then went to Constantinople, and great was the joy with which the king received him. He delivered the letter of the Patriarch of Jerusalem and was asked what he wanted. Mar Saba said: "I ask you to lighten the *kharāġ* on Palestine because the Samaritans have exterminated the inhabitants, and have sown destruction. I would also ask that the king orders the rebuilding of the churches that the Samaritans gave to the fire, that a hospice for strangers is erected in Jerusalem, and that Eleona, the church begun by Elias, Patriarch of Jerusalem is completed". The king granted him this and all he had asked for, he sent with him one of [his] messengers to deal with that everything was done as requested, providing a lot of money. He then wrote to his prefect in Palestine and ordered him to hand over to the messenger the proceeds of the *kharāġ* of Palestine, with which to build what the king had ordered. The king ordered the messenger to demolish the church of Bethlehem, which was small, and to rebuild it more impressive, big and beautiful, so that there was none more beautiful in Jerusalem. When the messenger came to Jerusalem he erected a hospice for strangers. He completed the construction of the church of Eleona, rebuilt the churches which the Samaritans had burned, he built many monasteries, demolished the church of Bethlehem and rebuilt it, just as we see it today.

4. After completing this, he returned to the king. The king said to him: "Describe how you built the Bethlehem church." After hearing the description, the king did not find it to his liking and was not at all satisfied. Great was his anger against him and he said: "You took the money and you used it for yourself, you built a small building, you made the church dark, and you have not built it as I would have liked it to be, nor have you followed my advice." And so saying he commanded them to lop off his head.

5. King Justinian built in Constantinople the beautiful church of St. Sophia. Mar Saba died at the age of ninety-four. Having been informed of the favourable attitude of the King Justinian and his

predilection for building churches and monasteries, the monks of Tur Sīnā came to him and complained of the fact that the Arab Ishmaelites harassed them, ate their food, destroyed their sites, broke into their cells, grabbing everything that was there, and entered into the church during the Eucharist. King Justinian said to them: "What do you want [me to do]?". They answered: "We ask you, O king, to build us a monastery in which we can feel safe." Before that, in fact, there was no monastery on Mount Sinai where the monks could gather, but they were just scattered here and there in the valleys around the bush from which God – Powerful is his name – spoke to Moses. Above the bush they had a large tower, which still exists today, in which was the church of Martmaryam. In that tower the monks were accustomed to assemble, and immediately repaired there when any threat hung over them. The king sent with them one of his men, to whom he gave much money, and he wrote to his prefect in Egypt to give the messenger all the money he asked, to provide men and to send him food from Egypt. The messenger ordered the building of a church near the Red Sea, the erection of the monastery of Rayah, and the building of the monastery of Mount Sinai, fortifying it so that there was none more protected and more secure, and that there was nowhere above the monastery from which harm to the monastery itself, and the monks, could come.

6. Once he reached the Red Sea, the messenger erected near the Red Sea the church of Mar Athanasius, and built the monastery of Rayah, and he continued to the Mountain of Tur Sīnā where he found the bush in a gorge between two mountains, the tower built on it, in the vicinity of the bush, as well as sources of water that flowed near the bush, and the monks scattered in the valleys. He thought of erecting the monastery at the top of the mountain, leaving out the site of the tower and the burning bush, but discarded the idea because of the water; because there was no water in the upper part of the mountain. So he built the monastery above the bush, on the site of the tower, so that the tower itself was inside it. Thus the monastery found itself between two mountains in a gorge. If someone climbed to the top of the mountain, to the north, and he threw down a stone, it would fall in the middle of the monastery and could cause damage to the monks. And yet he built the monastery in that narrow place only because of the bush, the famous ruins and the water. Then he built a church on top of the mountain, at the place where Moses received the Torah. The superior of the monastery was called Dula. When he returned to king Justinian, the messenger spoke of the churches and monasteries that he had built and described how he had built the monastery of Mount Sinai. The king said to him: "You were wrong, and you have compromised the safety of the monks in exposing them to the mercy of their enemies. Why did you not build the monastery on top of the mountain?". The messenger replied, "I built the monastery above the bush and near the water simply in consideration of the fact that if I built the monastery on top of the mountain, the monks would have remained without water, and that if the people besieged them, and prevented access to water, they would die of thirst. And also in consideration of the fact that the bush would be away from them." The king said to him: "Then you should have broken down the northern slope overlooking the monastery so that the monks could suffer no damage." The messenger replied, "Even if we had spent the riches of the land of Rum, Egypt and Syria, we could not achieve what you ask." The king was enraged with him and ordered them to lop off his head.

7. Then he sent another messenger together with a hundred men chosen from among the slaves of Rum, with their wives and their children, ordering him to take from Egypt another hundred men with their wives and their children, chosen from among the slaves, and to build them houses, out by Tur

Sīnā, so that they could establish themselves and guard the monastery and the monks, making sure that they had the necessary means of livelihood, bringing to them and to the monastery enough food from Egypt. When he arrived at Tur Sīnā, the messenger built, outside the monastery to the east, many homes, the walls of a fortress and settled the slaves there. They began to protect the monastery and to defend it. The place is called today “the monastery of the slaves.” They increased and multiplied over time and during the caliphate of ‘Abd al-Malik b. Marwan Islam was imposed on them, so they attacked each other and fought among themselves; some of them were killed, others fled, others were converted to Islam. Their descendants still present today in those places, are the Muslims called Banu Salih, also called Ghulmān ad-Dayr [=servants of the monastery], from which come the Lakhmids. Following their conversion to Islam, the monks destroyed the houses.

8. In the second year of the reign of Justinian, there was made patriarch of Rome Boniface. He held the office for two years and died. In the fourth year of his reign, there was made patriarch of Rome, John. He held the office for two years and died. In the sixth year of his reign, there was made patriarch of Rome Aghābiyūs. He held the office for a year and died. In the seventh year of his reign, there was made patriarch of Rome Bīlinariyus. He held the office for five years and he died. In the thirteenth year of his reign, there was made patriarch of Rome Vigilius. He held the office for eighteen years and died. In his fifteenth year in office there was the Fifth Council. In the tenth year of his reign, that is, of the reign of Justinian, there was made patriarch of Constantinople Epiphanius. He was a Jacobite. He held the office for six years and died.

9. King Justinian wrote a voluminous treatise containing many rulings and laws. In the seventeenth year of his reign, there was made patriarch of Constantinople Euty chius. He held the office for twelve years and was deposed. In his eleventh year in office there was the Fifth Council. In the fourteenth year of the reign of Justinian, there was made patriarch of Jerusalem, Macarius. He held the office for two years and died. In the seventeenth year of his reign, there was made patriarch of Jerusalem Euty chius. He held the office for twelve years and died. In his eleventh year in office there was the Fifth Council. In the fifteenth year of his reign, there was made patriarch of Antioch Domnus. He held the office for fourteen years and died. In his thirteenth year in office there was the Fifth Council. In the time of king Justinian there appeared in the sky a big star that remained there for forty days. Then there appeared in the sky a spear of fire which remained there for several days.

10. In the time of king Justinian lived Origen, Bishop of Manbiğ, who argued for the doctrine of transmigration of souls and denied the resurrection [of the body]. With him were Iniya, Bishop of ar-Ruha, Thaddeus, bishop of al-Masīsa and Theodoret, bishop of the city of Ankara. These bishops claimed that the body of Christ, our Lord, was a “fantasiya”, that is a shadow without any reality. On learning of their doctrine, the king sent to them to say to present themselves in Constantinople, and Euty chius, Patriarch of Constantinople arranged a meeting with them. The patriarch said to them: “If the body of Christ, our Lord, was, as you assert, a “fantasiya”, then his actions were a ‘fantasiya’ too, his words were a “fantasiya” as well. The same would be true of the body, the actions or words of any [other] man.” Addressing the Bishop of Manbiğ he said: “Christ our Lord, is truly risen from the dead and has taught us that in the same way we will be resurrected from the dead on the day of judgment. In fact, he told us in his holy gospel that will be a time when all those lying in tombs will live when they hear the voice of the Son of God. How then can you say that there

is no resurrection?”. Therefore he interdicted them, and excommunicated them. The king, in turn, ordered that a council should be held against them at which they could be publicly excommunicated. Then the king wrote to the four patriarchs summoning them to the council, i.e. to Apollinaris, Patriarch of Alexandria, Domnus, patriarch of Antioch, to Eutychius, Patriarch of Jerusalem and Vigilius, patriarch of Rome, telling them to go to Constantinople, so that they were present at the excommunication of the bishops. They presented themselves. At that council Eutychius, Patriarch of Constantinople, personally took part. The Patriarch of Jerusalem was not personally present but sent some of his legates. So too the Patriarch of Rome was not present, who did not send any legate but who agreed with them, and accepted the judgment. The number of bishops who gathered in the Fifth Council was one hundred and sixty. They excommunicated the bishops and all those who professed the doctrine, i.e. Origen, Bishop of Manbiğ, Thaddeus, bishop of al-Masīṣah, Iniya, Bishop of ar-Ruha and Theodoret, bishop of Ankara. They established that the Body of our Lord was a real body and not a shadow, and that He is perfect God and perfect man, with two natures, two wills and two operations, and only one person. They also confirmed the doctrine of the four councils that were held before them, that life on earth is transient, that without doubt there will be the resurrection and that Christ, our Lord, will come with great glory to judge the living and the dead, as already the three hundred and eighteen had said. Then the honoured ones returned, each to his own home.

11. From the fourth council of six hundred who gathered at Chalcedon and had excommunicated the Jacobites, to this fifth council of one hundred and sixty bishops who gathered in Constantinople, there passed one hundred and three years. This happened in the twenty-seventh year of the reign of Justinian, king of Rum.

12. As for Qabād, son of Firuz, king of the Persians, he incurred the disapproval of his people and they decided to kill him, but refrained from doing so for fear of his minister Suwākhar. So they did their best to bring Suwākhar into disgrace in the eyes of the king, in order to kill him. After the killing, a man named Marzīq and his followers confronted him and said, “God has distributed his blessings on earth equally among men, so that no one has more than another. But men act unjustly to each other and each one puts his own interests ahead of those of his brother. In view of this, we will take what belongs to the rich and give it to the poor, we will remove from those who have a lot and we will return to those who have little, and those with more assets, more women, more servants and furnishings than others, we will remove them, and distribute them equally between him and the others, so that no one has more goods than another of a certain thing.” So they began to seize the houses, women and the goods of the people and their position was strengthened. Then they kidnapped Qabād, son of Firuz, hid him in an inaccessible place and put in place his uncle, named Mārāsf. On seeing this Bzarmīhr rose up against them with a group of Persian noblemen, killed a large number of the men of Marzīq, put Qabād, son of Firuz, back in his place, restoring the kingdom, and drove away Mārāsf. The Mazdeans who remained started to stir up Qabād against Bzarmīhr until he was killed. His reign was convulsed and in every part rebels rose up against him. Seeing the state to which he was reduced Qabād repented that he had killed Sūkhar and his son.

13. Qabād died. The years when Qabād reigned, together with the years in which Rāmāsf reigned, were around forty. After him reigned his son Kisra, son of Qabād, called Anūshirwān. He reigned for forty-seven years and six months. This happened in the fourth year of the reign of Justinian, king of

Rum. Kisra ordered that the leaders of the Mazdeans should be expelled from his realm. He confiscated the goods, which they had illegally seized, and returned them to their owners, preserving for himself the goods of those who had no heirs, and repaired what they had damaged and rebuilt what had been destroyed. He interested himself in those whose houses and farms had been extorted from them, and gave them back their own. To those who had taken a woman by force he ordered them give her twice her dowry, unless, being fully satisfied, he took her as his wife. And if she had a husband, he was to give him the equivalent of the dowry that the woman had at the time of the wedding. If necessary he made him marry the woman. What prompted him to set aside the punishment for those who had been guilty of crimes was the fact that he had at heart the good of the people and he did not like to treat anyone in a way that rendered them hostile. He ordered a census of the families of nobles and aristocrats who, having lost those who supported them, had fallen into poverty; gave to their orphans and their widows what they needed, to teach their children the arts for which they were fit and to give their daughters in marriage to rich people equal to them. Also he showed interest in houses and land whose owners were no longer able to maintain them, for lack of means, and dug irrigation canals and waterways, so as to make the water flow in the rivers, and provided their owners the money needed to purchase seeds and livestock. He went visiting the villages that had been destroyed and built formidable fortresses. Then he chose ministers, prefects and judges and transferred them into the provinces. He published the books of Azdashīr which contained the teachings which had inspired his own conduct, and urged the people to do the same, sending letters in this regard into all the provinces. In the ninth year of his reign, in the twelfth year of the reign of Justinian, king of Rum, he went to Antioch at the head of his soldiers. At Antioch he found the soldiers of Justinian, king of the Rum. He fought against them and captured the city. He then ordered a map of the city to be made, respecting the measure, the number of dwellings, in height and depth, of the streets and all that was there. He sent a copy to his lieutenant of Ctesiphon, and ordered him to build him a city of the same shape and construction so that the eye would not notice any difference between it and Antioch. The city was built, called ar-Rūmiyah, and he transferred the population of Antioch to live there. When they arrived and passed the gate of the city, each family found a house very similar to the one left, and they all had the feeling of simply being returned to the Antioch that they had left.

14. In the thirtieth year of the reign of Justinian, king of Rum, there was made patriarch of Rome Pelagius. He held the office for four years and died. In the thirty-fifth year of his reign there was made patriarch of Rome, John. He held the office for twelve years and died. In the thirtieth year of his reign there was made patriarch of Antioch Anastasius the Great. He had held the seat for six years when the inhabitants of Antioch accused him of fornication. Anastasius fled, he took his clothes that he used to wear to celebrate mass and buried them. In disguise he went to Jerusalem and took refuge in the Church of the Resurrection, where he had the task of lighting the candlesticks. He remained as sacristan at the Church of the Resurrection, with the task of lighting the candlesticks, for twenty-four years, and no one ever knew that he was a patriarch. In his place there was made Patriarch of Antioch Gregory. He held the office for twenty-four years and died. In the twenty-ninth year of the reign of Justinian there was made patriarch of Jerusalem, Macarius II. He held the office for four years and died. In the thirty-third year of his reign there was made Patriarch of Jerusalem John. He held the office for ten years and he died. In twenty-eighth year of his reign he was told that Euty chius, Patriarch of Constantinople, had denied the truth and had become a Jacobite. He deposed him, and made patriarch of Constantinople, in his place, John. He



held the office for seven years and died. After Eutychius, the patriarch of Constantinople who had been removed, the ministers and generals of the king were commissioned to plead his case to the king, and to ask him to reinstate him in his office, because what had been said about him were simply lies. The king then reinstated him in the patriarchal office and he ruled for four years until he died. In the thirty-ninth year of his reign there was made patriarch of Constantinople John. He held the office for thirteen years and died. Also Apollinaris, Patriarch of Alexandria, was patriarch for nineteen years and died. In his thirteenth year in office he had a place on the Fifth Council. After him there was made patriarch of Alexandria John. He was a Manichaeon. He held the office for three years and died. In the thirty-seventh year of the reign of Justinian there was made patriarch of Alexandria Peter. He was a Jacobite. He held the office for two years and died. King Justinian was of the Orthodox faith, loving the good, hater of the doctrine of the Jacobites and a tenacious advocate of the doctrine of the Melkites.

15. The king Justinian died after a reign of thirty-nine years. After him reigned over Rum, for thirteen years, Justin the Younger. This happened in the thirty-seventh year of the reign of Kisra, son of Qabād, king of the Persians. Justin the Younger was also of the Orthodox faith, a champion of good, hater of the doctrine of the Jacobites and Nestorians and lover of the doctrine of the Melkites. In the first year of his reign there was made patriarch of Alexandria Athanasius. He was a Manichaeon. He held the office for five years and he died. In the sixth year of his reign there was made patriarch of Alexandria John the Just. He held the office for eleven years and died. In the eighth year of his reign there was made patriarch of Rome Benedict. He held the office for four years and died. In the twelfth year of his reign there was made patriarch of Rome Pelagius. He held the office for six years and died.

16. As for Kisra, son of Qabād, king of the Persians, called Anūshirwān, he moved with his troops against the Hayātilah to avenge his grandfather Firuz. As he was already related by marriage to the Khaqan, Kisra, son of Qabād, wrote him a letter to inform him of his coming, and to tell him that he would march over the Hayātilah territory before he arrived. Then he swooped down on him and the king killed him. Balkh and the lands of Khurasan who were around it went over to Anūshirwān, who encamped his hosts in Farghānah, and married the daughter of the Great Khaqan. In Khurasan, Sayf b. Du Yazan the Himyarite, head of the Yemeni population, presented himself to him, and asked for help against the Abyssinians. He sent with him one of his generals at the head of an army from Deylaman, and they occupied Yemen and settled there. Wherever he sent his troops Anushirwān obtained huge success and victories which rendered the condition of his subjects prosperous. Feeling the approach of death, he invested his son Hurmuz with power and died. Anushirwān reigned forty-seven years and six months. After him reigned his son Hurmuz, son of Anushirwān, for eleven years and six months. This happened in the twelfth year of the reign of Justin, king of Rum.

17. Then Justin the Younger, King of Rum, died. After him there reigned over Rum Tiberius, for four years. This happened in the third year of the reign of Hurmuz, son of Anushirwān, king of the Persians. In the first year of the reign of Tiberius, King of Rum, there was made patriarch of Constantinople Cyriacus. He held the office for sixteen years and died. In the second year of his reign there was made patriarch of Jerusalem Anus. He held the office for eight years and died.

18. Tiberius, King of Rum, died. After him there reigned over Rum Maurice, for twenty years. This happened in the seventh year of the reign of Hurmuz, son of Anushirwān, king of the Persians. In the time of Maurice, King of Rum, there lived a monk named Marun, who claimed that Christ, our Lord, has two natures, one will, one operation and only one person, so corrupting the doctrine of the people. Most of those who followed this doctrine and became his disciples were inhabitants of the city of Hamah, of Qinnisrīn, al-'Awāsīm and a large number of the people of the land of Rum. His followers and those who professed the doctrine were called Maronites, named after Marun. After the death of Marun, the inhabitants of Hamah constructed at Hamah a monastery, calling it "Dayr Marun", and they embraced the religion of Marun.

19. In the fifth year of the reign of Maurice, there was at Antioch a terrible and violent earthquake. A great part of the city of Antioch was destroyed and the inhabitants perished. In the nineteenth year of his reign there was another violent earthquake in the land of Rum and in Syria, about the third hour of the day. Many cities in Syria and in the land of Rum were destroyed, and many people died because of the earthquake. In the seventh year of the reign of Maurice, king of Rum, there was made patriarch of Jerusalem Isaac. He held the office for eight years and died. That same year died Gregory, Patriarch of Antioch. The inhabitants of Antioch then went to Jerusalem to look for a man to designate as their patriarch. Isaac, patriarch of Jerusalem, said to them: "For my part I would suggest this old sexton who serves at the Church of the Resurrection". They found him easily, and they undertook to bring him to Antioch. Then [the old man] said to them: "Do you not recognize me?" They answered no. And he said to them: "I am Anastasius, and I was your patriarch. But having been accused of fornication, I fled away from you and since then I have looked after the Church of the Resurrection service, after I buried my garments in such a place in Antioch." He led them to Antioch, took them to the place where he had buried his clothes, unearthed them and was restored to office. He was their patriarch for nine years and died.

20. In the seventeenth year of the reign of Maurice another Anastasius was made patriarch of Antioch. He held the office for six years and died. After the death of Anastasius the see of Antioch remained without a Patriarch for twenty-two years. In the fifteenth year of the reign of Maurice there was made patriarch of Jerusalem Zechariah. He held the office for seven years and was exiled. In the fifth year of the reign of Maurice there was made patriarch of Rome Gregory. He held the office for thirteen years and died. In the eighteenth year of his reign there was made patriarch of Rome Sabinianus. He held the office for a year and died. In the nineteenth year of the reign of Maurice there was made patriarch of Rome Boniface. He held the office for six years and died. In the fourteenth year of his reign there was made patriarch of Constantinople Thomas. He held the office for fourteen years and died. In the second year of his reign there was made patriarch of Alexandria Eulogius. He held the office for twenty years and died (In another text it says "for two years").

21. In the time of King Maurice there lived a robber from the city of Ifrīqiyah, the head of a gang of robbers, who preyed on and killed anyone who came into his hands. The ways were so unsafe that no-one dared to walk the streets of the city of Ifrīqiyah for fear of this robber. Under intense pressure, the patrician of Ifrīqiyah resorted to every means and even ruses to catch the robber, but his efforts were in vain. Hearing about this, the king Maurice sent one of his men to offer the robber a safe conduct. He accepted it and went to the king Maurice who was very generous towards him, filled him with honors and gave him a high position. After a short time the robber fell ill and

was admitted into the sanatorium which was in the city of Constantinople. One night, prostrate with grief that afflicted him, and convinced that he was about to die and appear before his Lord, gracious and merciful to his worshipers, he began to cry and to raise supplication, saying: "My Lord, as you received the tears of Peter and forgave him, as you have received the tears of Hezekiah, and as you received the thief who was crucified with you, so also receive my tears and erases with them my sins. Please, in your great mercy receive my prayer!" So he is saying he wiped his eyes with the cloth that he had on his face. For hours the robber continued to invoke his Lord and to confess his sins. Then he gave up his spirit. There was a man in Constantinople, who was among the most distinguished, charitable and virtuous doctors, who used to visit the sick every day in the sanatorium. Now, while he was sleeping in his house, he saw in a dream, at the same time as when the robber died, a troop of negroes approach the bed of the robber, carrying with them several sheets on which were written in detail the sins that he had committed. Then he saw two men, whose faces shone white as snow and as beautiful as the sun, who carried with them a set of scales. The negroes came forward, and they laid on the balance all the sheets so that one side rose and the other went down under the weight. Then one of the white men said to his companion: "We have nothing to do here." And the other replied: "What can we do, in fact, if it is not even ten days since he stopped robbing?" But then they began to rummage in his bed, and they found the cloth with which he wiped his eyes, and they threw it on the plate. The empty plate sank down and the other rose, on which were the sheets, and they were all scattered. Then they cried out, and said: "He won the mercy of God!" and so saying, they took the soul [of that robber] and took him away with them, while the negroes, confused and sad, fled. The doctor awoke, immediately went to the robber and found him dead with a cloth over his eyes. Those who slept next to the robber reported that they had heard his crying out and his prayers. The doctor then took the cloth, was received by the King, showed it to him and told him about what he had seen in his dream and what he had heard from those who slept next to the robber. Then the doctor said to the king: "Praise be to God who welcomed the robber, thanks to your good offices, and forgave his sins, just as he did with the first thief on the cross. This in fact was the first, and that the second."

22. Hurmuz, son of Anushirwān, king of the Persians, became famous for [his] violent character, [his] harshness and [his] tyranny. He oppressed his people, making life difficult, and he imprisoned a number of his subjects, depriving them of their ranks. He was behaving in this way, when Khaqan rose up against him at the head of a large army. Hurmuz sent him against a man named Bahram, also called Sūnīr, at the head of twelve thousand warriors. Bahram Sūnīr killed Khaqan and took possession of his soldiers. After having destroyed Khaqan, Bahram remembered the violent character of Hurmuz, his despotic conduct and the bad opinion he had of his generals and soldiers, and was afraid to return to him. Sūnīr then rebelled, while he was still in Khurasan, and refused obedience. The soldiers of Iraq also rebelled against Hurmuz because of his misrule and declared him deposed. However they were afraid to kill him.

23. Hurmuz had a son named Kisra, who was then far away from him in Adharbayğān. Made aware of what was happening to his father, he moved with his men to bring him help, but this failed, and he fled into the territory of Rum to get help from king Maurice and ask him to send with him an army in order to go to the rescue of his father. With him were eight of his advisers, and his uncles Nibdi and Nistām, who were advising him what to do. Hearing about this, Kisra said to them: "Come, tell me what you have decided." They answered: "We do not think that you should leave this country before we have killed Hurmuz; we worry, in fact, that when you reach Maurice, king of Rum,

Hurmuz may write to the king Maurice, telling him that we fled from him, and so there will happen something very unpleasant.” They went to Hurmuz and killed him. Then they returned to Kisra and went with him on the road until they came to a monastery along the way and spent the night there. When they awoke, they were taken by surprise by a group of horsemen who Sūnir Bahram had sent to look for them. Seeing the riders they felt lost. But Nibdī said to them: “You go and leave me here. I know how to get us out of this mess.” They mounted on their horses, and went on their way. Nibdī then ordered the porter to bolt the door of the monastery. Meanwhile, the horsemen had arrived and had surrounded the monastery. Nibdī then went out onto the terrace and said to them: “Kisra sends to say that we are in your hands, but asks you, if you judge opportune, to let us stay in this place for the rest of the day.” They agreed. Once it was night, Nibdī climbed once again on the terrace, showing himself to the horsemen and said to them: “Kisra sends to say that we will be thankful if you will allow us to spend this dark night here. As soon as dawn comes we will come down to you and we will get on the way”. They agreed. Nibdī continued to behave with them in this way until it was certain that Kisra and those who were with him were now unattainable and far away. Then he revealed to the soldiers of Bahram how things were, and they took him prisoner and brought him to Bahram where they told him what had happened to them. The king felt great admiration, and arranged for his brother named Bahram, son of Siyāwukhsh, to hold him captive. [Nibdī] approached the said Bahram. Inviting him to make an act of submission to Kisra and intriguing to unravel the loyalty of Sūnir, he said: “I think it’s better for you to look for ways to kill Sūnir, and to deserve a high reputation with Kisra”. He continued to send him one messenger after another, until he gained his heart and he took it upon himself to kill Sūnir. But Sūnir noticed this, and ordered them to kill him. Nibdī managed to escape without being recaptured.

24. When Kisra came to Maurice, king of Rum, he was received with very great honors and granted many soldiers in aid. With the soldiers that Maurice had given him, Kisra entered Armenia and encamped near Adharbayġān, where he fought a violent battle. Bahram Sūnir was defeated and fled to the Turks. But Kisra did not desist from pursuing him until he killed him. Kisra, son of Hurmuz, called Abarwīz, reigned thirty-nine years. This happened in the seventh year of the reign of Maurice, king of Rum. When he became undisputed king, Kisra sent back the soldiers that he had been given by the king Maurice, after covering them with gifts, and the best gifts that one of his rank had the authority to give to others like himself. He then wrote a letter to King Maurice asking him to give him in marriage his daughter Maria. King Maurice replied with a letter in which he said: “I am not allowed to give my daughter as your wife unless you become a Christian.” Kisra granted his request and agreed to become a Christian. His advisers, his ministers and his generals condemned such conduct, saying: “What you intend is shameful for both us and for you. No king of Persia has ever done such a thing from Azdashīr until today. Your desire to marry this woman should definitely not lead you to abandon the faith of your fathers. Moreover, we cannot advise you at all to adopt the religion of the Christians, because the Christians are a people unable to keep a deal, nor you can trust their word.” But [Kisra] did not accept their advice. Becoming a Christian, Kisra wrote to the king Maurice a letter in which he made him aware of it. Maurice sent his daughter with an indescribable amount of gold and silver, with furniture, servants and handmaids, of which the equal has never been seen. Abarwīz Kisra later arrested those who had killed his father and put them to death, even his uncles Nibdī and Nistām. Then he set to rule his subjects with despotism and harsh manners, preoccupied with amassing wealth as none of his predecessors had ever been, and avoiding spending it. He was contemptuous of the nobles and humbled the leaders.

25. Maurice, king of Rum, had a servant named Theodore whom he loved and favored. But it happened that he became angry with him and had him flogged in blood, to the point that he had a heart full of resentment against him. There was also one of his generals named Phocas, with whom king Maurice was angry. Then Phocas said to the servant Theodore, after giving him money: "Find a way to kill Maurice". Driven by resentment stored up towards Maurice, the servant came to him at night, killed him and Phocas took possession of the kingdom. Phocas reigned over Rum for eight years. This happened in the fifteenth year of the reign of Kisra, king of the Persians. King Phocas broke out against the children of Maurice and he killed them, but their nurse managed to save one and hid him, replacing him with his own son who was killed. When he grew up, the young man embraced the monastic life on Mount Sinai and died. When Kisra, son of Hurmuz, had notice that the king Maurice was killed along with all his children, he summoned his advisers and said to them: "I can't avoid claiming revenge for the blood of my father in law, to avenge him". Instigating this was his wife Maria, daughter of Maurice. And his ministers said to him: "We told you that the Christians have neither honor nor religion nor acknowledge an alliance, but you would not listen to us. If they had had honor or religion, they would not have killed their king. However now we will advise the king how he should behave with them, to humiliate their hearts, to overthrow the whole state, and annihilate the religion. They have a temple in Jerusalem which they hold in great reverence. However, let the king send to destroy it, and as soon as that temple is destroyed their power will weaken and their kingdom will be impoverished."

26. So he sent to Jerusalem one of his generals named Harwazayh, to destroy it, and sent another to Egypt and Alexandria to pursue Rum and kill them. Kisra then moved against Constantinople and besieged it for fourteen years. Harwazayh invaded Syria, sowed destruction and plundered the population, then marched to Jerusalem. So the Jews of Tiberias, Galilee, Nazareth and the surrounding area, joined him and together they advanced on Jerusalem, giving a hand to the Persians by destroying churches and killing Christians. When he arrived at Jerusalem, [Harwazayh] first destroyed the church of Gethsemane and the Church of Eleona, which are still a heap of ruins. He then tore down the church of Constantine, of the Skull and of the Tomb, setting fire to the latter two and sowed destruction in much of the city. Together with the Persians, the Jews killed untold numbers of Christians, at the place called Mamilla in Jerusalem. After having set fire, destroyed and killed, the Persians withdrew, bringing with them as prisoners Zachariah, Patriarch of Jerusalem, and a great many people. They also took the wood of the Cross that Queen Helena had left at that place. It was a piece of the wood of the Cross and was taken, along with the prisoners, into the land of Persia. Maria, daughter of King Maurice, asked Kisra to give her the wood of the Cross, the Patriarch Zachariah and a large number of people who were prisoners. She kept it in her home, and they stayed with her. The Patriarch Zachariah died in captivity. From the day when the Patriarch Zachariah was taken prisoner, the see of Jerusalem had no patriarch for fifteen years.

In the fourth year of the reign of Phocas there was made patriarch of Constantinople Sergius. He was a Maronite. He held the office for twenty-two years. In the second year of the reign of Phocas there was made Patriarch of Alexandria Theodore. He held the office for two years and died.

27. In the fourth year of the reign of Phocas there was made patriarch of Alexandria John the Merciful. He held the office for ten years and he died. He was called "the merciful" because, so it is said, he was a native of Cyprus, and saw in a dream, at age fifteen, a woman as young and beautiful

as the sun stop in front of him. He said: "I was stabbed in the side and I awoke, and I looked at her and said to her; "Who are you? And how do you dare to come to me at such an hour?". On her head she wore an olive wreath. She replied: "I am the daughter of the king. If you make me your friend, I will introduce you to the king, because no-one is more familiar with him than I. For I came upon the earth because he brought me, he became man and saved men." Then she disappeared and I said: "Indeed she is Mercy." I got up immediately to go to church and in passing I came across a stranger who was naked. It was very cold and it was winter. I took off the coat that I was wearing, gave it to him and I said to myself: "Now I shall know whether what I saw was true, or is of the devil." As soon as I came to the church, I met him a man with a robe as white as snow who gave me a hundred dinars (in another text he says "a thousand dinars") saying: "Take these dinars, and do what you want." Then I turned to give them back, but saw no one. Then I said: "In truth, everything makes sense." So John the Merciful began to give away everything he had, even the clothes he wore, to the point that once he happened to give away even the vestments with which he used to celebrate Mass, driven by his great compassion for the poor. He was therefore called John the Merciful. In the sixth year of the reign of Phocas there was made patriarch of Rome Theodore. He held the office for three years and died.

28. After the Persians had destroyed the churches of Jerusalem, set them on fire and had retired, there lived in the monastery of ad-Dawākis, i.e. in the monastery of St. Theodosius, a monk named Modestus who was the superior of the monastery. After the Persians left, he went to ar-Ramlah, in Tiberias, in Tyre and Damascus to ask Christians to give him offerings to help to rebuild the churches of Jerusalem, which had been destroyed by the Persians. With the offerings he gathered a good sum and returned to Jerusalem where he rebuilt the Church of the Resurrection, of the Sepulchre, of the Skull and of St. Constantine, which exist to this day. When John the Merciful, Patriarch of Alexandria, heard that Modestus was intent on [re]building the churches that the Persians had destroyed, he sent a thousand beasts of burden, a thousand sacks of wheat, a thousand bags of vegetables, a thousand jars of anchovies, a thousand "ratl" of iron and a thousand workers. As for Harzawayh, who had destroyed Jerusalem, he marched to Egypt and Alexandria. Having learned that the Persians had reached Alexandria, John the Merciful fled in fear, heading to Cyprus together with the patrician who ruled Alexandria, named Nicetas. When they came to Cyprus, Nicetas asked him to go with him to Constantinople to King Phocas to greet him, and to ask him to free them from the siege of the Persians. They were on the beach when John the Merciful saw in a dream a young man who told him: "The King of heaven is closer to you than the king of earth." John woke up and said to the patrician Nicetas: "Take me back to Cyprus, because I'm about to die." He returned to Cyprus and died after being Patriarch for ten years. He was buried in a village in Cyprus called Asātuntā. After the death of John the Merciful Alexandria remained without a patriarch for seven years.

29. When Kisra besieged Constantinople, the territory of Syria found itself without any Byzantine soldiers. There were, in the city of Tyre, four thousand Jews. The Jews who were in Tyre sent letters to the Jews of Jerusalem, Cyprus, Damascus, Galilee and Tiberias, inviting them to all gather on the night of the Christian Easter, and exterminate the Christians who were in Tyre, to go up to Jerusalem, and kill every Christian who was there and take over the city. Having received notice, both the patrician of Tyre and the population of Tyre, they took the Jews who were in Tyre, bound them with iron chains and threw them in jail. They bolted the gate of Tyre and positioned there catapults and ballistae. When it was the night of the Easter of the Christians, the Jews from every

country gathered at Tyre as the Jews [of Tyre] had written to them, and according to the agreement reached. They were about twenty thousand men. [The inhabitants of the city] fought fiercely against them from the walls. The foreign Jews then demolished every church which was located outside the walls of Tyre. But for every church that was demolished, the inhabitants of Tyre brought a hundred Jews whom they were holding prisoner onto the walls, beheaded them and threw down their heads. So they beheaded two thousand men. Then there was an outcry among the Jews, and they were defeated. The inhabitants of Tyre came out, pursued them, put them to flight (in another text he says "manahū aktāfahum") and made a great slaughter. The survivors returned humiliated to their respective places of origin.

30. In the city of Thessalonika there was a young man named Heraclius, with some patricians of Thessaloniki. The patricians took the ships, loaded them with barley, wheat and legumes, and sent them to Constantinople with Heraclius to rescue and provide food to the people who suffered due to the exhausting siege. When Heraclius arrived in Constantinople, the people rejoiced and perked up at the sight of that wheat, barley and legumes. Heraclius was a courageous young man, a very capable administrator, shrewd and cunning. Heraclius said to the ministers and generals: "The king Phocas is a very bad politician and he causes misery for all Rum. In fact since he began to reign, you have undergone eight years of uninterrupted siege and the lands of Rum, Egypt and Syria are in serious afflictions because the Persians have taken hold of your kingdom and all your territories. For my part, I suggest you kill him and make another king". The leaders expressed their approval and Heraclius attacked King Phocas and killed him. The ministers and generals gathered to choose a descendant of the royal house and make him king, but Heraclius said to them: "You must not elevate any other king except the one in whom there are the following qualities: he must have more integrity and knowledge with regard to religion than anyone else; discernment, truthfulness, courage, eloquence; clemency to his own subjects; and wisdom in foiling the machinations of the enemy." They said: "And where we will ever find such a man?" He answered: "Promise me that if I show you, you will choose him as your king." They promised this, and when he was sure of them he said: "I am that man." They elected him as their king and Heraclius reigned over Rum. This happened in the twenty-third year of the reign of Kisra, son of Hurmuz, Abarwīz, king of the Persians.

## PART TWO. FROM HERACLIUS TO AR-RĀDĪ (610-934)

### Chapter 18

Cap. XVIII Heraclius break the siege of Constantinople, Heraclius and Kisra – Heraclius to Jerusalem – Heraclius and Maronites – Death of Muhammad – the Caliphate of Abū Bakr – Caliphate of ‘Umar – Caliphate of ‘Uthman – Caliphate of ‘Alī— Caliphate of Mu‘āwiya – Caliphate of Yazīd b. Mu‘āwiya – Caliphate of Marwān b. al-Hakam – Caliphate of ‘Abd al-Malik b. Marwān – Caliphate of al-Walīd b. ‘Abd al-Malik – Caliphate of Sulaymān b. ‘Abd al-Malik – Caliphate of ‘Umar b. ‘Abd al-‘Azīz – Caliphate of Yazīd b. ‘Abd al-Malik – Caliphate of Hishām b. ‘Abd al-Malik – Caliphate of al-Walīd b. Yazīd – Caliphate of Yazīd b. al-Walīd – Caliphate of Marwān b. Muhammad al-Gā’dī (p.319)

1. In the first year of the reign of Heraclius, king of Rum, there took place the *Hegira* of the Prophet to Medina, in the month of *rabī’ al-awwal*. He stayed there in exile for ten years and in the eighth year there he erected the *minbar*. From Diocletian to the Hegira three hundred and thirty years had passed; from Christ, our Lord, to the Hegira had passed six hundred and fourteen years; from Alexander to the Hegira had passed nine-hundred and thirty years; from the Babylonian captivity to the Hegira one thousand one hundred and ninety six years; from David to the Hegira one thousand six hundred and seventy-three years; from the exodus of the Israelites from Egypt to the Hegira two thousand, two hundred and seventy-nine years; from Abraham to the Hegira two thousand seven hundred and six years; from Fāliq to the Hegira three thousand, three hundred and twenty-seven years; from the flood to the Hegira three thousand eight hundred and fifty-eight years; from Adam to the Hegira 6114 years.

2. When Heraclius began to reign at Constantinople, he was engaged for six years in a violent siege. Exhausted by the siege, the inhabitants of Constantinople, many of whom had already died from hunger, decided to open [the gate of the city of] Constantinople to Kisra. Learning of this, Heraclius was afraid that they would open the gate and hand him over to Kisra. So he sent to Kisra saying: “I’ll give you anything you want as long as you leave me alone.” Kisra wrote him saying: “If you want me to leave you in peace, pledge to send as your ransom, and for the city, a thousand qintār of gold and a thousand qintār of silver, a thousand virgin maidens, a thousand horses and a thousand heads of embroidered silk. This ransom you will give to me every year, I will stay away and I’ll leave you alone. Send me immediately the ransom for this year, and do not postpone it, if you want me to leave you alone.” Heraclius wrote to him: “I consent to what the merciful king is asking of me; at the moment, though, I do not possess all the ransom money, for the merciful king has not permitted me to do whatever I wanted. But if the merciful king will give me the opportunity to go out, I will gather the money and everything else required of me. I will send you everything in six months, if the king will wait for me, and will allow me to go undisturbed around the villages in order to collect the goods for which he has asked me and so satisfy him.” Kisra granted this request. So Heraclius gathered his ministers and generals and told them: “I have only placated Kisra in order to calm him, and inspire confidence in his men. In truth I’m going to travel to Persia. I am certain that Jesus Christ, our Lord, will give me the victory over the Persians, and so we will get rid of Kisra and his men. If I am late and do not return at the end of six months, make sure to keep Kisra in suspense, filled with promises and defer throughout the year your commitment to give him what he requested. If I don’t come back, or not come back to you, do what you please. I leave my brother



Constantine as my successor. Do you accept what I've said to you?" They accepted and wished him victory. Heraclius chose about five thousand men, selecting the strongest among the commanders of soldiers of Constantinople and among the nobles, and took them with him. And he took some of the ships, on which he embarked men and horses and left the city of Constantinople direct for Trebizond. Here he landed, summoned the people and gave them their own instructions. He asked the king of al-Gurzān for help, and he made with him a covenant and gave him a *sarir* to sit upon when he was attending levees. He also asked the king of al-Angāz for help, and gave him a diadem to wear at court audiences. Also he asked the king of as-Sanāriyyah for help, made a covenant with him, and likewise gave him a *sarir* to sit on when he was attending court receptions. It was at that time that the king of as-Sanāriyyah became known as "the king of the *sarir*". Heraclius continued his march in this way until he arrived at al-Gabal, at Isfahan and at Mird, the city of Sabur. Every time he went into a city he gathered the people and dictated laws to them. If he found in his path a Persian man, woman or child, he had them killed. When they saw the soldiers of Heraclius, the inhabitants of Sabur were terrified and fortified the city by placing catapults and ballistae near the gates. Heraclius engaged them in battle for a few days and then ended the fighting by storming the city, putting to death all the men, women and children that were there. They would open the wombs of pregnant women and pull out the unborn children and slam them against the rocks. Then Heraclius said: "I am the one of whom David prophesied in Psalm 136<sup>74</sup> saying: "Blessed is he who takes your babies and dashes them against the rock". He then set fire to the city, took many prisoners, carried off with him many riches and jewels and sowed destruction in the Persian territory. Then he began marching on in the direction of Hulwān, Shārūz and Ctesiphon, went into Mayyāfāriqin and the Tigris territory, then invading Armenia until he reached the river Arsanās. There was, among his prisoners, a son of Kisra, called Qabād and named Sirūyeh: he was the son of Mary, the daughter of King Maurice who had been the cause of all those wars. When he came to Mayyāfāriqin, Heraclius sent for Qabād, son of Kisra, made him shave his head and his chin, and sent him back riding on a donkey with a letter to his father Kisra. With him he sent a group of delegates to lead him to his father. This was the text of the letter he sent to Kisra through his son: "From the servant of God, the victorious Heraclius, to Kisra the humiliated, the confused, the abandoned. I have collected for you, as my redemption and as the ransom of my whole country, whatever I could gather, that is, the heads of the Persians. As soon as you read this letter, take a look at the bearer, before putting it aside. Be well."

3. When Qabād came to his father Kisra, he saw him with his head and his chin shaved, astride a donkey, and said to him: "What new do you bring me?" The son replied: "Heraclius has destroyed every city in Persia and killed the men, women and children. As for the city of the king, he destroyed it and handed it over to iron and fire, killing all who were there, took many prisoners, and brought away untold riches and treasures. This is his letter."

4. When Kisra had read the letter to Heraclius, he was greatly saddened, and he and his men grieved, and together they wept for a long time for their families and their children. Then Kisra summoned his ministers and generals and told them: "Tell me what to do; our families and our children have been killed, our houses and our homes destroyed." The ministers and the generals answered: "We gain nothing just sitting here; rather let's move, let's see where Heraclius is and give chase". Kisra then lifted the siege of Constantinople and began to chase after Heraclius. As he

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<sup>74</sup> Ps. 137: 8-9.

marched, he was told that Heraclius had taken the road over the Tigris and was definitely about to ford the river Arsanās. His advisers said to him: "Let us hasten to precede him to the ford, so that he can not pass over. May God give us victory over him, so as to free the hostages and take back what has been taken away. He has annihilated the men of Persia and it has lessened our honor." When he arrived near the river Arsānis, Kisra's men made camp near the ford waiting for Heraclius. Heraclius was a day's march from the Arsānis river when he was told that Kisra was camped there and waiting for him. Then leaving the soldiers and the baggage, he chose some of his own men, made them take the straw and manure of animals and began to walk against the current for a whole day. Then he threw into the river straw and manure and the water carried them off until they appeared under the eyes of Kisra and his men. Seeing the straw and manure in the river, Kisra and his men thought that Heraclius had forded across the river higher up, on another stream. So they left the ford where they had camped, and they set out, heading towards the place where Heraclius had forded the river. Heraclius then returned to his men and informed them that Kisra and the army had left the ford where they had camped and gone up the river. Heraclius then set off with the army and crossed the river, continuing until he arrived in Trebizond. Then he boarded and went to Constantinople. The inhabitants welcomed him with cheers and jubilation, and for seven days they ate, drank and made merry. Kisra, meanwhile, learned that Heraclius had returned to the place of the ford where he had camped and had crossed the river, and that the straw and manure of animals, which Heraclius had purposely thrown into the river, was just a ruse and a deception. Kisra then continued on his march until he came to his own city: he found it destroyed, leaving not even a child, and no one to speak to another. From then, that is in the seventh year of the reign of Heraclius, which was then the seventh year of the Hegira, the king of Persia began to lose prestige and authority.

5. In the second year of the reign of Heraclius there was made patriarch of Rome Yūsātiyūs. He held the office for five years and died. In the ninth year of his reign, the ninth of the Hegira, Heraclius left Constantinople for Jerusalem, to see for himself what the Persians had destroyed. When he arrived at Homs, the population refused to accept him saying: "You are a Maronite, a violator of our religion". He left them and went to the monastery of Maron, where the monks came to meet him and they greeted each other. And since Heraclius was a Maronite, he dispensed enormous wealth to them, assigned funds to the monastery and strengthened the prestige of the monks. Then he went to Damascus. There was, in Damascus, a man named Mansur ibn Sarġūn, who had collected the *kharaġ* on behalf of king Maurice. Heraclius then asked him to remit the money he had received in all the years in which the Rum had been beseiged in the siege of Constantinople. The man told him that he had sent regularly to Kisra the money received at Damascus. Heraclius then spoke to him brusquely, had him flogged and put in prison until he paid out a hundred thousand dinars. Then he reconfirmed him in his post, but Mansur began to harbour great resentment against Heraclius. Heraclius resumed his journey to Jerusalem. When he arrived near Tiberias, the Jews who lived in Tiberias, in Galilee, to Nazareth, and in all the [other] villages of that area came to meet him, and welcomed Heraclius with gifts, wishing him well and praying for his safety. Heraclius granted them their safety and left them a treaty in writing. When Heraclius came to Jerusalem, there met him the monks of the Lavra, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem together with Modestus, with censers and incense.

6. When he entered the city and saw that everything had been destroyed and burned by the Persians, he felt a deep sadness; then when he saw that Modestus had [re]constructed the Church of

the Resurrection, of the Skull and the church of Mar Constantine, he felt great joy and thanked Modestus for what he had done. The monks and the inhabitants of Jerusalem said to him: "The Jews living around Jerusalem, together with those from Galilee, took the side of the Persians, and they helped them when they invaded the country. They went to the trouble of killing more Christians than did the Persians: they destroyed the churches and set fire to them". Then they let him see the dead who had been cast in the Mamilla, and made him aware of how many Christians they murdered, how many churches had been destroyed at Tyre by the Jews.

Heraclius said to them: "What do you want, then?"

"That you give us satisfaction," they replied. "Kill every Jew who is found around Jerusalem and in Galilee, because if another hostile people come to us, we don't want them to help them again against us, just as they have helped the Persians."

Heraclius said to them: "How could I kill them, having already given them my protection and having put in writing my promise to them? You yourselves know what happens to those who violate a treaty. If I violated the treaty and the oath, it would be shameful for me, and a reprehensible action on my part. And I do not think that, if I were to give in writing a treaty to others who were not Jews, that they would accept it from me. No, if I do not keep faith with the treaty signed with them, I would be a perjurer, a traitor, I would no longer be trusted by the people, not to mention the severe guilt and shame that I would receive in the presence of Christ our Lord, for the extermination of a people to whom I had given my protection, leaving my promise in writing."

They answered: "Christ our Lord, he knows that killing them by your hand would be a cause of forgiveness for your sins and purification for your sins. Men, for their part, will justify you, because when you gave your protection to the Jews you did not know, or had not learned, how many Christians they had killed nor how many churches had been destroyed. They have come to meet you and have they received you with gifts with the sole purpose of deceiving you, to avoid the punishment for what they have perpetrated. If you kill them, it would be a worthy sacrifice that you offer to God. We would not assign this guilt to you, or cause it to be imputed to you. So also we will ask our Lord Jesus Christ to pardon it. We will do for you, in the week that precedes the great fast and in it which is allowed to eat eggs and cheese, a [period] of absolute fasting: for the whole of the great fasting period we will fast for you and will abstain, in that time, from eating eggs and cheese, to last as long as Christianity". The Melkites, in fact, in that week abstained from meat and lived on eggs, cheese and fish, as is demonstrated by the Typicon of saint Mar Saba. "We will fast for you," they said, "and we will abstain from eating all kinds of fat things. We will make it a rule, a prohibition and a curse so that this can never be changed, and will send written in every part of the world, as we ask forgiveness for what will be done."

Heraclius appeased them, and he killed an uncountable number of Jews who lived around Jerusalem and in Galilee. Others managed to hide, and the rest fled into the wilderness, and into the valleys, the mountains and into Egypt. So it was decided that the first week of fasting, in which the Melkites abstained only from flesh, should become a period of absolute fasting. They fasted for King Heraclius, to beg pardon, because he had violated the treaty and killed the Jews: in this period they refrained from eating eggs, cheese and fish. They sent written statements in this regard into all corners of the earth. The Copts of Egypt still fast like this today, although not those of Syria, nor the Greek Melkites, because after the death of Heraclius they resumed eating eggs, cheese and fish in

this week. In the same week they abstain on Wednesdays and Fridays until the ninth hour, then they eat eggs, cheese and fish according to the Rule of St Nicephorus, patriarch of Constantinople, martyr and confessor, according to the Typicon of the church, allowing the Orthodox to eat in this week eggs and cheese also on Wednesdays and Fridays, although only after the ninth hour. This rule is in sharp contrast with the behavior of those who fast for the Maronite king Heraclius, and may God will preserve us from their evil behaviour, because it is not permissible to fast for a man born of a woman and, even worse, for a king who has left this world and died a Maronite!

7. But let us return to [our] story. Heraclius made as Patriarch of Jerusalem the monk Modestus, superior of the monastery of ad-Dukas, and ordered him to go with him to Damascus in order to hand over part of the money raised in Damascus and the Palestinian money, so that he could [re]construct in Jerusalem all the churches that the Persians had destroyed there. Heraclius then came back from Jerusalem to Damascus, and he stopped and took the money from Mansur. Modestus was patriarch for nine months and died. After his death the see of Jerusalem had no patriarch for six years.

8. In the sixteenth year of the reign of Heraclius there died Muhammad, son of 'Abd Allah, prophet of the Muslims, on the second Monday of the month of *rabi` al-awwal* in the eleventh year of the Hegira. He was buried in his own house, where he died, that is in the house of Aishah, after thirteen days of illness. He died at the age of sixty-three, leaving no [other] children other than Fatimah, who died forty days after him (Others say "seventy days later"), in the time of the caliphate of Abu Bakr.

## CALIPHATE OF ABU BAKR (11-13 / 632-634)

1. The Muslims were unanimous in giving the *bay`ah* to Abu Bakr, i.e. to 'Abd Allah b. 'Uthman b. 'Amir b. Ka'ab b. Sa'd b. Taym b. Murra. His mother was Selma, daughter of Sakhr b. 'Amur b. Ka'ab b. Sa'd b. Taym b. Murra. He was given the *bay`ah* on the same day that Mohammed died. His influential advisers were Umar ibn al-Khattab and Uthman ibn Affan. This was in the eleventh year of the reign of Heraclius, King of Rum. In that year there was made patriarch of Rome Honorius. He held the office for eighteen years and died.

2. As for Kisra, son of Hormuz, now in his city, and seeing the killings and destruction that Heraclius had caused there, he was deeply distressed, but he did not cease his despotic behavior. The people felt oppressed by his authority, their patience broke down and they said: "This is a man who has a jinx. During his reign the Persians have been killed and their homes have been destroyed." So they deposed him, after a thirty-eight year reign, and put in his place his son Qabād, whose real name was Shirūyeh, son of Mary, the daughter of king Maurice, king of Rum, because of whom all those misfortunes had arisen: in fact he had been killed and Kisra had tried to avenge him as his son-in-law. Having become king, Qabād, son of Kisra, proclaimed justice, made public the misfortune of which the sons of his father were the architects, who were adverse to him because of his mother, and had eighteen of them killed. Others managed to escape. Then he said: "I will free the people from tax, because of my justice and my good will." Unfortunately it was not long before the plague fell upon the people of his kingdom. Many died and among them the king Shirūyeh, i.e. Qabād, and his father Kisra. His reign had lasted eight months.

3. After him reigned Azdashīr, son of Shirūyeh, but the governor of the neighboring western state attacked him, and killed him. His reign had lasted five months. Then a man named Gurhan advanced his claims over the kingdom, a man who did not belong to the royal line, and none of whose lineage had ever aspired to be king before him. He was the same man whom Abarwiz had sent to fight against the Rum and had named Shahrmārān, and he was then murdered by a woman of the royal house, named Arazmindukht, who managed to make him fall by his own treachery. His reign lasted twenty-two days and he does not appear in the list of Kings. After him there reigned a descendant of Hurmuz who was based in Turkey. He came when he learned that he was in line for the succession. His name was Kisra, son of Qabād, son of Hurmuz. But the governor of the neighboring state of Khurasan attacked him and killed him. His reign lasted only three months and he does not appear in the list of Kings. After him reigned Murli, daughter of Kisra II, sister of Kisra on her mother's side, for a year and a half; she did not demand tribute and divided her property among the soldiers. She reigned and was counted in the number of the kings of Persia. After her reigned a man named Hushnastadih, a son of the paternal uncle of Kisra. He reigned for two months, then he was killed. He does not appear in the list of Kings. There reigned after him Azarmindukht, daughter of Kisra, but only for a short time because she was poisoned and died. She reigned one year and four months. She reigned and was counted in the number of the kings of Persia. After her reigned a man named Farrukhrādkhushri for a single month and was killed. He is not counted among the kings of Persia.

4. The period during which Shirūyeh and the men and women who succeeded him reigned, whether included or not included in the number of the kings of Persia, up until Farrukhrādkhushrī, including an interruption between [the] two reigns, was four years. It was a period of unrest and turmoil. But when the Persians became aware of the discord that reigned over them, of the ascendancy that was gradually going to Rum and of the corruption into which their religion and their ordinary life had fallen, they sent for a son of Kisra named Yazdagard, who had run away from Shirūyeh when he had had his brothers put to death. They proclaimed him their king even though he was only fifteen. There were various parties and their factions were divided, warring against each other. The inhabitants of each place, town or village of the kingdom fought against their neighbors. Such a diffusion of disorder, of division of the community, corruption of the kingdom and discord among the people in the city lasted for eight months. The reign of Yazdagard coincided with the first year of the caliphate of Abu Bakr, and the eleventh year of the reign of Heraclius, King of Rum.

5. When Abu Bakr became caliph, there was the first *riddah* [war] among the Arabs, but he fought those who did not remain in Islam to the end. Then he sent Khalid ibn al-Walid with a huge army into Iraq. Khalid encamped in Mesopotamia. The notables of the place came to meet them, he gave them a guarantee of security and they made a pact of peace with him by giving him seventy thousand dirhams: this was the first *jizya* in Iraq and the first money that was given to Abu Bakr from Iraq. Next Abu Bakr sent letters to Yemen, to Ta'if, Mecca and to other Arab people asking aid to subjugate Rum. They responded to his appeal, and Abu Bakr put in charge of the expedition Amr ibn al-As, Sarhabil ibn Hasana, Abu Ubayda ibn al-Garrah and Yazid ibn Abi Sufyan. He entrusted to them the fighters and designated as supreme head Amr ibn al-As, ordering them to focus on Syria taking the road to Aylah. He ordered them not to kill old people or children or women, not to cut down fruit trees, not to destroy the towns, not to burn the palms, not to cripple and kill sheep, cows and goats. They made their way until they came to a village called Tādūn, in the territory of Ghazza,

on the border with al-Hiğāz. Having been informed that in the city of Ghazza the armies of Heraclius were concentrating, who was then in Damascus, Amr ibn al-As wrote to Abu Bakr asking for reinforcements, and making him aware of the plans of Heraclius. Abu Bakr then wrote to Khalid ibn al-Walid to bring his men to Amr ibn al-As to support him. So Khalid ibn al-Walid moved from Mesopotamia taking the way of the desert until he reached Amr ibn al-As. Meanwhile the soldiers of Heraclius were well fortified in Ghazza. Having come to Ghazza, the patrician who commanded the army of Heraclius turned to the Muslim soldiers and asked them to send him their commander, in order to know, through him, what they had to say. Khalid then said to Amr ibn al-As: "You go", and Amr went. He opened the gate of Ghazza and entered. When he came to the patrician, he greeted him and said: "Why have you come into our country, and what do you want?" Amr ibn al-As replied: "Our king has ordered us to fight you. But if you embrace our religion, if you feel it is as useful to you as it is to us, and harmful to your interests as it is to ours, if you are our brothers, then we will not allow wrong or revenge to be done to you. If you refuse, you will pay the jizya: a jizya agreed between us, every year, forever, as long as we live, and you live: we will fight for you against anyone who dares to oppose you and lay claim on your territory, on your lives, on your assets, and on your children; we will take care of these things for you if you accept our protection by entering into an agreement for this purpose. If you refuse then there will be between us only the judgment of the sword: we will fight to the death, and until we get what we want from you." On hearing the words of Amr ibn al-As and seeing the lack of hesitation that the subject gave him, the patrician said to his men: "I think he is the leader of the people." So he ordered them to kill Amr as soon as he came to the gate of the city. There was with Amr a slave named Wardan, who knew Greek very well because he was Greek. Wardan informed Amr of what he had heard: "Be very careful how to escape." The patrician then asked Amr ibn al-As: "Is there anyone like you, among your companions?" Amr replied: "I'm the the least of all who speak, and less authoritative than any other. I am merely a messenger, and repeat what was said to me by my colleagues, ten people more important than me, who are busy with soldiers and wanted to come with me, here with you. But they sent me to hear what you have to tell us. However, if you want me to make them come here, so you can listen to them, and to know that I told you the truth, I will." The patrician said to him: "Yes, let them come." In fact, he thought and said to himself: "I think it's better to kill many than just one." So he sent word to those, to whom he had given the order to kill Amr, not to do it, and to let him out without any trouble, in the hope that he would bring his ten companions and kill them all together. After he had come out of the gate, Amr ibn al-As informed his men of what had happened and said: "I never go back to someone like that," and he finished talking, shouting, "Allahu Akbar!" The Rum came out against the Arabs and engaged in a violent battle with them, but were put to flight. The Muslims made a great slaughter of them, and then gave chase, driving them into Palestine and Jordan. They took refuge in Jerusalem, in Caesarea, and wherever they could. The Muslims left them and went away from the parts of al-Bathaniyyah. Then he wrote to Abu Bakr informing him of what had happened. When the messenger came to him, he was already dead and had been succeeded by Umar ibn al-Khattab. Abu Bakr himself, when he was sick, designated Umar ibn al-Khattab as his successor and ordered Uthman ibn Affan to put this in writing.

6. Abu Bakr died on the penultimate day of the month of *ğumāda al-akhar*, in the thirteenth year of the Hegira. The ritual prayers were held by Umar ibn al-Khattab. He was buried in the same house in which Muhammad had been buried. His caliphate lasted two years, three months and twenty-two days. He died at the age of seventy-three. Abu Bakr was tall, with a fair

complexion which verged on pale, thin, with a thin, sparse beard, a gaunt face and sunken eyes. He dyed his beard with hinna and cetamo, and his waist could barely bear the *izar*. His minister was Abu Qahhafa as-Sandas and his *hāgib* was his freedman Sadid.

## CALIPHATE OF OMAR IBN AL-KHATTĀB (13-23 / 634-644)

1. On the third day after the death of Abu Bakr, in the thirteenth year of the reign of Heraclius, King of Rum, Omar ibn al-Khattab b. Nufayl b. Abd al-Aziz b. Riyah b. Addi b. Ka'ab was made Caliph. His mother was Khathimah, daughter of Hisham b. al-Mughira b. Abd Allah b. Omar b. Makhzūm.

2. At the beginning of his caliphate there was made patriarch of Alexandria George. He held the office four years. When he learned that the Muslims had defeated the Rum, had occupied Palestine and were moving towards Egypt, he embarked on a ship and fled from Alexandria to Constantinople. After him the seat of Alexandria remained without a Melkite Patriarch for ninety-seven years. After his flight, there was made patriarch of Alexandria Cyrus. He was a Maronite, of the same religion as Heraclius. There was, in Alexandria, a monk named Sophronius. Sophronius refused to accept the doctrine of the patriarch Cyrus. Cyrus, in fact, claimed that Christ, our Lord, had two natures with one will, one operation and one person. And this was the doctrine of Maron. Sophronius went to the Patriarch Cyrus, and had a dispute with him on the subject. Sophronius said: "If that's what you think, that Christ has only one will and one operation, then he must have [also] only one nature, not two. But this is what the Jacobites assert. But we say that in Christ there are two wills and two operations, as well as two natures, because it is impossible that one will can have those two natures. But if he has only one will then he has just a single nature. But just as he has two natures so he has two wills." Cyrus replied: "The patriarch of Rome, Theodore, and the patriarch of Constantinople Sergius share the same doctrine as myself". Sophronius then went to Constantinople. Sergius, patriarch of Constantinople, gave him audience, and Sophronius told him what had passed between him and Cyrus the patriarch of Alexandria. Sergius, patriarch of Constantinople, was amazed. Two days later Sergius received gifts from Cyrus. Sergius then changed his mind and began to confute Sophronius, repeating the arguments of Cyrus, and affirming that Theodore (sic!), patriarch of Rome, considered his<sup>75</sup> point of view was wrong, and instead shared their doctrine stating: "The nature of Jesus is twofold." Sophronius rejected this statement by saying: "No. Everything can be twofold, but not that which relates to the person". Then they said: "We will not say 'two wills', nor 'one will'." So the doctrine of the church remained discordant for about forty six years.

3. Sophronius left Constantinople and went to Jerusalem. The monks and the inhabitants met with him. Sophronius told his story, and made known his doctrine to them. Jerusalem had no patriarch. They then made Sophronius Patriarch of Jerusalem because of his Orthodox faith. Sophronius then wrote a book about faith, which he sent all over and was well received by the people. This was in the second year of the caliphate of Omar ibn al-Khattab. In the fifth year of his caliphate, Macedonius was made patriarch of Antioch, in the city of Constantinople. He was a Maronite. He remained at Constantinople for six years and died. He never set foot in Antioch or ever saw it.

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<sup>75</sup> Sophronius.

4. In the sixth year of the caliphate of Omar ibn al-Khattab, the eighteenth year of Heraclius' reign, there was made patriarch of Constantinople *Swrs*.(57) He was a Maronite. He held the office for eight years,<sup>76</sup> but Martina, wife of Heraclius, who was orthodox, removed him and put in his place as the Patriarch of Constantinople, Paul. Paul was a Maronite, held the office for six years and died. After his death Heraclius summoned to his headquarters *Swrs*, the patriarch that his wife had removed. He held the office for seven years and died.

5. The Muslims intended to besiege Damascus. When he became caliph, Omar ibn al-Khattab wrote a letter in which he took away the command from Amr ibn al-As and gave it to Khalid ibn al-Walid. The king of Rum Heraclius had meanwhile retreated from Damascus to Homs. Understanding that Muslims had already conquered Palestine and the territories of the Jordan as far as al-Bathaniyyah, he left Homs and went to Antioch. Here he made preparations, and tried to win over to his cause the Arabized tribes of [Banu] Ghassan, of [Banu] Gudhām, of [Banu] Kalb, of [Banu] Lakhm and all of the Arabs that he could. He appointed as their leader one of his generals named Mahan and sent to Damascus, writing to his prefect Mansur to hold onto the men by giving them money. When Mahan arrived in Damascus along with the soldiers who were with him, Mansur said, "The king doesn't need so many soldiers, because the Arabs are just a people of raiders, and any soldiers who go out against them to engage them in combat will kill them. This army [of yours], then, would cost a lot of money and here in Damascus there is not the money to give them." Some said: "Mansur speaks this way only to grab the money, and pushed by cunning and guile, because the soldiers, learning that there was no money for the army in Damascus, will disperse and in such a way he can hand over Damascus to the Muslims." Then Mahan said: "Give us the money that you have now, then we will write to the king to inform him that there is no money in Damascus. If the king has need of men he will be working to raise the money and will give it to them in one way or another."

Mahan then learned that the Arabs had come directly from Tiberias to Damascus. Gathering his soldiers, he left Damascus and marched for two days. Then he camped in a large plain called Wadi ar-Ramad [Valley of Ash] – the place was near the Golan – better known as al-Yaqūsah. In that valley he made a kind of ditch between him and the Arabs. There they remained for several days with the Arabs before them. A few days later, the prefect Mansur left the city in search of Mahan's soldiers. He carried with him the money he had in Damascus to give to the soldiers. He came at night to the place where the soldiers were camped, followed by many Damascenes carrying torches. When they were close to the soldiers they beat drums, blew the trumpets and shouted. Mansur resorted to this behaviour in order to deceive and provoke a disaster. In fact when the Rum saw the torches behind them and heard the sounds of drums and trumpets, they believed that the Arabs had got behind them and were attacking by surprise. So they were defeated, and they fell down in that valley, that is in the Wadi ar-Ramad, a wide and big valley, and they died. Only a few were saved, and some of them scattered here and there, others returned to Damascus, others fled to Jerusalem and others to Caesarea in Palestine. The Rum who had taken refuge in Damascus, fearing to be besieged by the Arabs, brought to town as much food, fodder and the like as they could, putting on the gates whatever ballistae and catapults they had. Then they wrote to king Heraclius, asking him for help and informing him of how Mansur had behaved with them, and the artifices which he had resorted to in order to kill the men.

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<sup>76</sup> "In another text it says, 'two'."



Mahan, then, afraid of being killed if he returned to the king Heraclius, preferred to flee to Mount Sinai, where he became a monk and took the name of Anastasius. And he is the author of the sermon in which he commented on the sixth Psalm of David's Psalter.

6. When the Muslims arrived at Damascus, Khalid ibn al-Walid camped near the "Bab ash-Sharqi", Abu Ubayda ibn al-Garrah near the "Bāb al-Gābiyah", Amr ibn al-As near the "Bāb Tuma", and Yazid ibn Abi Sufyan near the the "Bāb as-Saghir (71)" and the "Bāb Kisan".<sup>77</sup> They besieged Damascus for six months less one day. The Rum made raids against them every day, coming out now from one gate or another, keeping them engaged in combat. Then the Muslims wrote to Omar ibn al-Khattab, informing him of the progress of affairs. Omar ibn al-Khattab replied, sending a letter with which he removed the supreme command from Khalid ibn al-Walid and entrusted it to Abu Ubayda ibn al-Garrah. The siege had now exhausted the inhabitants of Damascus, and Mansur, the prefect of Damascus, went up on the "Bāb ash-Sharqi" and spoke to Khalid ibn al-Walid, asking him to grant safety to him, to his family, to those who they were with him, and to the inhabitants of Damascus, with the exception of the Rum: in exchange for which he would open the gates of the city. Khalid ibn al-Walid agreed to his request and wrote to him a covenant whose text read as follows:

"This is a statement by Khalid ibn al-Walid to the people of Damascus. I will guarantee your lives, your homes, your property and your churches and I assure you that these will not be destroyed, nor your dwelling places and that you will be left alone."

He handed over the parchment, and Mansur opened to Khalid ibn al-Walid the "Bāb ash-Sharqi". Khalid burst into the city shouting to his men: "Keep your swords in their sheaths." Once they entered the city, Khalid's men shouted in chorus "Allahu Akbar" [=God is great]. Their shout came up to the Rum who were fighting at the [other] gates. Realizing that Mansur had opened the door and had let the Arabs into the city, they gave up defending the gates and fled. Abu Ubayda ibn al-Garrah came with a drawn sword from the "Bab al-Gabiyah", and from "Bab as-Saghir" came Yazid ibn Abi Sufyan who was also with his sword drawn, and from the "Bab Tuma," where there was still violent fighting, came in, always with a drawn sword, Amr ibn al-As. Many men were killed at the "Bab Tuma" on both sides. The Muslims were continuing to slaughter, and to take prisoners when Khalid ibn al-Walid, Abu Ubayda ibn al-Garrah, Yazid ibn Abi Sufyan and Amr ibn al-As met together in the place called "az-Zayyanin" where Mansur was with the [text] of the covenant in his hands. Khalid ibn al-Walid made them aware of the guarantee which he had granted them. Their opinions were divided. Yazid ibn Abi Sufyan said: "We do not endorse the guarantee given to them," while Abu Ubayda and Amr ibn al-As said: "We will recognize its validity" and cried out to their men, saying sheathe their swords. Yazid instead shouted to his men not to put away their swords. Then Amr ibn al-As said: "Come now, consider also that the city was taken based on our commitment of protection and there is peace between us." Thus they were all agreed.

Then Mansur said to them: "Promise me in the name of Allah", and did write in the text "There swore in the name of Allah: Abu Ubayda ibn al-Garrah, Yazid ibn Abi Sufyan, Amr ibn al-As and Sarhabil ibn Hasana". Mansur took with him the text. The Byzantine soldiers who had found safety reached King Heraclius at Antioch.

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<sup>77</sup> I.e. outside each of the gates ("bab") of the city.

When King Heraclius understood that Damascus had been occupied he exclaimed: "Peace to you, O Syria," or "Peace to you, O Damascus of Syria", and went on his journey till he came to Constantinople, in the third year of the caliphate of Omar ibn al-Khattab. As for Mansur, prefect of Damascus, for his cowardly behaviour and for what he had done to the Rum, getting them killed, and for the help given to the Muslims against them, all the patriarchs and bishops of the whole earth cursed him.

Seven days later, a messenger announced to Omar ibn al-Khattab the fall of Damascus.

7. Omar ibn al-Khattab then wrote to Amr ibn al-As to go with his army into Palestine, saying, among other things: "I have appointed Yazid ibn Abi Sufyan as governor of Damascus, Sarhabil ibn Hasana as governor of the territory of Jordan, and Abu Ubayda ibn al-Garrah as governor of Homs". Amr ibn al-As then left for Palestine, Sarhabil for the territories of Jordan and Abu Ubayda ibn al-Garrah went to Baalbek. [The people of Baalbek] said: "We have no objection to making a covenant of friendship with you, in the same way as the inhabitants of Damascus did." He granted them a guarantee in writing and left for Homs. Then he granted a written guarantee to the people of Aleppo and to every [other] town that asked him. Then the news of the arrival of Omar ibn al-Khattab came to the Muslims. Abu Ubayda ibn al-Garrah left the command of his men to Iyas Ibn Ghanm; Yazid ibn Abi Sufyan left his to Muawiyah ibn Abi Sufyan, Amr ibn al-As to his son Abd Allah, and they met with Omar ibn al-Khattab. Then they all set out for Jerusalem and besieged it. Sophronius, Patriarch of Jerusalem, then went to Omar ibn al-Khattab. Omar ibn al-Khattab granted him his protection, and wrote a letter to them which stated that: "In the name of God, gracious and merciful. From Omar ibn al-Khattab to the inhabitants of the city of Aelia. A guarantee is granted on their persons, their children, their property and on their churches, and they will not be destroyed or be reduced to dwelling places" and he swore this in the name of Allah. After the gate of the city was opened and he went in together with his men, Omar went to sit in the courtyard of the Church of the Resurrection. When it was time for prayer, he said to the patriarch Sophronius: "I would like to pray." The patriarch replied: "O prince of believers, you may pray as well just where you are." "I will not pray here," said Omar. Then the patriarch Constantine led him into the church and ordered mat to be laid in the middle of the church. But Omar said: "No, I will not pray either." Omar then went out and walked to the step that was at the door of the Church of St. Constantine, on the east side. He prayed alone on the steps, then he sat down and said to the patriarch Sophronius: "Do you know, O patriarch, why I have not prayed in the church?" The patriarch replied: "I do not really know, O prince of the believers." "If I had prayed in the church," said Omar, "it would have been taken away from you, and you would have lost possession because on my departure the Muslims would take it from you, saying in chorus: 'Here Omar prayed'". Bring me a piece of paper so I can write you a 'sigili'". Omar then wrote a 'sigili', prescribing that no Muslim should pray on the steps except one by one, and that ritual prayer could be held unless someone the muezzin ascended. He wrote a 'sigili' and gave it to the Patriarch. Then Omar said: "You owe me for your life and for the goods which I granted you. Come, give me a place where I can build a mosque." The Patriarch said: "Give to the prince of believers a place where he can build a temple that the king of Rum was not able to build. This place is the Rock on which God spoke to Jacob and Jacob called "the gate of heaven"; the sons of Israel called it "Sancta Sanctorum" and it is at the center of the earth. It was once the temple of the children of Israel, which they have always magnified and every time they prayed they turned their faces towards it, wherever they were. This

place will I give you, provided you write me a 'sigili' that no other mosque will be built in Jerusalem other than this".

Omar ibn al-Khattab wrote him a 'sigili' and handed it to him. When the Rum became Christians, and Helena, mother of Constantine, built churches in Jerusalem, the place of the Rock and its surroundings were lying in ruins and abandoned; on the Rock so much earth had been thrown and it was reduced to a huge garbage dump. The Rum had totally neglected it, and not held it in high regard, as in fact had the children of Israel. They had erected no church on it, because of what Christ, our Lord, had said in his holy gospel: "Behold, your house is left in ruins," and again: "There will not remain one stone upon another that has not been demolished and destroyed". It was for this reason that the Christians left it in ruins and not built on there any church. The patriarch Sophronius took Omar ibn al-Khattab by the hand and took him out to that place of refuse. Omar lifted the hem of his robe, filled it with earth and poured it into the valley of Gehenna. As soon as the Muslims saw Omar ibn al-Khattab take the earth in his lap, they all hastened to take the earth, each in his lap, or clothes, or shields, some in baskets of palm leaves and some in basins until they emptied the place, cleaned it up and the Rock became visible. Then some of them said: "Let's build the mosque so that the Rock is our *qibla*". But Omar said: "No, let's build the mosque and leave the Rock out at the back". So Omar built the mosque, leaving the Rock at the rear of it. Then Omar went on a visit to Bethlehem. Now it was the time of prayer, and he prayed inside the church facing Mecca. At this time it was all covered with mosaics. Then Omar wrote a 'sigili' for the Patriarch which provided that Muslims would not pray in that place but in another. He also forbade prayer in the church and the muezzin to call the faithful to prayer. He also stipulated that no changes should be made to these provisions. In these present days the Muslims have contravened the 'sigili' of Omar ibn al-Khattab. They have removed the mosaics from the ceiling and have written what they wanted, they make communal prayer, and the muezzin is calling the faithful. The same thing they have done at the step that was at the door of the Church of Constantine and on which Omar had prayed; they have appropriated the middle atrium of the church and have built inside it a mosque which they have called the mosque of "Omar". Sophronius, Patriarch of Jerusalem, died after having held the office four years. After his death Jerusalem remained without a patriarch for twenty-nine years.

8. Omar ibn al-Khattab ordered Amr ibn al-'Ās to make the necessary preparations and to go to Egypt. If the letter had reached him while he was still staying in Syria, he was commanded to remain and not to move, but if he was already on Egyptian territory then he should carry on. Then Omar ibn al-Khattab returned from Jerusalem to Medina. Abu Obayda ibn al-Garrah returned to Homs and from Homs he went to Qinnisrīn. The patrician of Qinnisrīn wrote to him, asking him to give him a one-year truce, so that the population could go to King Heraclius, and to grant security to those who chose instead to remain in the city. Abu Obayda agreed and the patrician asked him to put a column between the Rum and the Muslims, arranging with [each other] that no Muslim would travel to the side of Rum past that column, and that no Byzantine would travel to the side of Muslims, passing the same. The column was a carved figure of King Heraclius seated on a throne. Abu Obayda gave his approval. Now it happened that, while a group of Muslims were learning to ride horses, Abu Handal ibn Sahl bin Omar lost control of the horse, passed the column with his spear in his hand, poking the tip into the eye of the effigy, without any intention to, and knocked out the eye of the statue. The patrician of Qinnisrīn came to Abu Obayda and said: "You have deceived, O Muslim, you have violated the agreement and broken the truce that existed between us and you." Abu Obayda

replied: "Who has violated it?". The patrician replied: "The one who knocked out the eye of our king". Abu Obayda said then: "So what you want [to do]?" He said: "We will be satisfied only when the eye [of an effigy] of your king is gouged out." Said Abu Obayda: "Instead of this, put up a likeness of me, then do with it what you want to do." They said: "We will content ourselves with no other image than that of your great king". Abu Obayda acquiesced to this request, and the Rum sculpted the image of Omar ibn al-Khattab on a column, then their man stepped forward and with a spear knocked out the eye of the image. Then the patrician said: "Now you have done justice". The following year, they renewed the act of truce and safety. Ghiyād ibn Ghanm occupied Mesopotamia, ar-Raqqah and ar-Ruha, conceding his guarantee of security and a peace treaty. Al-Mughira ibn Shughba with his army invaded Azerbaijan. Al-Mughira was the first to call Omar ibn al-Khattab the "prince of the believers", for the people, after the death of Muhammad, used to call Abu Bakr "the successor of the Envoy of God" and his governors also usually wrote: "The such and such to the successor of the Envoy of God". When he took command, Omar ibn al-Khattab was usually called the successor of the successor of the Envoy of God and his governors usually wrote: "The such and such to the successor of the successor of the Envoy of God". But when Omar ibn al-Khattab had chosen al-Mughira ibn Shughba as governor of Basra, he wrote to him thus: "To the servant of God Omar ibn al-Khattab, the prince of the believers". Omar ibn al-Khattab, however, refused this title and did not recognize it. But later he had to say himself: "I am the servant of God, I am Umar ibn al-Khattab, the prince of the believers, as al-Mughira ibn Shughba well said". Thus it was that Omar ibn al-Khattab was called "prince of the believers". And since then every Caliph has been called "prince of the believers".

9. When Yazdagard, king of the Persians, was made aware of the coming of Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqas, he ordered his family and his property to shelter in China. Then he took with him a small number of soldiers and the money, left Khrād al-Awzadī, brother of Rustam, in command of Ctesiphon, and sent the same Rustam to fight against Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqas. Rustam camped near al-Qadisiyyah, where he remained until he was killed. When Yazdagard heard this, and realized the state of discord and of internal struggle, of the death and of the sedition of his best soldiers, he perceived that the kingdom was slipping out of his hand. He then went to Persia, then fled to Merv by the way of Sigistān, and was killed there. He had only fought and faced sedition, until the day he died, having reigned twenty years.

10. When he arrived at Medina, Omar ibn al-Khattab wrote a letter to remove Amr ibn al-'As from office in Palestine, ordering him to equip himself and leave for Egypt, and he appointed Mu'awiya ibn Abi Sufyān as governor of Ashkelon, Caesarea and Palestine. Mu'awiya and his forces occupied Caesarea and Ashkelon, in the seventh year of the caliphate of Omar ibn al-Khattab. Othman ibn Affan paid a visit to Omar ibn al-Khattab, and Omar said: "I have written to Amr ibn al-'As, telling him to leave Palestine and Caesarea. I've ordered him to go to Egypt and assigned the governorship of Palestine and Caesarea to Mu'awiya ibn Abi Sufyān". Othman said to him: "You know, O prince of believers, that 'Amr is a bold, and intrepid commander. I fear that he may start recklessly and without enough men, and then expose the Muslims to ruin, in the hope of a few opportunities that might turn out as easily good as bad." Omar ibn al-Khattab regretted the letter that he had sent to Amr ibn al-'As, and worried about what Othman had said. So Omar ibn al-Khattab wrote another letter to Amr ibn al-'As, saying: "If this letter reaches you before you've entered the province of Egypt, go back to where you were. If you've already entered, carry on." The letter came to Amr while he was at Rafakh. Fearing that it might be an order to retire, if he took and opened the letter,

Amr would not take it from the hand of the messenger and brought him with him, and he continued on his way until he came to a village halfway between Rafakh and al-'Arīsh. He enquired about the place and they said: "This village belongs to the province of Egypt." He then called the messenger, took delivery of the letter, read it in front of the Muslims who were with him and said to them: "Do you not know that this village belongs to the province of Egypt?" "Yes," they replied. Then Amr said: "The prince of believers has ordered me to go back if this letter is delivered to me before I entered Egyptian territory, and to continue if this letter comes to me after entering Egyptian territory. We will continue, therefore, with the blessing and help of Allah. " It is said, though, that Amr was in Palestine and continued with his men to enter Egypt without any authorization and that Omar wrote the letter before Amr was at al-'Arish. However, he kept hidden the letter and did not read it until he arrived at al-'Arish, where he opened it, and he read as follows: "From Omar ibn al-Khattab to Amr ibn al-'As. You've left for Egypt with those who are with you. In Egypt there are many Rum and you have with you only a small handful of men. If you're not yet in Egypt, come back." Amr said: "Glory to Allah, what territory is this?" They answered: "It is Egyptian territory". Then he advanced and carried on. It is also said that Omar sent him to attack Caesarea, to give a hand to the soldiers who were besieging it, when Omar ibn al-Khattab was at al-Ġābiyah and that Omar wrote secretly to Amr to travel to Egypt. Amr then marched on Egypt and gave orders to his men as if they were only moving from one place to another place nearby. He moved with them at night. Later the leaders of his men halted their work because they saw that he had exposed them dangerously, and after they realised this, they reported it to Omar ibn al-Khattab, who sent a letter to Amr ibn al-'As in which he said: "You have endangered the lives of those who are with you. If my letter reaches you before you have entered Egypt, then go back where you were. If you have already entered Egypt, go ahead, and know that I give you my support." Then he carried on, until he came to al-Farama, besieged it for a month and captured it. Then he continued his march into Egypt. The Rum were well reinforced in the citadel, they had dug a moat around in which they had placed iron bars, and held back the garrison troops to guard the citadel, so that for seven months they defended themselves strongly. Because of the delay in taking the city, [Amr] wrote to Omar and asked him for reinforcements. He sent him as assistance four thousand men, including az-Zubayr ibn al-'Arrām, Obāda ibn as-Samit, and Maslama ibn Muqallad. Amr already had four thousand men with him, and so this became eight thousand.

11. In Egypt the prefect al-Muqawqas<sup>78</sup> was receiving the *kharāj*<sup>79</sup> on behalf of King Heraclius. He was a Jacobite and he hated the Rum. But it had never crossed his mind to express his Jacobitism for fear of being killed. He had also not sent to Constantinople the money that he had collected in Egypt during the siege of Constantinople by Kisra, and therefore he was afraid that, if he fell into the hands of King Heraclius, he would surely be put to death. So he tried to deceive the Rum by saying to them: "The Arabs have had reinforcements, we cannot do anything against them, and we will find no way out if they besiege us. They will kill us for sure. Let's open the gates of the citadel, and gather the fighters, then go out from the citadel and get out onto the island. There we will

<sup>78</sup> The "prefect al-Muqawqas" is not named by Eutychius, nor is his exact office given, and for good reasons. In fact his name was Cyrus, the *augustalis* or viceroy, and, far from being a Jacobite, he was Eutychius' predecessor as the Melkite patriarch from 628-643. There is more about him in al-Tabari and Abu Salih. See F. Nau, "La politique matrimoniale de Cyrus (le Mocaucas) patriarche melchite d'Alexandrie", in *Le Muséon* 45 (1932), pp. 1-17.

<sup>79</sup> Or *kharaj* – This is the name of the Islamic land tax, initially imposed only on non-Muslims. In this content it means the land tax.

encamp and the sea will make us an effective defensive barrier.” The Rum went out, with al-Muqawqas and a group of Coptic notables, from the southern gate of the citadel, while others stayed to fight against the Arabs. They embarked on the boats, came onto the island – today a place of artisans – and cut the bridge that was used when the Nile flooded. Then al-Muqawqas sent word to Amr ibn al-‘As and said: “You came into our country and we have fought for a long time. For too long a time you have now been in our territory. You are surrounded by the Nile and you are prisoners at our mercy. Send us therefore one of your men who is your representative so that we can hear what you have to say and maybe reach an agreement that satisfies us and you, and so put an end to this war.” When the messengers of al-Muqawqas presented themselves to Amr ibn al-As, he sent them back to al-Muqawqas along with Obaida ibn as-Samit. Obaida was of black complexion. When he came to al-Muqawqas, he led him to a seat and said: “What do you want from us, now, tell us.” Obaida replied: “For how things are done between us, there are only three possibilities, and it’s up to you to choose the one you like the most. This my chief has ordered me to repeat, and the prince of believers ordered him to say this. You may embrace our religion, namely Islam, and in this case you will become our brothers, we shall be united in good as well as in bad times. If you do this, we will stop fighting against you and will not let anyone do you harm or dare to go up against you. If you refuse to do this, you will pay us the tribute that we deem convenient, every year and forever, and we will defend you from all those who attack or try to harass you by laying claim upon your territory, upon you and upon your property. But if you accept our guarantee we will give you a deal which we deem legal. If you refuse even this, there will be between us and you only the judgment of the sword. We are all willing to die, to the last, in order to obtain what we want from you.”

Al-Muqawqas replied: “To embrace your religion is not possible [for us]; I myself personally, and my Coptic friends, can agree to accept a peace pact, but the Rum have refused to agree to make peace with you, saying: ‘We never do such a thing!’” Al-Muqawqas behaved in this manner because of treachery and deceit, in order to drive out the Rum from the citadel and then accept peace, in order to keep the money that he had collected.

13. ‘Ubāda ibn as-Samit then returned to Amr ibn al-As and made him aware of what had happened. When the Muslims heard that there were only a few men in the citadel, they moved the field of action to the area that is now known by the name of Souq al-Hammam, and subjected the citadel to catapult and ballista fire. Az-Zubayr leaned a ladder against the side of the citadel on the side of Souq al-Hammam and climbed up. No one noticed until az-Zubayr was on top of the citadel, and shouted ‘Allahu Akbar!’ Others were already climbing up the ladder. The Rum stopped fighting, they embarked [on ships] and joined their companions on the island. The Muslims conquered the citadel, killing and making prisoners, and obtained great spoil. When the Rum realized what al-Muqawqas had done, namely, that he had betrayed them and had made them go out of the citadel, delivering it to the Muslims, they were afraid, they embarked, and went off to Karm Sharik. Al-Muqawqas later had an interview with Amr ibn al-As to enter into a communal agreement and agreed that all the Copts of Egypt, of Upper and Lower Egypt, would pay two dinars per head as a personal tribute, whether they were nobles or commoners, as long as they were adults. The old, boys still not grown up, and women were not required to pay anything.

14. They then made a census of the Copts, especially of those who were required to pay the tribute. The number counted was six thousand men and the tribute to be levied was therefore

estimated at twelve thousand dinars. [Amr] therefore commanded them to pay these dinars in exchange for the protection that had been granted to them. Then al-Muqawqas went to Amr ibn al-As and said: "With the Rum I have nothing to do, my religion is not their religion nor is my doctrine the same as theirs. I was just afraid that they would kill me, so I kept hidden from them my religion and my doctrine, taking care not to leak such a thing. However, I have to ask you three things." Amr said: "And what would they be?" He answered: "First, do not separate me from the Copts, consider me one of them and even impose on me what you impose on them because we decided this by mutual agreement and I am their guarantor. The Copts will observe the covenant which you have made with their friendship and with which you engaged with them. Second, if in the future the Rum ask you to make friends with them, do not do it until you have destroyed them and reduced them to slavery, because they deserve it. Third, when I am dead, command them to bury me in the Abu Yūkhannas church in Alexandria." Amr gave him what he asked, provided that he undertook to repair both the bridges, to shoulder the burden of building houses and refreshment stations, and markets, and to build bridges in all the territory between Fustat and Alexandria. And so they did. In fact, the leaders of the Copts gathered their men, they repaired the road, and they built for them bridges, markets and houses. The Copts were then of great help to the Muslims in the war against the Rum. Amr then departed attacking the Rum at Karm Sharik. They fought for three days. Eventually the Rum retreated to escape, and they clashed again at Salstas, where they fought for nineteen days, then at al-Karyūn where they fought bitterly. The Rum were defeated and fled back to Alexandria where they entrenched. The Arabs then became like lions and continued to fight against the inhabitants of Alexandria without giving respite and harshly. The Rum made sorties from the gates every day and engaged in battle. Many were those on both sides who were left on the field. One day the fighting was so violent that the Arabs were able to storm the citadel of Alexandria engaging in fierce combat with those who were there. But the Rum managed to contain the onslaught and expelled them all from the citadel, making prisoners of Amr ibn al-As, Maslama ibn Mukhallad, Wardan, the freedman of Amr, and another man. The Rum, however, did not know who they were. The patrician told them: "You are now our prisoners, tell us what you want from us". Amr said to them: "Either embrace our religion or pay us the personal tribute, or we will not cease fighting you until you or we are destroyed." Then a Byzantine said to the patrician: "I have the impression that this man is their leader; kill him." He alluded to Amr ibn al-As. Wardan understood what he said, because he knew Greek. So he seized Amr violently and gave him a slap, saying, "Who are you to dare to talk like this to the presence of the leaders? There is no one more vile and less important than you among the soldiers. Leave it to others to talk and keep quiet." The patrician then said to himself: "If this man were their commander, he would not allow anyone to yank him like that and slap him." Maslama ibn Mukhallad said: "Our prince had already decided to cease all fighting against you, and in fact the prince of believers, Omar ibn al-Khattab, had written to our commander, wanting to send you ten of our most prominent and wise leaders, so that we could reach, some kind of agreement with which all would be satisfied, and so we were left alone here. We ask, therefore, if you are of this opinion, to let us go because returning to our commander we can report how humanely you have treated us, then send to him the ten leaders and everything stops between us and you, as pleases us and pleases you, and so leave you in peace." The patrician thought that these words corresponded to the truth. So he let them go free, hoping that the ten chiefs would present themselves. He would have them killed, and then the Arabs would be at his mercy. So he granted them permission to leave. As soon as they were outside, Maslama said to Amr ibn al-As: "O Amr, you were saved by the slap of Wardan!" Then

they shouted 'Allahu Akbar' and the Rum, discovering that the prisoner was Amr himself, repented of letting him go. Next [the Muslims] advanced, shouted out against the Rum, and engaged in a fierce battle. The Rum were put to flight. Some of them reached the sea and took ship, others took off into the desert. The Muslims thus came into Alexandria after having besieged it for fourteen months.

15. After occupying Alexandria, Amr ibn al-As pursued the Rum who had retreated into the desert. Then the Rum who had fled by sea returned to Alexandria and killed the Muslims who were there. Hearing this, Amr ibn al-As hastily returned to Alexandria. He engaged in a fierce battle at the citadel, but finally captured it and the Rum fled again by ship. Amr ibn al-As then wrote to Omar ibn al-Khattab saying: "I have conquered a city, but I will not describe here what is found there. I will tell you only that I have found there four temples, four baths, forty thousand Jews who pay the personal tribute, four palaces for kings and twelve thousand sellers of fresh green vegetables. I conquered by force without any promise of peace." In the letter he let him know that the Muslims were asking to divide up these things. Omar ibn al-Khattab replied, condemning this opinion, and ordered him not to sack the city or to divide up what was there, and to provide that the proceeds of the *kharag* (Islamic land-tax) would serve as a strength and sustenance for Muslims in the Holy War against their enemies. Amr then left the city as he had found it, he counted the villages and imposed on them the *kharag*. All Egypt was placed under the protection of Muslims in exchange for two dinars *kharag* for every man, without anyone being asked more for his person, unless it was someone who possessed more: in which case he was taxed in proportion to the lands and the cultivated fields that he possessed. The people of Alexandria were treated differently: they would have to pay the property tax as well as the personal tax that would have been asked by their administrators, because Alexandria had been conquered through war without any promise and no covenant, since there was no treaty or guarantee with its inhabitants. Alexandria was captured on Friday the new moon of the month of Muharram in the year twenty of the Hegira, in the twentieth year of the reign of Heraclius, the eighth year of the caliphate of Omar ibn al-Khattab.

Amr ibn al-As sent Uqba ibn Nafi, who went as far as to Zawilah. The territory between Barqah and Zawilah became a territory of the Muslims. At that time none of the collectors of poll tax came to Barqah because people sent in their own personal tribute at the appropriate time.

In those days a severe food shortage fell upon the inhabitants of Medina. Omar ibn al-Khattab then wrote to Amr ibn al-As, informing him of the state of collapse and famine in which the people were struggling. Amr sent camels laden with flour. The caravan was an uninterrupted line: when the first camel arrived in Medina the last one was still in Egypt. Omar ibn al-Khattab wrote to Amr ibn al-As to dig out a channel to reach the Red Sea, so as to make the wheat transport easier. Amr then ordered a canal dug, which is in the territory of al-Qantarrah, known by the name of the Canal of the Prince of the Believers. The boats transported wheat, barley and cereals from al-Fustat to the Red Sea through the canal, and from the Red Sea to Medina.

16. Amr ibn al-As then conquered Tripoli in Africa, in the twenty-second year of the Hegira, the twenty-second of the reign of Heraclius and tenth of the caliphate of Omar ibn al-Khattab. In Fustat in Egypt Amr constructed the great mosque.

17. Omar ibn al-Khattab was murdered at Medina, while he was at the morning prayer. He was killed by Abu Lu'lu'a, the slave of Ibn al-Mughira Shu'ba, on the twenty-seventh of the month of



Dhul-hiġġa, in the twenty-third year of the Hegira, the twenty-third year of the reign of Heraclius. He was sixty-three. He had delegated the election of his successor to a committee consisting of six companions of Muhammad, i.e. of Othman ibn Affan, Ali ibn Abi Talib, Talha, az-Zubayr ibn al-Arrām, Abd ar-Rahman ibn Urf az-Zahri and Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqas. The funeral prayer was recited by Suhayb ar-Rumi and he was buried in the house where Muhammad had been buried. His caliphate lasted ten years and nine months. During his caliphate Omar made the pilgrimage to Mecca nine times. He was of a reddish complexion, left-handed, bald, and his hair and beard were dyed with henna. The head of his bodyguard was Abd Allah ibn Abbas and his *hāgib* was the freedman Barqa.

## CALIPHATE OF OTHMAN IBN AFFAN (23-35 / 644-656)

1. Othman ibn' Affari b. Abi'l-'As b. Umayya b. Abd Shams was made Caliph – his mother was Umayyah bint Kawbarā b. Rabi'a – three days after the death of Omar, at the turn of the month of Dhul-hiġġa. His caliphate began in the new moon of the month of al-Muharram, in the twenty-fourth year of the Hegira, the twenty-fourth year of the reign of Heraclius, King of Rum. He held the caliphate for twelve years. In the third year of his caliphate George was made by Patriarch of Antioch. He was a Maronite. He settled in Constantinople and remained there five years without ever going to Antioch. He died in Constantinople and was buried there. In the tenth year of his caliphate Macarius was made patriarch of Antioch. He was a Maronite. He was invested with the office in Constantinople and remained there for eight years and never entered Antioch. He died and was buried in Constantinople. In the ninth year of his caliphate Peter was made Patriarch of Constantinople. He was a Maronite. He held the office for six years and died. In the fourth year of his caliphate Peter was made Patriarch of Alexandria. He was a Maronite. He held the office nine years and died. In the eighth year of his caliphate died Honorius, patriarch of Rome, who had professed the doctrine of Maron, thus giving rise to different opinions within the church. After his death a man named Sadinus was chosen and was made patriarch of Rome. He held the office for six months and died. After his death a man of proven virtue named John was chosen. Made aware of the origin of the doubts that were snaking about within the church – the sovereigns of Constantinople were then Heraclius and his brother Constantine – the Patriarch John wrote them a letter in which he passed under review the reasons for such doubts, taking the side of his predecessor Honorius, patriarch of Rome. The letter began:

2. "Pope John, Patriarch of Rome, to Heraclius and Constantine, ruling brothers, to whom are entrusted the church of Christ, true God, whose light appeared in the darkness, who has delivered us from the power of darkness with his wonderful light, the light of truth uncontaminated by any darkness, so that with the blood of his cross peace is restored between heaven and earth, who ever guards his church. It is given to you, O emperors, to ensure that in his church are raised the best and noblest invocations and that people believe according to the perfect faith and stay close to him. Something has happened that it is necessary to set forth, for him to understand who loves and cultivates justice, so that the truth can shine again as brightly as it once did. I have come to know the state of the controversy, also, and the doubts that are circulating in the West. I received news of all of this by a letter of our brother Honorius, Patriarch of Constantinople, and from others. And it is our duty to explain how things are, because He knows everything. The beginning of the story is this. About eighteen years ago Cyrus, Patriarch of Alexandria, professed the doctrine of

Maron, according to which in Christ, our Lord, there are two natures, one will and one operation. He heard about Sophronius, who became Patriarch of Jerusalem, who disputed with him, getting the better with his arguments. Then Sophronius went to Sergius, Patriarch of Constantinople, and perceived that he spoke the same way as Cyrus, affirming also that Honorius, patriarch of Rome, professed his doctrine. From Constantinople Sophronius went to Jerusalem. Later when he became Patriarch of Jerusalem – it was in fact because of the righteousness of his faith that the inhabitants of Jerusalem made him Patriarch of Jerusalem – he wrote a book on the faith that was welcomed by the people of this world. When Honorius, patriarch of Rome, heard this and that Sergius, Patriarch of Constantinople, had lied about him [Honorius], saying that he [Honorius] was a Maronite, he wrote a letter in which he said: ‘Our Lord Jesus Christ, who is the source of life, was born without sin, because the eternal Word, by whom all things were made, coming down from heaven, he took a body from the Virgin Mary and became like us as to the nature, but not in the will of sinners. Because Paul says that he took the similitude of us sinners, i.e. the body, without sin, with a rational soul and intellect. And similarly, he was pleased to take the single will for his humanity, not as we know it, who have two contrary wills, one of which is centred in the intellect and the other in the body, opposed to each other, which takes place in every human being who is subject to sin, and because none [of us] is exempt from the sin of rebellion. But the body of Christ, our Lord, did not in itself have two contrary wills nor was the will of his intellect contrary to the will of his body and he who had come to take away the sin of the world had no sin. Away from him be such a thing! In Christ our Lord there was never sin, not even one, either in his birth or in his incarnation. We profess and confirm that there was only one will to which was conformed his sacred humanity, and we do not accept at all that there were in him two contrary wills, one in his intellect and the other in his body’. So wrote Honorius, patriarch of Rome, to Sergius, the patriarch of Constantinople.

Now, with regard to our own natures, we recognize two contrary wills, the intellect and the body, and some, bending this fact to their fallacious doctrines, thought that Honorius, patriarch of Rome, was saying that there was one and the same will in the divinity and humanity of Christ our Lord. Now I ask those who advocate this doctrine: “In what nature can we say that Christ God had only one will? If only in his divinity, then his humanity had no will, so therefore he was not a perfect man. If they say that this will alone was in the humanity of Christ, we ask them: “How could he then be perfect God?” And if you respond that there are two natures with one will, this would not be possible at all. We profess the incarnation of Christ and therefore we do not deny the two wills of his two natures, nor alter in any way the peculiarities of each of them. But let’s say that each of the two natures of Christ, the incarnation of the one and only person, has a will. We do not say that there are two persons, like the much-execrated Nestorius [said]. As for those who claim to be two natures and one will, common to the deity and humanity of Christ, and a single operation, well they are known to be in error, like the maligned Marone. As for those who claim there to be one nature, one will and one operation, well we also know that they are in error, like the execrated Eutyches, Dioscorus and Severus, since this is the doctrine of the Jacobites. But sound and manifest doctrine is that which [our] masters professed, namely that in Christ our Lord there are two natures, two wills and two operations in one person, for it is impossible that one who has two natures can have only one will. If he had only one will, he would also have only one nature. But if he has two natures then he must have also two wills. We therefore ask you to tear up the parchment in which are accused Leo, patriarch of Rome, and the council of Chalcedon, so that it is not widely read and not understood in the hands of weak minds so as to shake their faith. We ask Christ our Lord to look

upon you with his mercy, his forgiveness and his help and to subdue the nations with his invincible strength.”

3. When John, patriarch of Rome, had thus finished his letter, he affixed his seal and sent it by entrusting it to a remarkable man named Barsiqā, archdeacon of the Church of Rome. He went to the sovereigns Heraclius and Constantine, but he found that Constantine had died. The ministers and army generals revolted against Heraclius, and killed him, because they thought that he was the cause of the disaster that had hit them – they had indeed lost Egypt and Syria – and also because he was a Maronite. In his place they elected king the son of the late brother Constantine and called him Constantine, with the name of his father. This was in the eighth year of the Caliphate of Othman. This new king, Constantine, was a godly man. When Barsiqā handed him the letter of John, Patriarch of Rome, the king took it, read it and was amazed at the insight of the Patriarch of Rome. Then he ordered that his answer should be written in these terms:

4. “We welcome, Your Excellent Holiness, your instruction. We profess and believe in Christ our Lord there are two natures, two wills, two operations and a single person and anathematise anyone who dares contradict anything. We also believe in what the Six hundred and thirty bishops gathered in Chalcedon said, and anathematise anyone who dares act against them. We have complied with the order that you gave to tear up the parchment where is slandered Leo, the holy patriarch of Rome, and the Council of Chalcedon, and we gave it to the fire. We remain steadfast in your teaching, which is the teaching of truth, and ask that you invoke upon us salvation, and preservation from every calamity.”

5. Barsiqā set off, carrying the letter of King Constantine in order to hand it over to John, patriarch of Rome, in response to his letter. When he arrived in Rome, he found that the patriarch John was now dead and in his place had come a man of proven virtue named Theodore. Barsiqā presented himself, let him know what the king had willingly accepted, informed him of his orthodoxy and handed him the letter that King Constantine sent him in response to the letter that John had sent to the two sovereigns. The Patriarch Theodore took it, read it and remained comfortable with the orthodoxy of the king. He answered him in these terms:

6. “To King Constantine, singularly faithful to pure orthodoxy, from the patriarch of Rome, Theodore. Almighty God, who protects his church, gave us the economy of his mercy by the event of your orthodox faith and has given us the opportunity to talk to you with joy and fervour in order to manifest this grace. Because you have received your authority as vicars of the holy Apostles in order to defend orthodoxy and make manifest the true religion, not as Heraclius did who does not deserve to be called King because of his wickedness, and to be left out of the truth, nor as Sergius, Honorius, Paul and Peter, the patriarchs of Constantinople, who opposed the truth making themselves worthy of anathema, and that they deserved to be deprived of the place they occupied within the church, for the falsity of their doctrine and for the doubts that they spread among the people. As for you, most excellent king, know that the true orthodox faith is the fruit of paradise and it is your job, most excellent king, to protect it, fight for it and make it manifest to the people. We ask this through Christ our Lord to grant this with his blessing by his generosity.” Patriarch Theodore affixed his seal to the letter and sent it to King Constantine in response to the letter he had sent to John, patriarch of Rome. When he received the letter, King Constantine felt great pain to learn the news of John’s death. Then he opened the letter and

remained extremely pleased with the response that the patriarch Theodore gave him in place of the deceased John. Then he ordered a reply. When the king's messenger came to Rome, he found that Theodore had died and that Martin had been made Patriarch of Rome.

7. In the time of Othman ibn Affan, King Constantine sent an eunuch named Manuel with a large army by sea and captured Alexandria. Amr ibn al-As was at Misr [i.e. Cairo]. Amr ibn al-As came out against him accompanied by the Copts and other people of Misr. Al-Muqawqas was with them who provided them money, housing, weapons and provisions. They met at the gates of Alexandria in a furious battle carried on fighting for several days. Eventually the eunuch Manuel fled along with all the Rum that were with him, they embarked and returned to Constantinople.

8. During the times of Othman ibn Affan were conquered Africa, Armenia and Khurasan. Muawiyah ibn Abi Sufyan ruled Damascus in the name of Othman ibn Affan. Mu'awiya made a pact of friendship with the people of Cyprus in the twenty-eighth year of the Hegira, the fourth year of the caliphate of Othman ibn Affan, for a tribute of seven thousand, two hundred dinars to be paid to Muslims each year, forever. The same amount they gave to the king of Rum. Othman had the Koran drawn up, beginning with the longest suras and ending with the shorter ones; he had seven copies made and ordered the destruction of all the others. This was in the thirtieth year of the Hegira. The people revolted against Othman ibn Affan and he was killed. Those who killed him were Muhammad ibn Abi Bakr, Ammar ibn Yasir and Kinana ibn Bishr, on the eighth day of Dhul-hiġġa (others say "the eighteenth of Dhu'l-hiġġa") in the thirty-fifth year of the Hegira. He was eighty years old. They buried him three days later. He was of medium height, handsome of face, dark, had a thick and braided beard, and his teeth were linked together with gold frames. His influential adviser was Marwan ibn al-Hakam. He was buried in Medina in a place called 'gisr Kawkab'. The head of his bodyguard was Abdullah ibn Fahd al-Adawī and his 'hāgib' was the freedman Hamdan.

### **CALIPHATE OF ALI IBN ABI TALIB (35-40 / 656-661)**

1. After Othman there was made caliph Ali ibn Abi Talib b. Abd al-Muttalib b. Hashim b. Abd Manaf – his mother was Fatimah, daughter of Asad ibn Hashim b. Abd Manaf – in the month of Dhu'l-hiġġa in the thirty-fourth year of the Hegira, in the fourth year of the reign of Constantine, the son of Constantine. He then went to Basra and the battle of the Camel took place. Then he went to Kufa, aimed at Syria and the battle of Siffin took place there. He returned and there took place the battle of al-Khazrawiyah, in Nahrawan. He returned to Kufa, where he was killed by Abd ar-Rahman ibn al-Mulġam al-Muzadi, ten days before the end of the month of Ramadan of the fortieth year of the Hegira. He was killed at the age of sixty-three years. The funeral prayer was held by his son al-Hasan. His caliphate lasted four years and ten months. He was of a dark complexion, with a big belly and he had a bushy beard that touched his chest. Gray hairs had in no way altered his features. He was buried in al-Ghariyyān, others say in an-Nawbah: it is in fact uncertain where he was buried. The head of his bodyguard was Ma'qil Qaysi ibn az-Zibāgi, and his 'hāgib' was the freedman Qanbar.

## CALIPHATE OF MUAWIYAH I (41-60 / 661-680)

1. Muawiyah ibn Abi Sufyān advanced from Syria into Iraq and was [there] given the *bay'ah*.<sup>80</sup> His name was Sakhr ibn Harb b. Umayya b. Abd Shams. Mu'awiya's mother was Hind, daughter of Utba ibn Rabi'a b. Abd Shams [b. Abd Manaf]. His appointment as caliph occurred in the month of *rabi' al-awwal* in the forty-first year of the Hegira, in the tenth year of the reign of Constantine, the son of Constantine, King of Rum. He ruled for nineteen years and five months.

2. In the second year of his caliphate there was made patriarch of Constantinople George. He held the office for ten years and he died. In his second year in office there was the Sixth Council. The Patriarch of Rome was then Martin, and the Exarch who ruled the West in the name of King Constantine, was a man named Constans. He was a Maronite and put pressure on Martin, patriarch of Rome to profess that doctrine. But Martin refused energetically and Constans banished him to a remote town.

3. There lived in those days a holy monk named Maximus, who had two disciples. He went to the exarch Constans, reproached him with the indecency of his doctrine and of his religion and showed him how horrible was his faith and how stubborn his wickedness. Constans then took Maximus, cut off his hands and feet, tore out his tongue, and banished him to a remote place. He then took one of his disciples and treated him the same way, while the other he had flogged; then he exiled them to remote places, far away from each other. After treating in this way the patriarch Martin, Maximus and his two disciples, Constans made patriarch of Rome a man of eminent virtues named Diyūnus. When the orthodox King Constantine learned of the death of Theodore, patriarch of Rome, and what Constans had done to the patriarch Martin, to the monk Maximus and his two disciples, as well as the appointment of Diyūnus as Patriarch of Rome, he disapproved of what had happened and sent a letter to the patriarch accompanied with a 'sigilius', asking him to send to him the most distinguished bishops who participated with him at the same altar, assuring him that he need not be afraid of anything. Constantine did this because he knew the cause of these excuses contrary to the doctrine of the church and who had originated them, just as the council of the holy Fathers had anathematized those who were not found worthy.

4. The king's messenger arrived in Rome and found that Diyūnus was dead. There had been made Patriarch of Rome, after him, Aghābiyūs. So he gave the letter to the patriarch Aghābiyūs. Aghābiyūs convoked the bishops. They were around one hundred and twenty, and he sent them with the messenger from the king along with three deacons who communicated at his own altar. And they came to Constantinople, the bishops were received by King Constantine, made him their greetings and blessings. Constantine summoned [another] hundred and sixty eight bishops, and so there were around two hundred and ninety-two. The three deacons sent by Aghābiyūs, patriarch of Rome, were subtracted and there remained two hundred and ninety bishops. They are mentioned thus in the diptych. By the help of the goodness of God and by the elevation of the meekness of Constantine the orthodox king, this issue was resolved with a judgment against the Monothelites, who were anathematized. There presided at this holy synod George, patriarch of Constantinople, and Theophanes, patriarch of Antioch, who was made Patriarch at that council as Macarius, his predecessor, was excommunicated at the council

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<sup>80</sup> Islamic oath of allegiance. The sense is that the Muslims swore allegiance to Muawiyah.

itself. Alexandria and Jerusalem had at that time no patriarch and the two sees were vacant. Anathematised were Macarius, Macedonius and George, patriarchs of Antioch, and Stephen, a disciple of Macarius; also excommunicated were Cyrus and Peter, patriarchs of Alexandria; excommunicated was Honorius, Patriarch of Rome; excommunicated were Sergius, Tūdrus, Paul and Peter, the patriarchs of Constantinople, Theodore, bishop of Faran, and Blūkh rūniyūs, called Simon Magus, because he was a heretical Syrian priest who claimed to have seen Christ tell him in a dream that the Monothelites were in the right. At that time he was present at Constantinople, after the final ruling against the Monothelites was published, and he had started talking about what he had seen in a dream, advocating the cause of the Monothelites. They excommunicated him so he and his followers rejected the false allegations and the people called him Simon Magus. They finished pronouncing the anathemas against the Monothelites, continued sitting, and settled what was the true faith, orthodox, pure and blameless saying: "We believe in the One of the Trinity, the Only-begotten Son, who is the eternal and everlasting Word, equal to the Father, God in one person, and in a unique hypostasis, must be considered perfect in humanity and perfect in divinity, in substance that is our Lord Jesus Christ, with two perfect natures, two operations and two wills in one person." Also they professed what was already professed by the Council of Chalcedon namely that God's Son received by the holy virgin Martmaryam a human body with a rational soul and intellect, by the mercy of God who loves men, without suffering mixture nor corruption nor separation or division, but remaining one in doing both what man does in his nature and in his doing what God does in his nature. He is the only begotten Son, the eternal Word who became flesh and truly took shape, as the Holy Gospel, without losing any of his eternal glory and without changing it, but keeping it integrated in two operations, two wills and two natures, God and Man in which is perfected the discourse of truth. And each of the two natures work in communion with the other, with two wills not contrary or opposed to each other, but the human will remaining in accord with the omnipotent divine will. If the Word of God in the act of incarnation had not become a perfect man in every part, our salvation would be a phantasm and a shadow. How could the doer of good, the wise doctor who truly heals, as the prophet Malachi says: "He will stand as the sun of justice for those who fear the name, will heal them and carry them on his wings", take upon himself the ancient defeat of the created and consent that in his power, in his will and in his power there was the first sin of man? And as this was done without any compulsion, we see the Lord who is the object of the Father's pleasure, the Son who alone is free, not a slave but who even became a servant for our salvation, giving us victory over those who were vainly uttering and saying that Adam sinned by necessity, that his sin did not depend at all on his own will and that his nature did not have a free power with which prevent it from falling. With these their words, the proponents of this doctrine, in particular, and all those who share it, trace the sin and the lack to God the Creator – who is immensely beyond anything – and justify Adam in his sin. Indeed, according to this their doctrine, the whole human race continues to sin, because it is forced to. We, however, maintain that Adam was able to observe the commandment of his Creator and could also reject the advice of the woman, but he would not do so; he accepted and ate the fruit picked from the tree and that the woman handed him with her hand, and the woman accepted the advice of the snake not under constraint by nature, but because of weakness of mind. It was the greed of the will on the part of the first two creatures, i.e. Adam and Eve, to provoke that from which they obtained the painful wound and at the same time the healing, because our Lord Jesus Christ took upon himself our infirmities and our sorrows, as said the prophet Isaiah: "We saw him and he had no form or comeliness and was despised and cast aside, he shared our infirmities and

took our sorrows, he through whose wounds we were all healed. Because like a sheep he was led like a lamb to the slaughter, and he stood silent before the shearers, but in his humiliation his judgment was exalted.” Understand, now, children of the church of God, what is the true doctrine, and that is that Jesus Christ, our Lord and our God, has two perfect natures, two wills and two operations in what is actually one person.

This is the profession and the symbol of faith of the sixth council. In it [the Fathers] confirmed what was established by the five previous holy councils, anathematising those whom they had excommunicated and driving [out of the church] the ones that they had driven out. They set forth the doctrine of Sophronius, Patriarch of Jerusalem, welcomed this and confirmed it.

All these things were accomplished with the help of God and the presence of the orthodox King Constantine. They invoked God for him, and then everyone returned to their own homes. This was the thirteenth year of the reign of Constantine, the fourth year of the caliphate of Muawiyah ibn Abi Sufyān. From the fifth council, in which there was one hundred and sixty bishops gathered in Constantinople in the time of Justinian, the king of Rum, to this sixth council of two hundred and ninety bishops gathered in Constantinople in the time of Constantine, King of Rum, there had passed a hundred years. Since this controversy had its own epilogue at the time of S. Aghābiyūs, patriarch of Rome, the inhabitants of Syria and Egypt since then took to mentioning the name of Aghābiyūs, patriarch of Rome, in their diptychs, which today they still do.

5. Constantine, the orthodox King, died after a reign of sixteen years. After him reigned over Rum his son Justinian for twelve years. This happened in the eighth year of the caliphate of Muawiyah ibn Abi Sufyān. There were presented to Justinian, king of Rum, some people saying: “In the city there are those who find fault with the Sixth Council which your father Constantine kept to, and assert that it is void.” Justinian then summoned hundred and thirty bishops, confirmed what the sixth council had asserted and anathematised those who resumed and contradicted the decisions; also they confirmed what was claimed by the previous five councils, they excommunicated those whom [the bishops of such councils] had already excommunicated and they returned each to his own home. In the seventh year of the Caliphate of Mu’awiya there was made patriarch of Jerusalem, John. He held the office forty years and died. From the death of Sophronius to the appointment of John the see of Jerusalem was left without a Patriarch for twenty-nine years. After ten years in office there also died George, the patriarch of Constantinople. In the twelfth year of the caliphate of Mu’awiya there was made patriarch of Constantinople Thomas. He held the office for ten years (in another text it says “twenty”) and died. In the twenty-third year of the caliphate of Mu’awiya, Maslama ibn Mukhallad al-Ansāri added the minaret to the structure of the mosque of Fustat, built by Amr ibn al-As, putting his name on it. During the caliphate of Mu’awiya the island of Rhodes was captured and taken from the Rum. Also during his caliphate, in the fiftieth year of the Hegira, there was a solar eclipse so intense that you could see the stars.

6. Muawiyah ibn Abi Sufyān died in the month of Ragab in the sixtieth year of the Hegira, at the age of eighty years. Mu’awiya was obese, had a big posterior, and was short of stature; he had a stentorian voice, bulging eyes, a wide chest and a thick beard which he dyed with vistic (?)<sup>81</sup> He was buried in Damascus. The leaders of his bodyguard were first Yazid ibn al-Hurr al-Ansi, then Qays ibn Hamza al-Hamdāni, then ad-Dahhak ibn Qays al-Fahri. His ‘hāgib’ was the freedman Riyah.

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<sup>81</sup> I don’t know what this Italian means: “ed una folta barba che tingeva di vistic”?

## CALIPHATE OF YAZID IBN MU`AWIYA (60-64/680-683)

1. The *bay'ah* was given to Yazid ibn Mu'awiya b. Abi Sufyan – his mother was Maysūr, daughter of Yahdak al-Kalbi -, in the month of Ragab in the sixtieth year of the Hegira. At Karbalah, in Iraq, on the tenth of the month of al-Muharram of the sixty-first year of the Hegira, at the age of sixty-three years old, al-Husayn, son of Ali ibn Abi Talib was killed. His head was taken to Damascus and carried around the city. After the killing of al-Husayn, son of Ali ibn Abi Talib, there rose up at Mecca Abdullah ibn az-Zubayr b. al-Gharrām, who proclaimed himself caliph, – his mother was Asma, the daughter of Abu Bakr, the just – This was the beginning of his rebellion.

2. Yazid ibn Mu'awiya died after three years and eight months of his caliphate. After him there ruled, for only forty days, his son Yazid ibn Mu'awiya b. Mu'awiya . The leaders of his bodyguard were first Hamid ibn Kharba b. Yahdak al-Kalbi and then Amir ibn Abd Allah al-Hamdani. His '*hagib*' was the freedman Safwan.

## CALIPHATE OF MARWĀN IBN AL-HAKAM (64-65/684-685)

1. The *bay'ah* was given to Marwan ibn al-Hakam b. Abi'l-`Ās b. Umayya b. Abd Shams – his mother was Amina, daughter of Alqama Safwan ibn al-Kināni -. in the month of Ragab in the sixty-fourth year of the Hegira, while Abdullah ibn az-Zubayr continued his well-fortified opposition at Mecca. Neither the inhabitants of Damascus nor those of Palestine could make a pilgrimage to Mecca because Marwan ibn al-Hakam had forbidden them to, because of Abdullah ibn az-Zubayr. Then there was the battle of Marg-Rahit with ad-Dahhak ibn Qays al-Fahri.

2. Marwan ibn al-Hakam died in the month of Rabi al-awwal in the sixty-fifth year [of the Hegira]. He was caliph for nine months and died at the age of sixty-one. He was tall, tanned and had blue eyes. He was buried in Damascus. The leader of his bodyguard was Yahya ibn Qays al-Assāni and his *hagib* was Abu Sahl al-Aswad, the freedman of his mother.

## CALIPHATE OF ABD AL-MALIK IBN MARWĀN (65-86/685-705)

1. The *bay'ah* was given to Abd al-Malik ibn Marwan b. al-Hakam b. Abi'l-`Ās – his mother was Aisha, daughter of Mu'awiya b. al-Mughira b. Abi'l-`Ās b. Umayya b. Abd Shams -, in the sixty-fifth year of the Hegira.

2. He sent some of his men to Jerusalem with the task of extending the mosque to include the area of the Rock. People then began to make the ritual pilgrimage to Jerusalem, because Abd al-Malik had forbidden them to do so to Mecca because of Abdullah ibn az-Zubayr. Abd al-Malik ibn Marwan summoned the Christians of Damascus and asked them to give him the Mar Yuhanna Church [= church of St John] which was located next to the main mosque. The Christians presented themselves, bearing the letter of Khalid ibn al-Walid. He then offered them a lot of money so that they could build a church of equal size in any other part of Damascus that they wanted. But Christians did not consent, and he let them go. After holding his office for twenty years, Thomas, Patriarch of Antioch, died. In the first year of the caliphate of Abd al-Malik George was made Patriarch of Antioch. He held the office for twenty years and died. In the same year John was made patriarch of Constantinople. He held the office for thirty-five years and died.



3. Justinian, king of Rum, died. After him there reigned Leo for three years and he died. After him there reigned over Rum Tiberius, for seven years, in the thirteenth year of the caliphate of Abd al-Malik ibn Marwan. Abd al-Malik sent al-Haggag ibn Yusuf to Mecca to fight against Abdullah ibn az-Zubayr, who had become entrenched in the sacred Ka'bah of Allāh. Al-Haggag subjected the Ka'bah to stone throwing and demolished a balcony. Fearing he might be trapped under the rubble of the temple, Abdullah ibn az-Zubayr went out. It was then that his mother said: "My son, if you are fighting for a just cause, you have right on your side. Go then to meet them, and if you are killed you will be a martyr, because you will be killed for a just cause." He replied: "Mother, it is not death that I fear, but it disgusts me to think that they can make a fool of me, pointing me out as an example." His mother said: "My son, a lamb that is slaughtered is not afraid of being skinned!" It is said that his mother made him drink a *ratl* of musk. Then he went out against al-Haggag and fought until he was killed. He was crucified at Mecca, and for many days the people could smell the odour of musk that emanated from his stomach.

4. Abdullah ibn az-Zubayr was killed in the month of ġumādà al-awwal in the seventy-third year of the Hegira. During the caliphate of Abd al-Malik ibn Marwan there was, on the Monday at the end of al-ġumādà awwal of the seventy-fourth year of the Hegira, an eclipse of the sun so intense that the stars appeared. Abd al-Aziz ibn Marwan, brother of Abd al-Malik ibn Marwan, governed Egypt. He demolished the great mosque of Fustat and built a new one. There were already visible in him the signs of elephantiasis and the doctors advised him to settle in the city of Hulwān, where he built assembly rooms. He then build at Hulwān a great pool, and brought water from springs that flowed upstream of the mountain of al-Muqattam, channeling it into aqueducts, which he had built, to make it flow into the pool. Over it he made a throne entirely of glass. He spent a thousand thousands of dinars at Hulwan and he planted date palms. Every Thursday he used to ride to Fustat where he spent the rest of the day and night. On Friday he returned to Hulwān, after having performed the morning prayer. At Hulwān he built a hydrometer with which to monitor the rising of the waters of the Nile. He had with him some Melkite Christians who asked for permission to build a church. He granted this to them, and they built at Hulwān the church of St George: it was a small church and was called "the church of the upholsterers". He ruled that the kharag [=land tax] in Egypt should be paid every Friday by groups of citizens, in rotation, for fear that in the event of a summons by the king he might need money. This continued until Abdullah ibn az-Zubayr was killed and Abd al-Malik ibn Marwan brought the situation under his control. In the seventy-fourth year [of the Hegira], Abd al-Aziz went to Alexandria, took the notable personalities of the city and exiled them into villages and rural districts, requiring each rural district [to supply] a specified amount depending on the funds, vineyards and species of cereal that it possessed. He built the bridge that is on the canal of the prince of the believers. He wanted to tear down the bridge of Fustat and erect it at Hulwān, and that he wanted to transfer to Hulwān also the ports, markets and merchants and stop any activity at Fustat, but he was unable to do this. He had with him a Jacobite '*Katib*' [=scribe] named Athanasius who asked him for permission to build a church at Qasr ash-Shama. He granted this and he built the church of St. George and the church of Abu Qir, which is inside the citadel next to Ashab ar-Ribat (?). It is said that the church of Abu Qir was built with the remains of the church of St. George.

5. At that time there died in al-Fustat, where he was also buried, Abd al-Aziz ibn Marwan, on Monday night of the twelfth day of the month of ġumādà al-ula of the eighty-sixth year of the Hegira, at the age of twenty-two.

6. Abd al-Malik ibn Marwan died on the tenth of the month of Shawwal in the eighty-fourth year of the Hegira, at the age of sixty-two. He was caliph for twenty years. He was of dark complexion, of medium height, he had a long beard and a big belly. He was buried in Damascus. The leaders of his bodyguard were Yazid ibn Abi Habasa as-Saksaki and, after him, Abd Allah ibn Yazid al-Hakami. His *hāgib* was the freedman Abu ar-Rughayragha [= Abū'z-Zu'ayzi'a?]

## CALIPHATE OF AL-WALĪD IBN 'ABD AL-MALIK (86-96/705-715)

1. The bay'ah was given to al-Walid ibn 'Abd al-Malik b. Marwan – his mother was Wallada, daughter of Abbas ibn al-Harbi b. Harith al-Absi –, at the same time that Abd al-Malik ibn Marwan died. He ruled for nine years and nine months.

2. He sent his men to Jerusalem, and there he built the mosque in Jerusalem, having the rock at the centre of the mosque. There he built other buildings around it, and decorated it with marbles. He then took away a ciborium from the church of the Christians of Baalbek – it was of copper covered with gold -, and had it put on the Rock, in order to do the ritual pilgrimage to the Rock.

3. He sent then to Qurra ibn al-Shibl al-Absi, who at that time was his governor in Egypt, telling him to demolish all of the great mosque and to rebuild it from scratch. And in fact he rebuilt it, decorated it and covered with gold the capitals of the columns that were in the audience chamber of Qays: in the mosque there was no column with gilded capitals except for the ones which were in the chamber of Qays. While the mosque was being demolished, Qurra had the 'minbar' [= the pulpit] carried to Qaysāriyyat al-Asal, where the people went to pray and to gather for Friday prayers until he had completed the construction of the mosque. The dome was left at al-Qaysāriyyah until that time.

4. Al-Walid planned to rebuild the mosque, which was in Damascus, and he therefore summoned the Christians, telling them: "We want to expand our mosque annexing to it your church, i.e. the church of St. John" – it was in fact an extremely beautiful church, and there was none like it in all of Syria – "We will give you enough money to build wherever you like a church equal to it. If you want we will give you as a price in exchange for it forty thousand dinars". But Christians refused saying: "We have a pact of security," and so saying they exhibited a letter of Khalid ibn al-Walid. Al-Walid was angry, stood up and with one hand he broke a piece of timber and with the other a brick, so that the people began the demolition, following his example. So it was that they extended the eastern part of the mosque and the whole 'maqṣūrah', taking the material from the church which was left as it is today. In the third year of his caliphate there was made patriarch of Jerusalem Theodore. He held the office for thirty-five years and died. In his day Justinian was king of the Rum. He reigned six years and died.

5. Al-Walid ibn 'Abd al-Malik died in the month of ġumādà al-Akhar in the ninety-sixth year of the Hegira, at the age of forty-three years. He was of perfect stature, he had a thick and graying beard. He was buried in Damascus. The leader of his bodyguard was Ka'b ibn Hazim al-Absi and his 'hāgib' the freedman Sa'd.

## **CALIPHATE OF SULAYMĀN IBN 'ABD AL-MALIK (96-99/715-717)**

1. The bay'ah was given to Suleiman ibn Abd al-Malik ibn Marwan – his mother was Wallada, daughter of al-Abbas ibn al-Bahri al-Absi -, in the month of gumādā al-akhar in the ninety-sixth year of the Hegira. He ruled two years and six months.

2. In his day Philip was king of the Rum. He was a Maronite. He reigned two and a half years. In Egypt the kharag was being received in the name of Suleiman ibn Abd al-Malik, by Osama ibn Zayd at-Tanūkhi. Osama wrote to Suleiman to inform him that the Nilometer built by Abd al-'Aziz ibn Marwan at Hulwān to measure the level of the water was out of order. [The Caliph] answered him, ordering him to build a hydrometer in the island which was in the river near Fustat and Giza. Osama built the Nilometer which is at the entrance of Giza, which is the one still in operation today and they call "al-qadim" [= the old], in the ninety-seventh year of the Hegira. In the third year of the caliphate of Suleiman Stephen was made Patriarch of Antioch. He held the office for thirty-seven years and died.

3. Suleiman ibn Abd al-Malik died in the month of Safar in the ninety-ninth year of the Hegira, at the age of thirty-nine, nominating as his successor Omar ibn Abd al-Aziz. He was handsome, plump and had a black beard. The leader of his bodyguard was Ka'b ibn Khalid al-Absi and his hāgib the freedman Abu Obayda.

## **CALIPHATE OF OMAR IBN ABD AL-AZIZ (99-101/717-720)**

1. The bay'ah was given to Omar ibn Abd al-Aziz b. Marwan b. al-Hakam – his mother was Umm Asim, daughter of As ibn Omar b. al-Khattab – in the month of Safar in the ninety-ninth year of the Hegira.

2. He disdained to follow the behaviour of the members of his family, and removed the curse that used to be launched against Ali ibn Abi Talib from the pulpit. From the days of the Caliphate of Mu'awiya ibn Abi Sufyan, in fact, until the time of the caliphate of Omar ibn Abd al-Aziz, the Umayyad caliphs were accustomed to curse Ali ibn Abi Talib from the pulpits, maliciously calling him "Abu Turab".

3. [Omar ibn Abd al-Aziz] was caliph for thirty months. In his day there was king of the Rum Anastasius, who reigned only a year and a half. The Christians said to Omar ibn Abd al-Aziz that by virtue of the protection granted to them, their churches should neither be destroyed nor used as dwelling places. In this regard they showed him the letter of Khalid ibn al-Walid. Omar ibn Abd al-Aziz suggested that they take the money, abandon the church and construct another anywhere in Damascus they liked. But the Christians refused. Then the Caliph signed a decree which he allowed them to keep the church with its boundaries and be able to repair it. The Muslims believed that this measure was onerous and said: "Must we return to them our mosque, where we have been called to prayer from the top of the minaret, and where we have actually prayed, fulfilling our obligation to raise prayers to Allah? Must it be destroyed and go back to being a church?" Then Abu Idris al-Hulwāni interjected and said: "The Christians have our protection for only one half of the city of Damascus and only for the churches that are in that half; the other half of the city, in fact, was conquered by the sword. Also the churches and monasteries that are located on the outskirts of Damascus starting from Ghūtah belong to the Muslims, because they were conquered by the

sword. If the Christians want us to give back to them this their church, we will return it to them, but on one condition, namely that we will destroy every church that is in the other half of the city of Damascus and every church and monastery which are outside the town, at Ghūtah. But if they leave us this church, we will give them all the rest.” With these last words he alluded to the churches of Ghūtah and “Dayr Murran” in which the Muslims were accustomed to stop and stay. The Christians then, fearing that their churches and monasteries would be destroyed, left their church. Omar ibn Abd al-Aziz wrote them a decree which ensured that their churches that were at Damascus, and the churches and monasteries that were outside Damascus, in Ghūtah, were neither destroyed nor used as dwelling places, and that no Muslim would ever be able to claim rights over them. For all this he made his solemn oath.

4. Omar ibn Abd al-Aziz died in the month of ragab in the year 101 of the Hegira, at the age of thirty-nine. He was of medium height, handsome of body and face with premature signs of gray hair and a scar on his forehead. In one text he is said to be buried in Dayr Sim’an, in Homs. The leader of his bodyguard was Ruwah Yazid ibn as-Saksaki and his hāgib was the freedman Hubaysh.

### **CALIPHATE OF YAZĪD IBN ABD AL-MALIK (101-105/720-724)**

1. The bay’ah was given to Yazid ibn Abd al-Malik ibn Marwan ibn al-Hakam – his mother was Atika, daughter of Yazid ibn Mu’awiya -. He was caliph for four years and one month and was the first caliph to take a singer. For he had taken a singer named Habbābah, very dear to him, who appointed and deposed the governors without waiting for any order from him. [Yazid ibn Abd al-Malik] died in the month of Ragab in the year 105 of the Hegira, at the age of thirty-one (In another text it says “thirty-seven years”), and was buried in Damascus. The leader of of his bodyguard was Ka’b ibn Khalid al-Absi and his hāgib was the freedman Khalid.

### **CALIPHATE OF HISHĀM IBN ‘ABD AL-MALIK (105-125/724-743)**

1. The bay’ah was given to Hisham ibn Abd al-Malik – his mother was Umm Hashim, daughter of Hisham ibn Isma’il b. Hashim b. al-Walid b. al-al-Mughira Makhzūmi -. He was caliph was for nineteen years and seven months. In his day there was king of the Rum Theodosius. He reigned a year and a half and died.

2. After him there reigned over Rum Leo for twenty-four years and died. In the third year of Caliph Hisham there was made patriarch of Constantinople Constantine. He held the office for twenty-eight years and died. In the seventh year of the caliphate of Hisham there was made patriarch of Alexandria Cosmas. He held the office for twenty-eight years. The Melkite Christians in Alexandria were praying in the church of St Saba because the Jacobites had seized all the [other] churches in the city. When Cosmas was made Patriarch he was an illiterate, he could neither read nor write. He was a tailor. He went to Damascus to the presence of Hisham ibn Abd al-Malik and claimed from him, with the help of some scribes, the return of the churches that the Jacobites had made their own. Hisham wrote to his prefect in Egypt, who was then Abdullah ibn al-Gigan as-Sakwī, to get the churches that were in the hands of the Jacobites and return them to the Patriarch Cosmas together with all that had belonged to them. Cosmas then took the churches from the Jacobites, including the church of al-Qaysāriyyah. All this had happened because, from the time that the patriarch George had fled from Alexandria to Constantinople, in the third year of the caliphate of Omar ibn al-

Khattab, until Cosmas became patriarch of Alexandria, in the seventh year of the caliphate of Hisham, the see of Alexandria had been without a Melkite Patriarch for ninety-seven years. The Jacobites, therefore, had been able to take possession of all the churches of Egypt and Alexandria. In addition, as the inhabitants of Nubia needed bishops, the patriarch of the Jacobites began to ordain bishops for them, and the Nubians became Jacobites also after then, and every time the bishop died in any city in Egypt, the patriarch of the Jacobites appointed another, so that all of Egypt, from the Upper to the Lower, became Jacobite. The only exception was the Mika'il church in Qasr ash-Shama. The Melkites, in fact, had managed to keep it, carrying on prayer and when their bishop died they referred to the Metropolitan of Sur, who ordained for them a [new] Bishop. Things continued to go well for the Melkites of Egypt and Alexandria until Cosmas was no longer patriarch. In the seventeenth year of the caliphate of Hisham there was made patriarch of Jerusalem Elia. He held the office for thirty-four years and died.

3. Hisham died in the month of Rabi al-Akhar in the year 125 of the Hegira, at the age of fifty-three years. He was buried in ar-Rusafah, in the district of ar-Raqqah. He was of fair complexion, cross-eyed, ugly, bad tempered, stingy, and greedy for wealth. The leader of his bodyguard was Ka'b ibn Hamid and his hāgib the freedman Ghālib. His influential adviser was Sa'īd ibn al-Walid al-Abrash al-Kalbi and his katib was Salim ibn Abd al-Aziz.

### **CALIPHATE OF AL-WALĪD IBN YAZĪD (125-126/743-744).**

1. The bay'ah was given to al-Walid ibn Yazid b. Abd al-Malik b. Marwan – his mother was Umm al-Haggag, daughter of Muhammad b. Yusuf b. al-Hakam b. Abi Uqayl ath-Thaqafi -. He was wild, wasteful and addicted to entertainment. He ruled one year and three months. Then the people could not stand his behaviour any more and killed him in the month of ġumādā al-akhar in the year 126 of the Hegira. He was struck down in al-Buhayra, in Damascus. He was forty years old. There followed a revolt that shook the whole of Syria. He was handsome of face, eloquent, with a perfect complexion. The leader of his bodyguard was Abd ar-Rahman ibn Hamid al-Kalbi and his hāgib was the freedman Qatr.

### **CALIPHATE OF YAZĪD IBN AL-WALĪD (126/744)**

1. The bay'ah was given to Yazid ibn al-Walid an-Nāfid, i.e. Yazid ibn al-Walid b. Abd al-Malik b. Marwan – his mother was a Persian, i.e. Shāhqūd, daughter of Firuz Kisra, King of Persia, son of Yazdağard, son of Shahrāyān, whose grandmother was the daughter of Maurice, king of the Rum - . [Yazid ibn al-Walid] thus used to say: "I am the son of Kisra and of Marwan; Maurice is my grandfather and my grandfather is [also] Shashan". He was made caliph in the month of Ragab, he ruled five months and died at the end of the month of dhu'l-qa'da in the year 126 of the Hegira, at the age of thirty. He was buried in Damascus. The leader of his bodyguard was Yazid ibn ash-Shammākh al-Lakhmi and his hāgib was the freedman Sallam.

### **CALIPHATE OF MARWAN IBN MUHAMMAD AL-GA'DĪ (127-132/744-750)**

1. Upon the death of Yazid an-Naqid, those of Syria gave the bay'ah to Ibrahim b. al-Walid b. Abd al-Malik (238). He ruled for four months, then they deposed him. Then arose Marwan ibn Muhammad b. [Marwan] al-Hakam, the son of an Armenian – his mother's name was Izya and she had been the

wife of Mus'ab ibn az-Zubayr and after the killing of this man she had been taken as wife by Muhammad ibn Marwan b. al-Hakam. When he arrived in Syria, Marwan ibn Muhammad was hailed as caliph by many of the inhabitants of Syria, but he was opposed by Suleiman ibn Hisham b. Abd al-Malik and other Umayyads. The inhabitants of Syria united against him and in Khurasan the number of supporters of the Banu Hashim<sup>[1]</sup> greatly increased. His troops were put to flight, and his soldiers were killed. Those of Khurasan killed many men of Syria and Iraq, seizing their property and making their wives and children captives. Marwan ruled five years, through continuous wars and the opposition of the populations of the countries hostile to him. Then he fled from az-Zab to Mosul and finally into Mesopotamia, then through Syria to reach Egypt. The soldiers of the Banu Hashim penetrated Upper Egypt and began following him everywhere giving chase. He was surprised in a village of Ashmūr called Abusir Lūrinds and was killed there. He was sixty nine. Amir ibn Isma'il as-Salmi [= al-Maslami?] was responsible for his killing. Marwan was nicknamed "al-Ga'di" because he who had great influence on him and on his decisions was al-Ga'd ibn Dirham. The leader of his bodyguard was al-Kawthar ibn al-Aswad al-Anawi and his 'hāgib' was the freedman Saqlāb.

## Chapter 19

Cap. XIX The Abbasid Caliphs. Caliphate of Abū l-Abbās as-Saffāh — Caliphate of Ga'far al-Mansūr — Caliphate of al-Mahdī — Caliphate of Mūsa al-Hādī — Caliphate of Hārūn ar-Rashīd — Caliphate of Muhammad al-Amīn — Caliphate of al-Ma'mūn — Caliphate of al-Mu'tasim — Caliphate of al-Wāthiq — Caliphate of al-Mutawakkil — Caliphate of al-Muntasir bi'llāh — Caliphate of al-Musta'īn — Caliphate of al-Mu'tazz — Caliphate of al-Muhtadī — Caliphate of al-Mu'tamid e nascita di Sa'īd Ibn Batrīq — Caliphate of al-Mu'tadid — Caliphate of al-Muktafī — Caliphate of al-Muqtadir — Caliphate of al-Qāhir: Sa'īd Ibn Batrīq is made Patriarch of Alexandria — Caliphate of ar-Rādī (p.391)

### CALIPHATE OF ABŪ'L-'ABBĀS AS-SAFFĀH (132-136/749-754).

1. The *bay'ah* was given to Abū'l' Abbās, i.e. Abd Allah ibn Muhammad b. Ali b. Abd Allah b. al-Abbas b. Abd al-Muttalib – his mother was Rādiyya, the daughter of Abd Allah ibn Ubayd Allah b. al-Abbas b. Abd al-Maddān -, in Kufa, on Wednesday of the month of Rabi al-Akhar in the year 132 of the Hegira. He went on horseback to the mosque on Fridays, and preached to the people standing, while the Umayyads used to deliver their “khutbah”<sup>82</sup> while sitting. Then he sent his armies against Yazid ibn Omar al-Huzayza Qarāri in Wasit and he sent against Marwan ibn Muhammad his uncle Abd Allah b. Ali who put him to flight in order to oust him from Mesopotamia and Syria. Then he sent Salih ibn Ali who chased Marwan into Egypt – Abu Awn was at the forefront – until Marwan was killed.

2. As for the Rum, after the death of king Leo<sup>83</sup> and suffering continuous revolts so as to see their kingdom a prey to disorder, they elected as their king a man from Mar'ash named Artābatus.<sup>84</sup> His rule was very disordered during the time of Abu'l-Abbās and al-Mansur. Abu'l-Abbās built near al-Anbar a city which he called al-Hāshimiyah. His caliphate lasted four years and nine months. He died in al-Anbar on Sunday 12th of the month of Dhu'l-hiġga in the year 136 of the Hegira and was buried in his town of al-Hāshimiyah. Abu'l-'Abbās was tall, handsome and with a perfect complexion. The leader of his bodyguard was Abd al-Gabbar b. Abd-ar-Rahman al Azdi and his hāgib was the freedman Abu Assan.

### CALIPHATE OF ABU JAFFAR AL-MANSUR (136-158/754-775).

1. The prince of the believers, Abu'l-Abbas left in writing a will in which he designated as his successor his brother Abu Jaffar bd Allah b. Muhammad b. Ali b. Abd Allah b. al-Abbas – his mother was an *umm walad*<sup>85</sup> named Sallāmah, daughter of Bishr from Basra – and he had been entrusted to his uncle Isa b. Ali b. Abd Allah b. al-Abbas saying: “When I die, make sure that the *bay'ah* is given to the person designated in my writing.” On the death of Abu'l-Abbās, Isa ibn Ali caused the Banu Hashim and the commanders who were in al-Anbar to give the *bay'ah* to Abu Jaffar Abd Allah b. Muhammad. Abu Jaffar was on a pilgrimage to Mecca along with Abu Muslim. So he let him know

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<sup>82</sup> I.e. Sermon

<sup>83</sup> Leo III Isauricus.

<sup>84</sup> Here is meant Artavasdos, to whom Leo the Isaurian had given his daughter Anna, and who became a usurper from July 741 to 2 November 742. It was Leo III who was from Marash, in fact.

<sup>85</sup> The term indicates a slave woman who had a child with her owner.

the news by letter. As soon as this reached him, he was recognized as caliph by Abu Muslim and the leaders who were with him, and he went to al-Anbar. In Mesopotamia Abd Allah ibn Ali b. Abd Allah b. al-Abbas rose up, claiming the caliphate for himself. Abu Jaffar sent against him Abu Muslim, who defeated him. Al-Mansur<sup>86</sup> returned to Kufa. He then built the city of Baghdad and called it Madinat as-Salam [= "City of Peace"]. It was called "Baghdad" because there lived in that place, in a hermitage, a monk named Baghdad. The hermitage was at the centre of a large and beautiful expanse of land. As Abu Jaffar really liked that place, he enclosed it and he built a city there. It was called Baghdad, after the name of the monk; or else Abu Ga'far built a city on the site where the monk Baghdad lived.

2. In the first year of the Caliphate of Abu Jaffar al-Mansur, there was made patriarch of Antioch Prophilatus.<sup>87</sup> He held the office for eighteen years and died. In the twentieth year of his caliphate there was made Patriarch of Antioch Theodore. He held the office for twenty-three years and died. In the fourth year of his caliphate there was made patriarch of Alexandria Politianus. He was a physician. He held the office for forty-six years and died. In the first year of his caliphate there was made patriarch of Constantinople Theodore. He held the office for twenty-six years and died. I shall not list the names of the patriarchs of Constantinople who have held the seat from Theodore's death until I have finished composing this book.<sup>88</sup> The same applies to the patriarchs of Rome. From Aghābiyūs onwards, in fact, I had no way of finding either the names or any information on the patriarchs of Rome. In the twentieth year of the caliphate of al-Mansur there was made patriarch of Jerusalem George. He held the office for thirty-six years and died.

3. Artābatus, king of Rum, died. After him reigned over Rum Constantine,<sup>89</sup> son of Leo. In the year 158 of the Hegira al-Mansur made the pilgrimage to Mecca, where he died on the 9th of the month of Dhu'l-hiġġa, at the age of sixty-eight. His caliphate had lasted twenty-two years. His son Salih said the prayer for him. He was buried in Mecca at the "Bi'r Maymun".<sup>90</sup> Abu Jaffar al-Mansur was tall, dark, with a sparse beard on his cheeks but a long chin. The leaders of his bodyguard were Abd al-Gabbar b. Abd ar-Rahman al-Azdi b. Musa b. Ka'b at-Tamimi and al-Musayyab Zuhayri az-as-Sabbi. His *hāgib* was the freedman Abu'l-Khasib Marzuq. After him his *hāgib* was the freedman ar-Rabi.

## CALIPHATE OF AL-MAHDĪ (158-169/775-785)

1. Upon the death of al-Mansur, which took place in Mecca, Salih ibn al-Mansur and Isa ibn Musa gave the *bay'ah* to al-Mahdi ibn Muhammad b. Abd Allah b. Muhammad b. Ali b. Abd Allah b. al-Abbas – his mother was Umm Musa, daughter of al-Mansur b. Abd Allah b. Sahwa al-Himyari b. ar-Ru'ayni. The pilgrimage of the people in Mecca was led by Salih ibn al-Mansur, or, as others say, by Muhammad ibn Yahya b. Muhammad b. Ali b. Abd Allah b. al-Abbas, and at that time the people were invited to recognize al-Mahdi as caliph. The news was brought to al-Mahdi, who was then in Baghdad, by Munāra, freedman of al-Mansur, and he was given the *bay'ah* in Baghdad, on the last day of the month of Dhul-higga in the year 158 .

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<sup>86</sup> I.e. Abu Jaffar.

<sup>87</sup> Theophilatus Bar Qanbara (744-750)

<sup>88</sup> In fact the information about these in Eutychius is doubtful.

<sup>89</sup> Constantine V.

<sup>90</sup> I.e. the Well of Maymun.



2. Constantine (V), son of Leo (III), king of Rum, died. After him there was made king his son Leo (IV), son of Constantine, son of Leo. The caliphate of al-Mahdi lasted ten years, one month and sixteen days. He died in the month of al-Muharram in the year 167 of the Hegira, at the age of thirty-nine. His death took place at a village called ar-Rud, in the district of Māsīdān, where he was also buried. Al-Mahdi was handsome of face, body and complexion; in the right eye he had a speck of white. The leader of his bodyguard was Nasr ibn Nusayr b. Malik al-Khuzā'i. Then Nasr died and the leader of his bodyguard was Hamza ibn Malik b. Abd Allah b. Malik. His *hāgib* was first the freedman ar-Rabi, and then the freedman al-Husayn [or al-Hasan] ibn Rashid.

### **CALIPHATE OF MŪSĀ AL-HĀDĪ (169-170/785-786).**

1. On the death of al-Mahdi at az-Zud, in the territory of the province of Māsīdān, Musa ibn al-Mahdi became caliph – his mother was an *umm walad* named al-Khayzuran, daughter of Ata native of Hurash in the Yemeni land – while Musa al-Hadi was in Gurgan<sup>91</sup> fighting against Madar Hurmuz, lord of Tabaristan. Harun ibn al-Mahdi persuaded the Hashemites and the commanders who were with him to give the *bay'ah* to his brother Musa and sent Salma al-Wasif, freedman of al-Mahdi, who served as a courier, to Musa to give him the news. Harun ibn al-Mahdi and the commanders went to Baghdad and there awaited the arrival of Musa al-Hādi. His caliphate lasted fourteen months.

2. Musa al-Hādi died outside Baghdad in a place called Isarmād, and was buried there. He was twenty-five, handsome, he loved to ride and enjoyed a strong constitution. The leader of his bodyguard was Abd Allah b. Hazim b. Huzayma at-Tamimi, and, on the dismissal of this man, Abd Allah b. Malik al-Khuzā'i. His *hāgib* was ar-Rabi`, and on the death of ar-Rabi`, al-Fadl ibn ar-Rabi`.

### **CALIPHATE OF HARUN AR-RASHID (170-193 / 786-809).**

1. The *bay'ah* was given to Harun ar-Rashid b. al-Mahdi – his mother was al-al-Khayzuran – in the same night that Musa al-Hadi died, the night of Friday 14 Rabi al-awwal in the year 170. That night his son al-Ma'mun was born. He entrusted the management of his business in Yahya b. Khalid b. Barmak. During his caliphate he made the pilgrimage to Mecca nine times and he invaded the territories of Rum eight times. He removed his favour from the Barmakees in the month of Safar of the year 187 of the Hegira. His caliphate lasted twenty-three years, two months and sixteen days.

2. Leo (IV), son of Constantine, son of Leo, king of Rum, died. After him there was made king of Rum Nicephorus (I), son of Istirāq,<sup>92</sup> who asked for a truce from [Harun] ar-Rashid. Ar-Rashid gave him a respite of three years. There ruled in Egypt, in the name of ar-Rashid, Musa b. Isa al-Hashimi, who extended the Great Mosque of Misr at the rear of the building which may still be seen. Ar-Rashid then deposed Musa ibn Isa and entrusted the government of Egypt to Abd Allah ibn al-Mahdi. Abd Allah sent as a gift to ar-Rashid a young girl of his choice from among the Yemenis who lived in the south of Egypt. She was very beautiful and ar-Rashid fell intensely in love. The young girl was then hit by a serious disease. The doctors cared for her but no medicine was effective. They said to ar-Rashid: "Send word to your governor in Egypt, Abd Allah, to send you an Egyptian doctor. The Egyptian doctors are more able than those of Irāq to cure this young girl." Ar-Rashid sent word to

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<sup>91</sup> I.e. Georgia

<sup>92</sup> Elsewhere "Istabrāq"; i.e. Stauracius.

Abd Allah ibn al-Mahdi to choose the most skillful Egyptian doctor and send him to him, telling him about the young girl and of what had happened. Abd Allah sent for Politianus, the Melkite Patriarch of Alexandria, expert in medicine, made him aware of the young girl and the disease that had struck her, and sent him to ar-Rashid. [Politianus] brought with him some Egyptian durum “ka’k”,<sup>93</sup> and some pilchards. When he arrived in Baghdad and presented himself to the young girl, he gave her some rustic ka’k and pilchards to eat. The young girl recovered her health at once, and the pain disappeared. After that [ar-Rashid] began to order from Egypt, for the sultan’s use, durum ka’k and pilchards. Ar-Rashid gave lots of money to the patriarch Politianus and gave him in writing an order which provided that all the churches that the Jacobites had taken away from the Melkites and of which they had taken possession, should be returned. The patriarch Politianus returned to Egypt and got back his churches. The patriarch Politianus died after having held the patriarchal seat for forty six years. After him there was made patriarch of Alexandria Eustathius,<sup>94</sup> in the sixteenth year of the Caliphate of ar-Rashid. Eustace was a linen-maker and had found a treasure in the house in which he used to prepare linen. He had embraced the monastic life at “Dayr al Qusayr”, later becoming the superior. He built at “Dayr al-Qusayr” the church of the Apostles, and a residence for the bishops. Later he was made patriarch of Alexandria, held the office for four years and died. After him there was made patriarch of Alexandria Christopher<sup>95</sup> in the twentieth year of the Caliphate of ar-Rashid. The patriarch Christopher was hit by hemiplegia and could only move if supported. There was therefore appointed a bishop named Peter after a vote whom the bishops put in place of the patriarch. Christopher held the office for thirty-two years and died. In the eighth year of the Caliphate of ar-Rashid there was made patriarch of Antioch Theodoret. He held the office for seventeen years and died. During the caliphate of ar-Rashid there was, after the afternoon prayer, an eclipse of the sun so intense that you could see the stars, and people stood screaming at the sky imploring God – may His name be glorious! In Khurasan there rebelled against ar-Rashid, Rafi ibn al-Layth and occupied it. Ar-Rashid invaded Khurasan, but at Gurgan he became ill and stopped at Tus, sending al-Ma’mun to Merv to the head of a large army.

3. Ar-Rashid died in the month of Jumādà al-Akhar in the year 193 [of the Hegira], at the age of forty-six. He was buried in Tus, in the city of an-Nirāt.<sup>96</sup> The sons who were with him, those of his family and his commanders gave the bay’ah to his son Muhammad ibn Zubaydah. Al-Fadl ibn ar-Rabi returned with his men to Baghdād. Ar-Rashid was of perfect stature, handsome of face, with a black and flowing beard which he used to cut when he went on pilgrimage. The leaders of his bodyguard were al-Qasim ibn Nasr b. Malik first, then Hamza ibn Hazim b. Obayd Allah b. Malik, then Hafs ibn Umar b. ash-Shugayr. His *hāgib* was Bishr ibn Maymun b. Muhammad b. Khalid b. Barmak. Then al-Fadl ibn Rabi regained this position.

### **CALIPHATE OF MUHAMMAD AL-AMIN (193-198 / 809-814).**

1. The news of the death of ar-Rashid arrived in Baghdad on Wednesday, twelve days before the end of Jumādà al-Akhar. The crowds gathered, his son Muhammad went out in the pulpit, and invited them to mourn his death. The people gave him the bay’ah on that day. Then there appeared

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<sup>93</sup> A collective term for various pastries and pretzels.

<sup>94</sup> 813-817 AD

<sup>95</sup> 817-848.

<sup>96</sup> Possibly “Iran” is meant?

strong differences between him and his brother al-Ma'mun. The mother of Muhammad al-Amin was called Umm Jaffar,<sup>97</sup> and was the daughter of Abu Jaffar al-Mansur. Muhammad al-Amin sent Ali ibn Isa b. Mahan to Khurasan to fight against al-Ma'mun, who sent against him, from Merv, Zahir ibn al-Husayn b. Sa' b al-Būsagi. Zahir killed Ali ibn Isa, put to flight the armies of Muhammad al-Amin and came to Baghdad, where he was joined by Hartama ibn A'yan and Humayd ibn Abd al-Hamid at-Tusi. Al-Ma'mun was hailed as caliph in Khurasan in the year 196. The civil war then moved to Baghdād.

2. Muhammad al-Amin was killed in Baghdad on Saturday, five days before the end of the month of Muharram of the year 198 [of the Hegira]. His caliphate, until the day of his murder, had lasted four years, eight months and six days. He was killed at the age of twenty-eight years.

3. Nicephorus, son of Istabraq, king of Rum, died. After him there reigned over Rum Istabraq,<sup>98</sup> son of Nicephorus, son of Istabraq.

4. In the third year of the caliphate of Muhammad al-Amin there was made patriarch of Jerusalem Thomas, nicknamed Tamriq.<sup>99</sup> He held the office for ten years.

5. Muhammad al-Amin was handsome, with a perfect constitution, white-skinned, fat, strongly built, with thin fingers. His body was buried at Baghdād and his head brought to Khurasan. The leader of his bodyguard was Ali ibn Isa b. Mahan and his *hāgib* al-Fadl ibn ar-Rabi, who was also his confidential adviser.

### **CALIPHATE OF AL-MA'MUN (196-218/814-833).**

1. In Khurasan, in the year 196 of the Hegira, the *bay'ah* was given to al-Ma'mūn, i.e. 'Abd Allah ibn Hārūn ar-Rashid b. Muhammad al-Mahdi b. 'Abd Allah Allāh b. Hārūn b. Al-Mansūr – his mother was Marāgil and belonged to one of the most illustrious families of al-Bāda'ishah.

2. Muhammad al-Amin, brother of al-Ma'mūn, was killed in Baghdad at the end of the month of al-muharram of the year 198. Zāhir ibn al-Husayn was in Baghdad in the east, Hartama in the west and Humayd b. 'Abd al-Hamid at-Tūsi was four parasangs from Baghdad. [Al-Ma'mūn] entrusted the government of Iraq to al-Husayn ibn Sahl (66) around whom the provinces of Iraq and others had been united. The countries were all in turmoil. All the time a pretender came from one side or another, and from other lines. Al-Ma'mūn then left Khurāsān and went to Baghdād during the month of Safar of the year 204. He gave the command of the guards to Zāhir ibn al-Husayn and granted his protection to everyone. Then he defeated Ibrāhim ibn al-Mahdī, nicknamed Ibn Shiklah, who had been proclaimed caliph and had assumed the title of prince of the believers. He sent his troops to the countries in revolt, and reduced all the provinces to obedience. Everyone submitted and obeyed him, and every insurrection was thus subdued.

3. Abū Ishāq Ibrāhim ibn al-Mahdī, better known by the name of Ibn Shiklah, said: "Before the killing of Muhammad al-Amin we used to exchange letters in this form: "From A, son of B, to C, son of D."

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<sup>97</sup> I.e. Zubaydah, the wife of Harun ar-Rashid.

<sup>98</sup> Stauracius, emperor of the East from 26 July 811 to 2 October 811.

<sup>99</sup> 807-821.

or: "From the father of A, to the father of C,"<sup>100</sup> or: "To the father of A from C, son of D.", without introducing any formula of greeting in the heading." And he records that the governor of Baghdad sent him a letter from Dhūr-Ri'āsatayn, i.e. al-Fadl ibn Sahl, whose heading was like this: "To Abū Ishāq – may God Most High preserve him! –, from Abū'l-'Abbās". Abū Ishāq tells us also: "When I saw that heading, I sent the letter to my uncle Sulaymān, believing that he would see it as something new. But when he received my letter, he sent his hāgib with a letter of Dhū ar-Ri'āsatayn the same as the heading of what he had written to me. It was since then that greeting formulas in have been used in the headings of letters".

4. Muhammad ibn as-Sari b. al-Hakam was in Egypt [as governor]. He rebelled, refused the authority of al-Ma'mūn and seized Egypt. His father, as-Sari ibn al-Hakam, had previously had his hands on Egypt before him. Al-Ma'mūn then sent 'Ubayd Allah ibn Zāhir to Egypt. When he arrived in Egypt, Ubayd Allah offered peace to Ibn as-Sari, who was governor at the time of his arrival in Egypt, made his entrance to Misr, received the [tribute] money, and sent it to al-Ma'mūn in Baghdad. 'Ubayd Allāh expanded the great Misr Mosque, after writing to al-Ma'mūn and having it approved, adding the "dar ar-Raml", of which he completed the construction, and leaving incomplete the "Dar ad-Darb". The dome of the church of the Resurrection in Jerusalem was in a bad condition and was threatening to collapse.

5. Palestine and Jerusalem were suffering a severe famine and the invasion of countless grasshoppers. Many died of hunger. The Muslims fled from Jerusalem because of the famine and there was only a scattering in the city. The patriarch of Jerusalem Thomas, known as Tamriq, seized the opportunity – that Jerusalem had been abandoned by the Muslims – and sent men to Cyprus to cut fifty cedar and pine logs and bring them to Jerusalem. There was a man called Bukām, of Būrah of Egypt, who was very wealthy. He sent a large sum of money to Thomas, patriarch of Jerusalem, to use it to repair the dome, asking him not to take any money from others and to turn to him alone if he needed any more money. Thomas demolished the dome piece by piece, by hand, replacing the beams upon which he then built the new construction. In a dream, Patriarch Thomas saw forty men come out of one of the columns that held up the dome of the Resurrection, who supported the cupola with their hands so that it would not collapse. The column was the one found under the temple. He awoke and said, "Those forty who the column supported must be the Forty Martyrs." He made forty logs support the dome, as thick as a man's arms could encircle, according to the number of the Forty Martyrs. The column was the one in front of the ambo, next to the altar, on the south side. When the feast of the Forty Martyrs came round, they celebrated it in front of that column. After finishing repairing the dome with the logs, attaching one to the others, above and below, Patriarch Thomas made another dome above the dome, leaving enough space between them for a man to be able to walk, and he lined it all over with lead.

6. While Ubayd Allah ibn Zāhir was returning from Egypt, going to Baghdad, the Muslims complained to him, about the fact that Christians had transgressed the provisions that had been made to list what was not permissible, by demolishing the dome of the Church of the Resurrection. It had been a small dome, but they had enlarged it so much that it was bigger than before, exceeding the Dome of the Rock in height. 'Ubayd Allah ibn Zāhir then summoned the Patriarch Thomas and another group

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<sup>100</sup> In his lifetime King Hussein of Jordan, father of the current ruler King Abdullah, used to be referred to as "Abu Abdullah", i.e. "Father of Abdullah".

of people and put them in prison, while he investigated what they were doing: if what the Muslims had complained about was true, then he would punish them. They were led to prison in the night by an old Muslim who told the patriarch Thomas: "I am able to suggest a way to save you and your companions, with the help of God, and the dome also, provided that you promise to give me a thousand dinars and to pay me, my son and the children of my son, until their extinction and always, an income of the income of this cupola in the measure that the priests and deacons receive it." Patriarch Thomas promised him what he asked and put it in writing. Then the old Muslim said to them, "When they prosecute you and bring evidence against you, you say to them, "May God save the prince! All I did was repair the part of the dome that needed repairs. And in fact I did it without destroying anything and added nothing to it. Those who depose against me have only been able to say that the dome was smaller than it is now and that I have enlarged it. Well, let the Prince ask them how large was the "small dome" that I am supposed to have demolished, as they say, and how much is this that I am supposed to have built and expanded, so that the Prince can realize what has been added to its dimensions." Certainly they will not know how to answer." The next day, when the Patriarch Thomas and his companions were summoned and the Muslims appeared to stand against him, on the expansion of the dome, the Patriarch Thomas refuted them by resorting to that argument. Then Ubayd Allah ibn Zāhir said to them: "What he asks is right, and we too are of the same opinion. Let me know what the size of the dome was before it was demolished, and what is the size of the dome." They said: "We will be doing surveys," and they went out. 'Ubayd Allāh ibn Zāhir went off to Damascus, and patriarch Thomas and his people returned to Jerusalem. The Patriarch Thomas gave the thousand dinars to that old Muslim man and continued to pay to him, to his son and to his son the income of the dome, until there was only a daughter from whom the patriarch of Jerusalem Elijah, son of Mansūr, removed that privilege. Patriarch Thomas died and his disciple Basil was made patriarch of Jerusalem, in the seventh year of the caliphate of al-Ma'mūn. Basil held the office for twenty-five years and died.

7. In the first year of the caliphate of al-Ma'mūn, Job was patriarch of Antioch. He held the office for thirty years. 'Ubayd Allah ibn Zāhir returned to Baghdad to al-Ma'mūn, made him aware of the situation in Egypt and how much he had done to you to restore order. Subsequently, there appeared the Bima – a Coptic word that means "descendants of the Forties". For when the Rūm left Egypt at the time of the advent of Islam, they left behind forty men who propagated, multiplied and reproduced in Lower Egypt, receiving the name of "Bima", the descendants of the Forty. They rebelled and refused to pay the poll tax and the land tax. Learning of this, al-Ma'mūn sent to Egypt al-Mu'tasim at the head of an army. The Bima faced him and he fought against them, making great slaughter, and he routed them, captured their women and children and carried them off to Baghdad. After establishing order in Egypt, al-Mu'tasim returned to Baghdad. Then al-Ma'mūn went to Egypt together with al-Mu'tasim and entered on the night of Friday, 9th of the month of al-Muharram of the year 217 of the Hegira. The first day of the month of Safar, they went to the territory of the "Bima", then left and entered Misr and al-Fustāt on Saturday 14th of the month of Safar. In the month of Rabī 'al-awwal of the same year, al-Ma'mūn left Egypt. After he entered Misr, al-Ma'mūn had built, on Mount al-Muqattam, his own residence with a dome called "qubbat al-Hawā": With al-Ma'mūn were some Christian upholsterers. Because the churches of the citadel were far from where they were, they asked al-Ma'mūn permission to build a church to pray near the "qubbat al-Hawa". He granted it. Thus they built a church to pray, which they called the church of "Martmaryam" at al-Qantarāh, which is nowadays known as the "Rūm church", but

previously it was called the “Church of the Upholsterers”. It is said that they built it using the remains of the “Qubbat al-Hawa”.

In Upper Egypt al-Ma’mūn built a hydrometer in order to measure the waters of the Nile, in a place called Shūrāt, at a village called Banūdah, and he repaired the nilometer at Ikhmim. One day there came to al-Ma’mūn, the Christian Bukām of Būrah, the same who sent the money to build the dome of the Resurrection, and asked him to make him governor of the province of Būrah. He was very rich. Al-Ma’mūn answered him; “Become a Muslim, and you will be their lord.” Bukām replied: “The prince of believers has tens of thousands of Muslim officials, but he does not have even one Christian.” Al-Ma’mūn rose and entrusted to him the province of Būrah and its surroundings. Bukām built many beautiful churches in the territory of Būrah. Facing the door of his house there was the main mosque. He said to the Muslims of Būrah: “I’ll build you another big mosque if you destroy that which is in front of my house.” The Muslims replied: “Build another mosque while we continue to pray in this. When you finish building, we’ll pray in it and destroy the other one.” He thus constructed a large and beautiful mosque and when he completed the construction, he said to them: “Be faithful to the word given and demolish the mosque that is in front of my door.” But they answered him, “Our religion does not allow us to pull down a mosque in which we have already prayed, where we gathered at the voice of the muezzin and in which we held the Friday prayer together. No, our religion does not allow it.” The mosque therefore remained where it was and in Būrah there were two mosques where they gathered for the rite of prayer. The Muslims prayed on one Friday in one and one Friday in the other. Bukām used to dress in black and girded with a sword and went riding a horse preceded by his men. When he came to the mosque, he stopped and a delegate went in, who was a Muslim, to direct the prayer and hold the prayers in the caliph’s name, returning, once he had finished, to him. The Christians continued to dress in black and to ride until the time of al-Mutawakkil. Al-Ma’mūn returned to Baghdad.

8. Constantine fought against Nicephorus, son of Istabrāq, and defeated him, becoming king of the Rūm. Al-Ma’mūn made three campaigns, the last of which was in the year 218. Then he came to al-Yadidūn, fell ill and died. He was carried to Tūs, and was buried there. His caliphate – after he was saluted as caliph in Khurāsān – lasted twenty-two years. He died at the age of forty-nine years in the month of Raġab in the year 218. He was of a whitish-rosy complexion, handsome, and had a long beard, already white in many places. The chiefs of his bodyguard were Zuhayr ibn al-Musayyab as-Sabbi, then Zahir ibn al-Husayn. Among his guards the command was held by Ishāq ibn Ibrāhūn. His hāgib while he was in Khurāsān was al-Husayn ibn Abi Sa’id. Later his hāgib was ‘Ali ibn Sālih, sāhib al-musallā. The influential ministers at the beginning of his caliphate were Dhūr-Ri’āsatayn al-Fadl ibn Sahl and after that many others, including al-Husayn ibn Sahl, Umar ibn Sa’id and Ahmad ibn Abī Khālid.

### **CALIPHATE OF AL-MUTASIM (218-227/833-842).**

1. The bay’ah was given to al-Mu’tasim, i.e. Abū Ishāq Muhammad b. Hārūm ar-Rashid – his mother was a “umm walad” named Māridah – at Tarsus. But some of al-Ma’mūn’s generals advocated appointing al-‘Abbās, son of al-Ma’mūn, as caliph, and in fact acknowledged al-‘Abbās ibn al-Ma’mūn as their caliph. All the other generals recognized al-Mu’tasim as their caliph. The news of his appointment came to Baghdad where the bay’ah was given to him by Abū Ishāq Ibrāhīm b. al-Husayn b. Mus’ab – who was then in Baghdad -, the Hāshemites and the various generals who were

in the city. The bay'ah was also given by 'Abd Allah ibn Zāhir in Khurāsān and he summoned al-Mu'tasim. Al-Mu'tasim went to Baghdad at the beginning of the month of Ramadan of year 218 and remained there until 222. Then he moved on Surramanra'ā, surrounded it with a wall and camped there with his soldiers. He sent Afshin Kindarā ibn Kāwus to fight against Tābak al-Gurrami, who occupied the city and imprisoned him together with his men. The conquest took place in the month of Ramadan of the year 222. He sent Uğayf ibn 'Anbasa against the Zutt who lived in Batā'ih, took them prisoners and carried them off with him. Al-Māziyār had revolted with the army of Tabaristan. 'Abd Allah ibn Zāhir sent [against him] his uncle al-Hasan ibn al-Husayn who made him prisoner and brought him to al-Mu'tasim.

2. Then al-Mu'tasim entered the territory of the Rūm, with the intention of invading, taking with him the Patriarch of Antioch Job, and besieging the city of Ankara. The patriarch Job spoke in Greek to the Rūm saying to them: "Make submission to the Sultan and pay the poll tax. It is better to do this than to be killed or taken prisoner." The Rūm rejected him and threw stones at him. Then al-Mu'tasim captured Ankara and burned it. Then he went on 'Ammūriyyah and besieged it for a month (In another text it says "for months"). Every day the patriarch of Antioch Job went to the citadel alone and spoke to the Rūm in Greek, trying to play on their fear and persuade them to pay the poll tax, so that al-Mu'tasim would leave them in peace. But the Rūm covered him with insults and pelted him with dirt. They continued until al-Mu'tasim captured 'Ammūriyyah: many were killed and many others were taken prisoners. This was in the month of Ramadan of the year 223. After having captured 'Ammūriyyah, al-Mu'tasim started his way back. During his absence, al-'Abbās ibn al-Ma'mūn died. Al-Mu'tasim gave his property to al-Afshin in the year 225.

3. Constantine, king of the Rūm, died. After him there reigned over Rūm Theophilus. In the fourth year of al-Mu'tasim's caliphate there became patriarch of Alexandria Sophronius. He held the office for thirteen years. He was a philosopher and a wise man. In the seventh year of the caliphate of al-Mu'tasim, John was patriarch of Jerusalem; but the inhabitants of Jerusalem spoke so much ill of him that, frightened, he wrote a letter, under duress, in which he renounced the office.

4. Al-Mu'tasim died in the month of Rabī 'al-awwal of the year 227. His caliphate lasted eight years and eight months. He died at the age of forty-eight and was buried at Surramanra'ā al-Ġawsaq. Al-Mu'tasim was fair of body and face, with a wide chest, strong body, and a long beard with no white hair. The chief of his bodyguard was Ishāq ibn Ibrāhim. His huggab, for the audience of the nobility, were the freedman Simā at-Turkī, the freedman Wasif at-Turki and Bughā at-Turki. His huġgāb for the audience of the people were Muhammad ibn 'Āsim al-Hanaki, Ya'qūb ibn Ibrāhim, 'Attāb ibn 'Attāb and Muhammad ibn Hammād b. Danqash. His influential advisers were the supreme "qadi", Ahmad ibn Abi Dāwūd and the secretary Muhammad ibn 'Abd al-Malik az-Zayyāt.

## CALIPHATE OF AL-WĀTHIQ (227-232/842-847)

1. The bay'ah was given to al-Wāthiq, i.e. Hārūn ibn al-Mu'tasim – his mother was an *umm walad* named Qarātis, on the same day that al-Mu'tasim died. He left the internal affairs as they were in the days of al-Mu'tasim, He built the palace known by the name of al-Hārūni, and moved there. Al-Wāthiq argued that the Qur'an was created, and this theory he inculcated, until it was accepted by Ahmad ibn Abi Dāwūd and Muhammad ibn 'Abd al-Malik az-Zayyāt, his minister. Al-Wāthiq sent letters to all the provinces in which he asked [his governors] to induce all Muslims to support the

creation of the Koran by writing to the mosques. But the Muslims considered that such a proposal was insolent and oppressive, and they vigorously refused to accept it. All those who rejected this claim, or who did not approve, or who did not support it, were flogged, imprisoned or killed. His caliphate lasted five years, seven months and thirteen days.

2. Theophilus, king of the Rūm, died. After him Michael, son of Theophilus, was made king. In the second year of the caliphate of al-Wāthiq, there was made patriarch of Jerusalem Sergius, son of that Mansūr who had helped the Muslims to conquer Damascus and had been hit by anathema everywhere in the world. He held the office for sixteen years and died. In the sixth year of his caliphate there was made patriarch of Antioch Nicholas. He held the office for twenty-three years and died.

3. Al-Wāthiq died on Wednesday, six days before the end of the month of Dhū'l-hiġġa of the year 232, at the age of thirty-four. Al-Wāthiq was of medium stature, fair in body, and had a wide chest, a thick beard and a bit of white in the eye. The chief of his bodyguard was Ishāq ibn Ibrāhim and his huġġāb were the freedman Itāh at-Turkī, the freedman Bughā at-Turkī, the freedman Wasif at-Turkī, Muhammad ibn Hammād b. Danqash and Muhammad ibn 'Āsim al-Gabalī. His huġġāb for the audience of the people were also Ya'qūb ibn Ibrāhim, Qawsara and Attāb ibn 'Attāb. His influential advisers were Ahmad ibn Abi Dāwūd and Muhammad ibn 'Abd Allah al-Malik az-Zayyāt.

### **CALIPHATE OF ĠA'FAR AL-MUTAWAKKIL (232-247/847-861).**

1. The bay'ah was given to Ga'far al-Mutawakkil, son of al-Mu'tasim – his mother was an *umm walad* named Shuġġā 'al-Khwārizmiyyah – on the same day that al-Wāthiq died. He released those who had been imprisoned because of the question of the creation of the Qur'an, and withdrew his favour from Muhammad ibn Abd al-Malik, minister of al-Mu'tasim, and disapproved of the actions of al-Mu'tasim, of al-Wāthiq, of Umar ibn al-Farah az-Zugahi, of Itāh at-Turki and of Ahmad ibn Abi Dāwūd, the supreme qādi. He gave the bay'ah to his three sons, namely Muhammad al-Muntasir bi'llāh, Ibrāhim al-Mu'ayyad min Allah and Abū 'Abd Allah al-Mu'tazz bi'llāh, designating the latter as his successor from the beginning of the year 236 of the Hegira. Public affairs were restored, the countries returned to order and the streets made safe.

2. It was reported to al-Mutawakkil that the nilometer, built by Sulaymān ibn 'Abd al-Malik b. Marwān on the island at Fustāt-Misr, was out of order. He then sent an Iraqi geometrician, chosen by Muhammad ibn Mūsa the astrologer, who went to Egypt where Yazīd ibn 'Abd Allah b. Nādān b. Farah was responsible for providing all forms of assistance, and where Sulaymān ibn Wahb was in charge of collecting taxes, and he made a nilometer at Gizat-Misr in Year 245. It was called "al-Miqyās al-ġadid" [= the new hydrometer] because the old one was out of order. Al-Mutawakkil built a city called "al-Ga'fariyyah". He withdrew his favour from the physician Bukhtishū', and sent letters to all countries, ordering that Christians should wear clothes of the same pattern and with patches, as well as surcoats with a front and back flap, that they were prohibited from riding horses, carrying ropes on their saddles, or using wooden brackets, and that the images of the devils should be drawn on their doors. (In another text it says "pigs and monkeys"). This order brought serious harm, pain and concern upon the Christians.



3. Michael, son of Theophilus, king of the Rūm, died. After him there was made king over Rūm his son Theophilus. He removed the images from the churches, sanded down the bas-reliefs and broke the statues, and ordered that there were to be no more images in the churches. The reason that caused him to take the images away from the churches was this. One of his ministers told him that, in a certain place in Byzantine territory, there was a church dedicated to the Blessed Mary, in which a picture was worshiped, from whose breast a drop of milk came out on her feast day. King Theophilus found this a strange thing and made inquiries. It was then discovered that the clerk of the church had made a hole in the wall behind the image, at the height of the breast of the image, and had inserted a thin tube of lead. He then covered the place with clay and lime so that it could not be seen. When then the day of the feast of the Blessed Mary' came, he poured milk into that hole, and a small drop dripped from the breast of the image. People made pilgrimage to that church, and the clerk earned much money that way. King Theophilus therefore sent to destroy that image, to bring things back to normal, and ordered that there should be no more images in the churches. He then ordered the execution of the clerk and took away the pictures from the churches saying, "Images are like idols: he who adores an image is like the one who adores idols." Then there were disputes among the Rūm about the images and they ended up accusing each other of impiety. Some said: "He who prostrates himself in front of an image is impious!" While others said, "Whoever does not prostrate himself in front of the image is impious!" The news came to Sophronius, patriarch of Alexandria, who wrote a long sermon in which he took up the defense of the cult of images using the following argument: "God – to whom be the highest praise and holy be his name! – ordered Moses to portray the cherubim in gold on the ark of the covenant and to put it in the Temple." And he carried on, saying: "When Solomon, son of David, built the Temple and had completed the construction, he put the golden image of the cherubim inside." And again he said, "When the king wrote a letter to his lieutenant, and he added the seal with his ring, he [the lieutenant] said to the people, "This is the seal of the king and his letter," did not he stand up to take the letter in his hands and kiss it and lower his head and eyes? Certainly he stood up, and kissed the letter; not to honor the paper, or the stamp of the seal on the paper, or the ink on the letter, nor did he stand up to honour the letter of itself. No, for my life, for none of these things. It was only an act of honor that he intended to make to the king and to the king's name, it being his [the king's] letter. In this sense, we must kiss this image and worship it, because it is not for us to kiss and venerate a cult made to idols.<sup>[1]</sup> It is for us a pure and simple act of honor and veneration, made in the name of that martyr depicted in that image and in that particular way." Then he sent what he had written to King Theophilus. The king welcomed it, rejoiced and refused to forbid the worship of images, as he had done at first. Among those who defended the cult of the images was Abū Qurra, who wrote in this regard a treatise that he called "Mayāmir as-Suḡūd li's-suwar" [= "Sermons on the Cult of Images"].

4. Sophronius, patriarch of Alexandria, died of dropsy- he had not been able to drink mandrake juice – in the year 233 of the Hegira. After him there was made patriarch of Alexandria Michael. He held the office for twenty-four years. He belonged to the Bukām family and came from the town of Būrah. The caliphate of al-Mutawakkil lasted fourteen years, nine months and nine days. In the tenth year of the caliphate of al-Mutawakkil, there was made patriarch of Jerusalem Salmūn, son of Zarqūn. He held the office for five years and died.

5. Al-Mutawakkil died in his palace, in the city he had built and called "al-Ga'fariyyah". His murder took place on the night of 3 March of the month of Shawwāl of the year 247. He was forty-four. He was buried at "al-Ga'fariyyah". Al-Mutawakkil was brown, with a delicate, almost yellowish,

complexion, handsome in face, and had a little beard on his cheeks, and big eyes. The chief of his bodyguard was Ishāq ibn Ibrāhim and, on his death, Muhammad ibn Ishāq. When he [also] died, there came back from Khurāsān Muhammad ibn ‘Abd Allah b. Zāhir and became chief of the guards. His *huġġāb* were Wasīf at-Turkī, then Sa‘īd ibn Sālih and Bughā at-Turki. His *huġġāb*, for the audience of the people, were Ya‘qūb ibn Ibrāhim, then Qawsara and ‘Attāb ibn’ Attāb. His influential advisers were al-Fath ibn Khāqān and the *kātib* ‘Ubayd Allāh ibn Yahyā b. Khāqān.

### **CALIPHATE OF AL-MUNTASIR BI’LLAH (247-248/861-862).**

1. The *bay‘ah* was given to al-Muntasir bi’llāh [Abū Ġa‘far] Muhammad b. [Ġa‘far] al-Mutawakkil – his mother was an *umm walad* named Hasanah – on the same night that al-Mutawakkil was killed. Five days after he obtained the caliphate, he moved from al-Ga‘fariyyah to Surramanra‘ah, destroying al-Ga‘fariyyah and abandoning al-Gawsaq. He deprived his two brothers, Abu ‘Abd Allah al-Mu‘tazz bi’llāh and Ibrāhim al-Mu‘ayyad bi’llāh, of the right of succession, and wrote letters about this to every part of his territory. His caliphate lasted one year, six months and three days. He died at the age of twenty-eight and was buried at Surramanra‘a. His mother raised his tomb: for no caliph before him was a tomb erected. Al-Muntasir was of medium stature, handsome of body, brown and obese. The chief of his bodyguard was Muhammad ibn ‘Abd Allah ibn Zāhir and his *huġġāb* were Abū Nāsirat-Turki and Ahmad ibn al-Hasīb.

### **CALIPHATE OF AL-MUSTA`IN (248-252/862-866).**

1. The commanders of the Turks got together to choose the one to whom to give the *bay‘ah*. They rejected al-Mutawakkil’s son and their choice fell on Ahmad ibn Muhammad al-Mu‘tasim – his mother was an *umm walad* named Mukhādiq. They gave him the *bay‘ah* and called him al-Musta`in bi’llāh. But as a result of an uprising within the army and a turmoil among the Mawālī,<sup>101</sup> al-Musta`in fled, along with the Turks Wasif and Bughā, to Baghdad. The Mawālī and the forces who were at Surramanra‘a placed on the throne Abū ‘Abd Allah ibn al-Mu‘tazz b. al-Mutawakkil – his mother was an *umm walad* named Fabtahah – and gave him the *bay‘ah* at the beginning of the month of al-Muharram of the year 251. Great disagreements and fighting broke out between the men of al-Musta`in, of al-Mu‘tazz, and of Abū Ahmad ibn al-Mutawakkil, in charge of al-Mu‘tazz’s military affairs. They continued to fight until the beginning of the month of al-Muharram of the year 252. Then al-Musta`in abdicated and there was peace. Al-Musta`in wrote of his decision to al-Mu‘tazz, who answered him by guaranteeing his safety with an oath. Then he retired to Iraq, to Wāsit. His caliphate lasted three years and eight months until the day of abdication.

2. In the first year of the caliphate of al-Musta`in, there was made patriarch of Jerusalem Theodorus, called al-Miqlāti. He held the office for nineteen years and died. Al-Musta`in was fat, handsome in body, and had a black beard. The chief of the bodyguard was Muhammad ibn ‘Abd Allah ibn Zāhir, and his *huġġāb* were the Turks Wasif and Bughā.

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<sup>101</sup> The freed slaves.

## CALIPHATE OF AL-MU'TAZZ (252-255/866-869).

1. All the Turks, and the others who were in Surramanra'a, gave the *bay'ah* to al-Mu'tazz, in the month of al-Muharram of the year 251, while al-Musta'in was in Baghdad, and the countries were at the mercy of tumults, and most people were on the side of al-Musta'in. So when al-Musta'in abdicated, at the beginning of the month of al-Muharram of the year 252, the people made submission to [al-Mu'tazz]. Al-Mu'tazz restored the right of succession to the throne to Ibrāhim al-Mu'ayyad bi'llāh (156) but then took it away. Ibrāhim al-Mu'ayyad bi'llāh died. Abu Ahmad conceived a violent hatred against al-Mu'tazz because of what had happened to his brother. Al-Mu'tazz then exiled him to Basra, and killed Wasīf and Bughā. Muhammad ibn 'Abd Allah b. Zāhir, chief of the guards, died. [Al-Mu'tazz] recalled al-Musta'in from Wāsīt and gave the job of killing him to his *hāgib*, Sa'īd ibn Sālih.

2. Theophilus, son of Michael, son of Theophilus, king of the Rūm, died. After him, his son Michael, son of Theophilus, son of Michael, reigned. There was at that time a general named Basil, whom the king had preferred to all the others, giving him command over all his men and generals. One day, King Michael went out for a walk on the island opposite Constantinople, in the middle of the sea called Pontus. The general Basil attacked him, killed him inside the church on the island, got rid of all those who were on the island and took over the kingdom. Basil did not belong to the royal family, because he was of Slavic origin. When asked why he had killed the king, he replied, "Michael had fallen madly in love with a woman and had ordered me to marry her but never to approach her. The woman would be mine in words, but he would be sleeping with her." He had resorted to this expedient for fear that his wife would betray him,<sup>102</sup> and also because he was not allowed to marry another woman in addition to his wife. "First I followed him, then I felt repentance, I was afraid of God, and I thought it best to kill him." Thus Basil became king of the Rūm.

3. Al-Mu'tazz appointed as governor of Egypt the Turk Bākbāk, who appointed as his lieutenant Ahmad ibn Tulūn and sent him to Egypt. Bākbāk had given his daughter in marriage to Ahmad ibn Tūlūn. Ahmad ibn Tūlūn entered Egypt in the month of Ramadan in the year 254. Between al-Mu'tazz and the Mawāli there were strong disagreements.

4. Al-Mu'tazz died on Tuesday, three days before the end of the month of Ragab of the year 255. His caliphate had lasted, from al-Musta'in's abdication, three years, nine months and eight days. He died at the age of twenty-two and was buried at Surramanra'a. His mother erected his tomb near that of al-Muntasir. Al-Mu'tazz was of a fair complexion, handsome, with a handsome face and a graceful body. There had never been one equal to him for the grace of face and beauty. The chief of his bodyguard was Muhammad ibn 'Abd Allah b. Zāhir, and, on his death, 'Ubayd Allah ibn 'Abd Allah b. Zāhir. Then the guard passed to the command of Sulaymān ibn 'Abd Allah b. Zāhir (167), and was later entrusted to Ubayd Allah ibn 'Abd Allah b. Zāhir. His *huġgāb* were Wasif and Bughā, then Sālih took the place of his father [Wasīf] and Bākbāk at-Turki took that of Bughā.

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<sup>102</sup> Not sure that I have this right: the Italian is "Era ricorso a questo espediente per paura che lo sapesse sua moglie, ...".

## CALIPHATE OF AL-MUHTADĪ (255-256/869-870).

1. The *bay'ah* was given to al-Muhtadī, i.e. Muhammad ibn Hārūn al-Wāthiq bi'llāh b. al-Mu'tasim bi'llāh – his mother was an *umm walad* named Qurb – on Tuesday, three days before the end of the month of Raġab of the year 255. His caliphate lasted only one year. He was killed at the age of thirty-nine and was buried at Surramanra'a. Al-Muhtadī was of medium stature, handsome in body and face, and had a black curly beard. The chief of his bodyguard was Ubayd Allah ibn 'Abd Allah and his *hāgib* was Sālih ibn Wasif. Then Sālih was killed and Takin at-Turki took the place.

## CALIPHATE OF AL-MU'TAMID BI'LLĀH (256-279/870-893).

1. The *bay'ah* was given to al-Mu'tamid bi'llāh, i.e. Ahmad ibn Ga'far al-Mutawakkil – his mother was an *umm walad* named Qiyān, in the month of Raġab of the year 256. His minister, Abd Allah ibn Yahya, was the son of that Khāqān who was previously the minister of al-Mutawakkil.

2. Wars and revolts followed, in regions and provinces the disorder increased and throughout the territory the number of contenders multiplied. The days of his caliphate were a continuous succession of revolts and wars. The management of internal affairs was entrusted to Abu Ahmad al-Muwaffaq bi'llāh, al-Mu'tamid's brother. Al-Mu'tamid named as his successor his son Ga'far, calling him al-Mufawwid ilā'llāh, and after him, his brother Abū Ahmad b. al-Mutawakkil, giving him the name of al-Muwaffaq bi'llāh. Abū Ahmad personally headed the military campaigns and made tiring and fatiguing journeys from country to country, while al-Mu'tamid enjoyed himself with pleasures and amusements.

3. At Basra, 'Ali ibn Muhammad b. Ahmad b. 'Ali b. Yazīd b. 'Ali b. Al-Husayn b. 'Ali b. Abi Tālib revolted against him, on Monday, two days before the end of the month of Ramadan of the year 256. He killed all the inhabitants of Basra, took possession of their property and captured their women and children, dividing them among his men. He defeated Basra, and occupied its surroundings and the province. Abū Ahmad al-Muwaffaq marched against him in the direction of Basra, and there was a war between them for fourteen years. Then the descendant of Ali was killed at Basra, on the Abū Safyān River at the confluence of the Abū'l-Khasib River on which was built the city called "al-Mukhtārah", on Wednesday, in the cool of the evening, of the 4th of the month of Safar of the year 270. From the day when he arose and his banner was raised to the day when he was killed, fourteen and four months and six days elapsed.

4. Muhammad (sic!) Ibn Tūlūn had occupied Egypt and Syria and captured Antioch while Abū Ahmad al-Mutawaffaq (sic!) was preoccupied with the war against the descendant of Ali in Basra. In the first year of al-Mu'tamid's caliphate there became patriarch of Antioch Stephen. He held office for one day and died on the same day after having celebrated Mass. After him there became patriarch of Antioch Theodosius. He held office for twenty-one years and died. In the tenth year of his caliphate there became patriarch of Jerusalem Elijah, son of that Mansūr who had helped the Muslims to conquer Damascus and was accursed all over the world. He held office for twenty-two years and died.

5. The Patriarch of Alexandria Michael, son of Bukām, died in the year 256 and was buried in the city of Būrah. After him there became patriarch of Alessandria Michael, originally from Rome (in another

text it is said “from Ghazza”), in the third year of the caliphate of al-Mu’tamid, i.e. in 258. He held office thirty-four years and died in 292, and was buried in Alexandria.

6. Basil, King of the Rūm, died. After him reigned his son Leo. He was a wise man and a philosopher. In the eighth year of the caliphate of al-Mu’tamid, Sa’id ibn Batrīq the physician was born on Sunday, three days before the end of the month of Dhū’l-hiġġa, in the lunar year 263. From the Hegira until the day of his birth, there elapsed two hundred and fifty-four solar years, years with which he was dating history. From Diocletian to the birth of Sa’id ibn Batrīq the physician, there elapsed 568 years (in another text “592”); from our Lord Jesus Christ to the birth of Sa’id ibn Batrīq, there elapsed 868 years; from Alexander to his birth, there elapsed 1,199 years; from the captivity of Babylon to his birth, there elapsed 1,450 years; from David until his birth, there elapsed 1,927 years; from the exodus of the children of Israel from Egypt until his birth, there elapsed 2,535 years; from Abraham to his birth, there elapsed 3,040 years; from Fāliq until his birth, there elapsed 3,540 years; from the flood until his birth, there elapsed 4,160 years; from Adam until his birth, there elapsed 6,368 years. It was sixty years from his birth when he was made patriarch of Alexandria and was called *anba* Euty chius.<sup>103</sup>

7. As for Ahmad ibn Tūlūn, he occupied Antioch and then returned to Egypt. In Misr he built the great mosque that looked out over the lake, built a hospital and a construction bringing water from the lake called “al-Habas”, so that it could serve the Ma’āqir. Ahmad ibn Tūlūn contracted the illness from which he would subsequently die, that is, gastroenteritis, and ordered Muslims, Christians and Jews to climb the mountain called “al-Muqattam” to invoke the help of God upon him. And so they did, going up to the mountain in groups and invoking on him the blessing of God. However he died of that illness, on the night of Sunday, ten days before the end of the month of Dhū’l-qa’da of the year 270 and was buried on mount al-Muqattam. His commanders gathered together, killed his elder son at Abbas and chose as their leader his younger son, Khumārawayh b. Ahmad b. Tūlūn. He was then twenty years old. He marched on Damascus at the head of his soldiers and was faced by Abū’l-`Abbās b. Al-Muwaffaq: they met at “at-Tawwāhin”, in the province of Palestine. Khumārawayh b. Ahmad b. Tūlūn was put to flight and returned to Egypt alone. During the journey he lost five horses and many of his people were killed. Abū’l-`Abbās took over all that he found among the soldiers of Khumārawayh b. Ahmad [b. Tulun]. Khumārawayh ibn Ahmad had some men in ambush, completely unaware of the defeat [suffered by their comrades]. As Abu’l-`Abbās and his men became burdened by all the property that they had taken, they were put to flight and a great slaughter was made. Then the men of Khumārawayh returned, recaptured the army, returned to Egypt and celebrated the victory with Khumārawayh. Abu’l-`Abbās returned defeated to Baghdad where he received the blame of his father al-Muwaffaq for what he had done. Khumārawayh had a large army in Syria. In the seventeenth year of the caliphate of al-Mu’tamid, that is, in 273, there was a terrible earthquake in Egypt: many houses collapsed and many people lost their lives. That year the grain reached the price of a dinar per *mudd*. The populace died out from hunger, and even the lynx came to eat them. The markets of Egypt were full of the dead. They were carried away on camels – on each camel were stacked up to eight corpses – they dug a big ditch and threw them inside. When Khumārawayh learned that Muhammad ibn

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<sup>103</sup> At this point during the translation process I became aware that Google translate was generating random numbers for these large numerals. I went back and rechecked them, but it is possible that I have been silently deceived for some earlier numbers.

Diyūdād, i.e. Abū's-Sāg, had arrived in Syria at the head of a large army heading for Egypt, he gathered his troops and moved against him. There was a terrible battle between them at a place called al-Bathaniyyah, in the province of Damascus, and Muhammad ibn ad-Diyūdād, i.e. Ibn as-Sāg, was put to flight. Many of his forces were killed, but many others sought to be spared by pleading for the protection of Khumārawayh, who continued his journey until he came to the Euphrates. His men entered the city of ar-Raqqah, buying and selling. Al-Muwaffaq was afraid of him. Then Khumārawayh returned to Egypt after imposing his sovereignty over the territories from the Euphrates to Nubia, leaving in each country a man as his deputy. It was the year 276 [of the Hegira]. Al-Muwaffaq died in the month of Safar of the year 278. His son Abū'l-`Abbās was recognised as his legitimate successor. Ga'far ibn al-Mu'tamid (194) was deprived of the right of succession to the throne and the management of business went into the hands of Abū'l-`Abbās ibn al-Muwaffaq who was called al-Mu'tadid.

8. Al-Mu'tamid died at Baghdad on Sunday, eleven days before the end of the the month of Raġab of the year 279 [of the Hegira]. His caliphate lasted twenty-three years and six days. He died at the age of forty-six. He was taken to Surramanra'ā and was buried there.

### **CALIPHATE OF AL-MU`TADID (279-289/892-902).**

1. The *bay'ah* was given to al-Mu'tadid bi'llāh Abū'l-`Abbās, i.e. Ahmad b. Abū Ahmad al-Muwaffaq bi'llāh b. Ga'far al-Mutawakkil 'alā'llāh – his mother was an *umm walad* named Sirār. The *bay'ah* was given to him on the same day that al-Mu'tamid died, eleven days before the end of the month of *Raġab* of the year 279 [of the Hegira]. The revolts ceased, the countries returned to order, the wars stopped, each rebel accepted peace, and prices fell sharply.

2. Al-Mu'tadid sent to ask Khumārawayh b. Ahmad b. Tūlūn to give him his daughter in marriage. Khumārawayh consented, and sent her with great riches, slaves, and maidservants. They made peace and order was restored. Khumārawayh b. Ahmad b. Tūlūn left Egypt for Syria and stopped at Damascus. He had built, outside Damascus, below the *dayr Murrān*, on the "Thawrah" River, a palace that used to be his residence. Khumārawayh was killed in this palace that he built, near Damascus, on Sunday night, three days before the end of the month of *dhū'l-qa'da* of the year 282 [of the Hegira]. His servants, Zāhir, Sābūr, Lu'lu ', Natīf, Shafi` ash-Sharābi and Ghanā'im, were charged with his killing. These servants were then killed and their heads were taken to Egypt, while their bodies were crucified at Damascus. Khumārawayh was taken in a coffin from Damascus to Egypt, and was buried on mount al-Muqattam. Egypt was shaken by violent riots because of Khumārawayh and his death.

3. After him there was appointed governor of Egypt Gaysh ibn Khumārawayh. Gaysh returned from Damascus to Egypt and stayed there for eight months. Then there were serious dissensions between him and the commanders. They rose up against him and killed him. His brother Hārūn ibn Khumārawayh took his place, at the age of ten years, in the month of *raġab* of the year 283 [of the Hegira].

4. Al-Mu'tadid wrote a letter to Hārūn b. Khumārawayh, in which he entrusted him with the rule of Egypt. Hārūn was ten years old and his regent was Abū Ga'far b. Muhammad b. Abā at-Turki.

5. On the night of Thursday, two days before the end of the month of *Rabīʿal-awwal* of the year 284 [of the Hegira], a strange phenomenon happened in Egypt. The Christians were intent on celebrating the feast of the Ascension into heaven of our Lord Christ, when wild and violent winds blasted them, from dinner time until midnight. At midnight, then, there came such a thick darkness that nobody could see their fingers even if they were in their eyes. Then the harsh winds of earlier returned, taking off the roofs of many houses. On the heads of people, gathered in their homes, there was a rain of red sand. At the four corners of the heavens there were flaming columns of fire. This lasted until dawn. Then the wind calmed a little and the sky became intensely red, like a flame of fire, with a cold wind. The earth, the mountains, the trees, the people and their clothes, and all that they could see, looked red because of the intensity of the red sky. The red [sky] lasted for two hours, then turned yellow until noon. Then the yellow vanished and the sky became black all day and until noon the day after, before dissolving. The sun did not appear for a day and a half, from when the winds began to blow, until the black clouds broke.

6. On the morning of Wednesday, 9th of the month of *Dhū'l-qa'da* of the year 288, there was also, in Egypt, from midnight to dawn, a violent movement of the stars, which the vulgar called falling stars. The sky was full of such stars coming down from east, west, south and north. No one could watch the heavens because of the many falling stars.<sup>[1]</sup> In the first year of the caliphate of al-Mu'tadid, there became patriarch of Antioch Simeon, son of Zarnāq. He held office for twelve years and died.

7. As for Leo, king of the Rūm, his wife died without having children. He decided to remarry, but the Patriarch of Constantinople, Nicolas, forbade him, saying, "You are not allowed to marry, because you have been consecrated as an *anagnoste* [= a reader] and you have to fulfill the priestly prayer. If you marry, you will not be allowed to come to the altar." King Leo replied: "I decided to marry only in order to have a son who can inherit the kingdom after me." But the patriarch did not allow him to marry. Then King Leo wrote to the patriarch of Rome, to Michael, the patriarch of Alexandria, to Elijah, son of Mansur, patriarch of Jerusalem, and to Simeon son of Zarnach, patriarch of Antioch, asking them to go to him in order to examine whether he was allowed to get married or not. None of them could go in person to the king, but each one sent their own messenger. The bishops gathered together with the messengers at Constantinople to examine the case of the king and pronounced in favour of his marriage. King Leo married and had a son called Constantine. Nicholas was removed from his office and Anthimus was made patriarch of Constantinople.

8. Al-Mu'tadid bi'llāh died on Sunday, nine days before the end of the month of *al-ākkar* of the year 289. His caliphate lasted seven years, nine months and two days. He died at the age of forty-seven. The administrators of his property were the freedman Badr and `Ubayd Allah b. Sulaymān, who was succeeded in the place that he occupied by his son al-Qasim b. `Ubayd Allah (204). Al-Mu'tadid was handsome in his face and body, and he spent much time accumulating riches.

<sup>[1]</sup>Does he perhaps mean that astronomy became impossible? There is no explanation of these interesting events in the notes of the Italian. I find discussion of this, however, in Richard B. Stothers, "Cloudy and clear stratospheres before A.D. 1000 inferred from written sources", *Journal of Geophysical Research* 107 (2002), online [here](#): "2.14. A.D. 897 [26] Red skies in Egypt made the outdoor surroundings appear red (Euty chius of Alexandria, *Annals*, Migne, *PG*, 111, 1144; al-Tabari, *Annals*, A.H. 284; Elias of Nisibis, *Chronicle*, p. 92, Brooks). This event, which occurred only on 5 May

and only near Alexandria, was apparently caused by a red sandstorm, as mentioned by the chroniclers.”

## CALIPHATE OF AL-MUKTAFĪ BI'LLĀH (289-295/902-908).

1. The *bay'ah* was given to al-Muktafī, i.e. Abū Muhammad [‘Ali] b. Ahmad al-Mu’tadid, in Baghdad, on the same day that al-Mu’tadid died. Al-Muktafī was in ar-Raqqah. Letters and missives were sent to him to travel to Baghdad. He went, and settled there. His mother was Bakhtagiknah, and she was the daughter of al-Qāsim b. ‘Ubayd Allah b. Sulaymān b. Dhahb. He named his secretary al-‘Abbās b. Al-Hasan al-Mādarāni, and restored things to order.

2. In the second year of the caliphate of al-Muktafī, in 290 [of the Hegira], the Nile of Egypt reached the height of thirteen cubits and two fingers. The Muslims, Christians and Jews went out in procession, praying to God for rain, but the level of water remained as we mentioned, and the water continued to flow. In the third year of al-Muktafī’s caliphate there was made patriarch of Antioch Elias. He was a *kātib*. He held office for twenty-eight years and died. In the month of *Rabī ‘al-ākhar*, the town of Seleucia, in Byzantine territory, was conquered, and the loot was brought to Egypt in the month of *Ragab* of the year 290 [of the Hegira]. In the second year of the caliphate of al-Muktafī died Michael, patriarch of Alexandria, on Sunday, six days before the end of the month of Ramadan of the year 290 [of the Hegira], after having been patriarch for thirty-four years. After him the see of Alexandria remained without a patriarch for four years. In the fifth year of the caliphate of al-Muktafī, there was made patriarch of Alexandria Cristodulos, originally from Aleppo. He was consecrated in Jerusalem on Holy Saturday, the 4th of the month of *Nīsān*, that is, the 7th of *Barmūdah*, 19th of the month of *ġumādā al-ākhar*. Elias, the son of Mansūr, patriarch of Jerusalem, consecrated him and he went to Alexandria. But the inhabitants of Alexandria said, “We will not accept him unless the prayer making him patriarch is repeated.” The prayer of patriarchs was prayed over him on the 4th of Ramadan of the year 294 [of the Hegira]. He held office for twenty-six years and six months and died. He was buried in the church of [Saint] Michael at Fustāt-Misr. In the sixth year of al-Muktafī’s caliphate there was made patriarch of Jerusalem George, son of Da’ġān. He held office for four years and eight months and died.

3. There arose in Syria a rebel called Ismā’il the Qarmatian.<sup>104</sup> In Damascus the governor, in the name of Khumārawayh b. Ahmad b. Tūlūn, was Tughġ b. Khaff al-Far’āni. After several battles, Tughġ was put to flight at the hand of Ismā’il the Qarmatian, and many of his men fell on the field. Tughġ then wrote to Hārūn ibn Khumārawayh, informing him of the fact. Hārūn sent a large army to him, all of which belonged to the men of the Tulūnids. The battle between the army of Hārūn and the Qarmatian took place near a village called “Kenākīr”, in the province of Damascus, in the area known as “al-Askafiyah” in the month of *Ragab* of the year 289 [of the Hegira]. After a fierce battle, the Qarmatian was killed, and on both sides about twenty thousand men fell, while the others were fleeing. The survivors of the forces of Hārūn went to Damascus and Tiberias, while those of the Qarmatian army headed to Homs. Then Hārūn’s soldiers returned to Egypt, but part of

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<sup>104</sup> From what follows, the name of this rebel was actually Abū’l-Qāsim, as is clear from the battle in which Tughġ was defeated. Eutychius has confused him with Ismā’il, son of the 6th Imam Ga’far as-Sādiq (d. 765), from whom the Ismailites take their name. The latter are easy to confuse with the Qarmatians. (Pirone). The “Qarmata” or “Qarmatians” or “Qaramita” were a Shia group best known for taking the black stone from Mecca.



them remained in Damascus with Badr, called al-Ġamāmi. The Qarmatian had a brother named an-Nāgim. He gathered the survivors of his brother's forces, and formed an army by recruiting his own people, and began his rebellion in the area around Homs. When al-Muktafi learned that the Egyptian hosts had been cut to pieces and decimated by the Qarmatian and that the Egyptian soldiers had been killed, he decided to occupy Egypt, and he sent Muhammad ibn Sulaymān at the head of his most illustrious commanders and with a huge army. Al-Muktafi then went to ar-Raqqah and stopped there. When he came to Homs, Muhammad ibn Sulayman put to flight the troops of the Qarmatian an-Nāgim and captured seven hundred of his men. The Qarmatian escaped but he was caught in a place called "ad-Dāliyyah". Muhammad ibn Sulaymān brought him to al-Muktafi, at ar-Raqqah, along with the seven hundred men. Al-Muktafi took him with him to Baghdad where, after torturing him for a long time, he had him decapitated on a scaffold, then hanged his body on a cross. He then ordered the killing of the seven hundred men: some were decapitated on the scaffold and then crucified, others had their hands and feet cut off.

4. Al-Muktafi's armies progressed with Muhammad ibn Sulaymān even to Damascus. Badr al-Hammāmi, along with the soldiers who were with him, asked for a promise of safety from Muhammad ibn Sulaymān. Muhammad ibn Sulayman then left for Palestine with the intent of invading Egypt. Knowing that the soldiers and armies had him as their target, Hārūn ibn Khumārawayh went to a place called "al-'Abbāsiyyah", an Egyptian territory of the province of al-Hawf, and camped there with his commanders and many men, to wait for Muhammad ibn Sulayman and to fight against him. Al-Muktafi's ships followed the route to Tinnis and entered the province of Egypt. The Greek Damian commanded the fleet. Then some of Hārūn's commanders came to meet Damian in a village of al-Fustāt called "Tanūhah". The battle between the two sides was violent, but Hārūn's officers went over to the other side and fled.

5. Shaybān ibn Muhammad b. Tūlūn, the uncle of Hārūn, attacked Hārūn ibn Khumārawayh and killed him, on Sunday 18th of the month of Safar of the year 292. Shaybān b. Ahmad b. Tūlūn was the arbiter of the situation only for a few days. For Hārūn's officers wrote a letter to Muhammad ibn Sulaymān asking him to grant them protection. Granting them what they asked, Muhammad ibn Sulaymān entered Misr without finding any opposition and no objection on Thursday, two days before the end of the month of Safar of the year 292. Faced with this event, and seeing that Muhammad ibn Sulayman had already deployed his battle-ready soldiers in a place called "ar-Riyah" at the gate of the city of Misr, Shaybān and his brothers sought a guarantee of their lives and property. This was granted, and Shaybān's forces disbanded. Muhammad ibn Sulayman ordered all the officers and secretaries of Hārūn who were with him to go to Baghdad. They went to Baghdad, while Muhammad ibn Sulaymān stayed in Egypt for six months, and the scribes and the officers with them collected thousands of thousands of dinars. Then he returned to Iraq, leaving 'Isān an-Nūshari in Egypt, after having stayed for six months and having collected from the provinces thousands of thousands of dinars destined for the sultan. Al-Muktafi took Muhammad ibn Sulaymān and threw him into prison, demanding the restitution of the goods that he had collected in Egypt.

6. In Syria one of Hārūn's officers, known under the name of Muhammad ibn 'Ali al-Khalīġ, one of those who remained with Muhammad ibn Sulaymān in Syria, rebelled, and, having gathered around him a multitude of men of every sort, had set up their seat in the city of ar-Ramlah. Learning of this, 'Isa an-Nūshari joined with al-Husayn ibn Ahmad al-Mādarāni, called Abū Zaynūn, and the soldiers who were in Egypt and came out together to fight against Muhammad ibn Ali al-Khalīġ. When

they learned that he had a large number of men with him, they returned, together with the officers, to al-Fustāt. From here they went down to al-Gizah, broke the two bridges then gave them to the flames, so that Muhammad ibn Ali al-Khalīḡ could not reach them, and continued marching about, now to Alexandria, now to upper Egypt. So the city of al-Fustāt remained without authority and without anyone [as governor]. The citizens protected themselves, and took care of each other for five days.

7. Muhammad ibn [Ali] al-Khalīḡ entered Misr on a Thursday, fourteen days before the end of the month of *Dhū'l-qa'da* of the year 292. He stayed there for eight months, accumulating riches and strengthening his position. Then the armies of al-Muktafī arrived, under the command of his freedman Fātik, and a group of officers. Muhammad ibn Ali al-Khalīḡ came out against him, retreated on al-Fustāt with his men and engaged in a violent battle. Muhammad ibn Ali was beaten and succeeded in returning to al-Fustāt, where he hid himself. Fātik made his entry into al-Fustāt together with his officers. The man with whom Muhammad bin Ali al-Khalīḡ was hiding went to Isā an-Nūshari and told him that he was with him. He was arrested – it was the month of Raḡab of the year 293 [of the Hegira] – and he carried him with him back to Irāq together with his men, his family, his officers and scribes, and those who had helped him.

8. Al-Muktafī died on Sunday 13th of the month of *Dhū'l-qa'da* of the year 295 [of the Hegira]. His caliphate lasted six years, nine months and two days. His influential advisers and administrators of his affairs were his minister al-'Abbās ibn al-Husayn and his freeman Fātik.

### **CALIPHATE OF AL-MUQTADIR BI'LLĀH (296-320/908-932).**

1. The bay'ah was given to al-Muqtadir bi'llāh Ga'far b. Ahmad al-Mu'tadid bi'llāh, on the very day that his brother al-Muktafī died, that is, on Sunday 13th of *Dhul-qa'da* of the year 295 [of the Hegira]. His mother was an *umm walad* named Sha'ab. He confirmed the position and office of al-'Abbās, his brother's minister, and entrusted him with the management of his affairs.

2. Then some of the officers came together in order to put on the throne 'Abd Allah ibn al-Mu'tazz. For several days Baghdad was convulsed by acts of war. The ministers al-'Abbās ibn al-Husayn and Fātik were killed in the month of *Rabi' al-ākhar* of the year 299 [of the Hegira]. 'Abd Allah ibn al-Mu'tazz was taken and put in prison. Al-Muqtadir appointed as minister Ali ibn Muhammad b. Musa b. Al-Furāt.

3. In the Maghrib, a man named Abū 'Abd Allah al-Muhtasib bi'llāh revolted who, put to flight the troops of Ibn al-Aghlab, killed his men and captured the Maghrib. Learning this, Ziyādat Allah b. Ibrāhim b. Al-Aghlab, who took with him his women and followers and went to Egypt. He entered Egypt in the month of Ramadan of the year 296 [of the Hegira], and then went to ar-Ramlah and remained there until his death. Abū 'Abd Allah al-Muhtasib, who had been raised in the Maghrib, took a man named 'Ubayd Allah who claimed to be an ally, enthroned him, gave him the bay'ah, and invited others to do the same. Then 'Ubayd Allāh attacked Abū 'Ubayd<sup>105</sup> Allah al-Muhtasib and killed him, taking over the Maghrib, in the year 298 [of the Hegira]. Al-Muqtadir removed his favour from Ali ibn Muhammad b. Al-Furāt in the month of *Dhū'l-hiḡga* of the year 299 [of the Hegira] and he was thrown into prison, appointing as his minister Muhammad b. 'Abd

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<sup>105</sup> This should read "Abū 'Abd Allāh...".

Allah Allāh b. Yahya b. Khāqān, nicknamed “Daqqa sadrahu”, because when asked to do something, he used to beat his chest saying, “Yes, with great pleasure!”<sup>106</sup>

4. In the third year of the caliphate of al-Muqtadir there was made Patriarch of Jerusalem Leo. He held office for seventeen years and died. In Alexandria, the great church called “al-Qaysāriyyah” – i.e. the temple that Queen Cleopatra had erected and dedicated to Saturn – caught fire on Monday, 3 of the month of *Shawwāl* of the year 300 [of the Hegira].

5. In the month of *Rabīʿ al-ākhar* of the year 300 [of the Hegira] Abd Allah sent an officer named Habāsa at the head of a large army. Habāsa occupied the city of Barqah, routing the soldiers of al-Muqtadir who were there, then he aimed at Alexandria, engaging the soldiers of al-Muqtadir in Alexandria in a tough battle. Habāsa routed them and occupied Alexandria. He then sent a detachment to al-Fayyūm and to al-Bahnasā<sup>107</sup> and occupied them. He wrote to Ubayd Allāh<sup>108</sup> to inform him about what was happening, and Ubayd [Allah] sent his son Abūʿl-Qasim (In another copy it says ‘Abd ar-Rahmān’) at the head of a great army to support Habāsa. Takin al-Khassah was governor of Egypt. Al-Muqtadir sent al-Qāsim ibn Simā to help with a group of officers, as well as the eunuchs Muʿnis and Hawa. They went to al-Gizah and asked for the help of the people, recruiting about a hundred thousand armed men. [Habāsa] moved against them with his army, and the others also deployed, ready for battle. The battle between the two sides took place in an district of al-Ġazīrah known as “Ard al-Khamsin”. Habāsa was put to flight, and his servants were killed and hunted down by the population. Then Habāsa’s soldiers marched back and fell upon the people and killed all those whom they came across. It was already evening and night separated them. Of the people there were about twenty thousand killed, and of the men of Habāsa ten thousand. During the night, the men of ‘Ubayd Allāh reassembled, and cryers went around to recall the population. Abūʿl-Qāsim returned to the Maghrib with his men and his army.

6. Al-Muqtadir withdrew his favour from Ali ibn Muhammad b. ‘Ubayd Allāh b. Yahya b. Khāqān on Monday, 10th of the month of *al-Muharram* of the year 301 [of the Hegira], and appointed as his minister Ali b. Al-Garrāh, who he then dismissed in the month of *Dhūl-hiġġa* of the year 303 [of the Hegira]. Ali b. Muhammad b. Al-Husayn b. Al-Furāt was brought out of prison and appointed as minister. Then he dismissed him, and again put him in prison in the month of *ġumādā al-awwal* of the year 304 [of the Hegira], appointing as his minister Hāmid ibn al-‘Abbās.

7. In the year 307 [of the Hegira] Abūʿl-Qāsim ibn ‘Ubayd Allāh moved from the Maghrib at the head of one hundred thousand men and captured Alexandria. The people of Egypt were terrified. He then conquered al-Fayyūm, al-Bahnasi, and the island of al-Ashmuriyyin.<sup>109</sup> Learning of this, al-Muqtadir sent the eunuch Muʿnis with a large army. The armies encamped at al-Gizah. Then Ubayd Allah arose and sent one hundred warships, eighty of those called humuli<sup>110</sup> and twenty of those called ushāriṇī,<sup>111</sup> who docked at Rosetta. Muʿnis wrote al-Muqtadir, informing him of the fact. Al-

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<sup>106</sup> Pirone does not explain this nickname, instead referring to the reader to another source. I would infer that the label is obscene.

<sup>107</sup> Oxyrhynchus.

<sup>108</sup> Called ‘Abd Allah a little earlier.

<sup>109</sup> Probably “al-Ashmūnayn”, the classical Hermopolis or Mercurii oppidum, now in the district of Rawdah in the province of Assiut.

<sup>110</sup> I.e. transport or cargo vessels, also known as markab hamla or markab hammāl.

<sup>111</sup> Lighter vessels, seemingly used for transfer of goods and people from cargo ships to shore.

Muqtadir sent the eunuch Thamāl with fifty warships. Thamāl confronted them, and destroyed the fleet by burning it. Most of the men were killed, others drowned, many others surrendered pleading for protection. He then sent the latter to Misr. When they arrived, the people said to them, “Whoever of you is a kutāmī<sup>112</sup> should separate himself from the Sicilians, the Africans, and the Tripolitanians.” The Kutāmiyyūn were set aside: they were about five hundred. Then they attacked them and killed them in a place called “al-Muqass”, without saving anyone, in the vilest and most repugnant manner. Mu’nis stayed with his army at al-Gizah for two years, and dug a moat around his camp. Abū’l-Qāsim ibn ‘Ubayd Allah was camped at Alexandria and soon marched in the direction of al-Fayyūm. The eunuch Mu’nis wrote to the eunuch Thamāl to take his ships to Alexandria – in fact it was known that in Alexandria there were only three thousand soldiers of Abū’l-Qāsim – to evacuate the population, and to prevent anyone from entering. When he arrived in Alexandria with his ships, Thamāl sent around his cryer, announcing that no one could stay in Alexandria beyond the third day, on penalty of death. The inhabitants left their furnishings and everything they possessed, closed the doors of the house, and left Alexandria as if going for a walk. Thamāl transported them on his ships to the island known under the name of “gizat Abi Qir”. Many of them were drowned in the Nile while others, about two hundred thousand men, women and children, died of hunger and thirst in rural villages and at al-Fustāt. The country was reduced to a ruin, depopulated as it was. Thamāl acted in this way so that Abū’l-Qāsim would find no place to take refuge if he returned from al-Fayyūm. Later the eunuch Mu’nis gathered his army and went against him while he was still at al-Fayyūm. He routed them, killed the men and laid hands on their possessions and everything they had. Abū’l-Qāsim ibn ‘Ubayd Allāh fled with his followers and returned to al-Qayrawān in the month of *Dhū’l-hiġġa* of the year 308 [of the Hegira]. After these events the eunuch Mu’nis stayed at that place for another two months, then returned to Baghdad, leaving in Egypt [as governor] Hilāl b. Badr. As for Alexandria, the survivors of those who had fled returned, and the city returned to life.

8. King Leo contracted a serious illness, and fearing that he was to die soon, sent for the Patriarch Nicolas, who he had dismissed, reconciled with him and returned him to his office. He then removed the patriarch Anthimus,<sup>113</sup> and relegated him to a monastery in Constantinople, where he remained for two years and died. King Leo bore his illness for several months, until he died. After him there reigned over Rum his brother Alexander. He reigned seven years and died. After him reigned over Rūm Constantine, son of Leo.<sup>114</sup> He was twenty-three years old (in another text it says “thirteen years”). His mother Augusta administered the empire. The King of the Bulgars sent to ask Constantine to give his sister to his son, but Constantine did not consent. There were many wars between the king of Rūm and the king of the Bulgars. Observing such a continuous succession of wars between the two, Nicholas, patriarch of Constantinople, had good reason to fear that they might destroy each other. He therefore called for an officer of the king named Domitius<sup>115</sup> and joined him to Constantine as emperor. He then took Domitius’ daughter and gave her to Constantine. Constantine, Domitius and Christopher, the son of Domitius, were recognized as the

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<sup>112</sup> The Kutama tribe were Berbers, and supported the Fatimids against the Aghlabids.

<sup>113</sup> I.e. Eutymius I.

<sup>114</sup> Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus.

<sup>115</sup> Pirone suggests a confusion of consonants in the Arabic for Romanus, i.e. Lecapenus.

three kings of the Rūm, and together administered the Empire. Domitius gave his daughter to the king of Bulgars and the wars ceased.<sup>116</sup>

9. Al-Muqtadir withdrew his favour from his minister Hāmid b. al-‘Abbās and had him killed in the month of *Rabi’ al-awwal* of the year 321 [of the Hegira].<sup>117</sup> He released Ali b. Ahmad (sic!) b. al-Furāt and appointed him as his minister, nine days before the end of the month of *Rabī ‘al-ākhar* of the year 311 [of the Hegira], for the third time. The Muslims of ar-Ramlah rioted, and destroyed two churches of the Melchites, namely the church of St. Cosmas and the church of St. Cyril. They also damaged the churches of Ascalon and Caesarea, in the month of *ġumādā al-ākhar* of the year 311. The Christians complained to al-Muqtadir, to allow them to [re]build what had been destroyed. Then the Muslims of Tinnis rose up and demolished a church of the Melchites from Homs at Tinnis, called “Būthawr’s Church”, in the month of *Raġab*. Afterwards, Christians [re]built the church of Tinnis, but before they had finished the Muslims rioted for a second time and destroyed what they had built, setting it on fire. The sultan then gave his support to Christians so that they could complete the [re]building of the church. Al-Muqtadir withdrew his favour from his minister Ali b. Muhammad b. Al-Furāt and had him killed together with his son Muhassin in the month of *Rabi’ al-awwal* of year 312. Al-Muqtadir appointed as his minister ‘Abd Allah in the month of *ġumādā al-ākhar* of the year 314 [of the Hegira].

10. The Muslims of Damascus rioted and destroyed the Church of the Catholics dedicated to the Blessed Mary. It was a majestic, beautiful and beautiful church, for the construction of which two hundred thousand dinars were spent. They looted all the vessels, ornaments, and drapes that were there. They also looted the monasteries, especially the convent of nuns which was beside the church. They demolished many churches of the Melchites and pulled down the Nestorian church, in the middle of the month of *Ragab* of the year 312 [of the Hegira].

11. ‘Ali b. ‘Isà was at Mecca. The minister Abd Allah wrote to him, that he should go to Egypt to see close up how things went. ‘Ali b. Isa entered Egypt at the beginning of the month of *Ragab*. He summoned the monks and bishops, and demanded that they pay the poll-tax for all the monks, the sick and the poor, and for all the monasteries who were in Lower Egypt, as well as for the bishops and monks who were in Dayr Mīnā. A group of monks then went to Iraq to al-Muqtadir and begged him to come to their rescue. [Al-Muqtadir] then wrote that no poll-tax was required from them, and that things would return to be as they always were. He then dismissed the minister Abd Allah b. Muhammad b. Khāqān and appointed as his minister Abū’l-‘Abbās Ahmad b. ‘Abd Allah b. Ahmad b. Al-Khasib in the year 313 [of the Hegira].

12. Nicholas, patriarch of Constantinople, died after holding office for thirty-three years. After him there was made patriarch of Constantinople Stephen.<sup>118</sup> He was a eunuch. He held office for three years and died.

13. A huge star appeared in the land of Egypt, whose rays were brilliant and very fast-moving, and behind it a sparkling tail, and an impressive flame of considerable size and strongly reddish colour. It

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<sup>116</sup> In fact Peter of Bulgaria, son of Simeon of Bulgaria, married the neice of Romanus Lecapenus.

<sup>117</sup> This should be 311 AH, as the next sentence makes clear.

<sup>118</sup> Stephen II, from 29 June 925 to 18 July 927.

ranged from north to east, nearly three hundred rods long,<sup>119</sup> and nearly two wide, like a snake. This happened at sunset, on Wednesday, 5th of the month of *Rabi` al-ākhar* of the year 313 [of the Hegira]. It lasted three hours, then went out.

14. The minister Abu'l Abbas ibn al-Khasib was dismissed and Ali ibn Isà b. al-Garrah was appointed minister. Then [al-Muqtadir] dismissed him and appointed as minister Abū 'Ali b. Muhammad b. 'Ali on the Thursday of the middle of the month of *Rabi` al-ākhar* of the year 316 [of the Hegira]. At Baghdad, the officers rose up against al-Muqtadir and decided to kill him. They were Abū'l-Hayḡā, Nazūk, and others. Al-Muqtadir, fearing for his own life, abdicated on the Saturday of the middle of the month of al-Muharram of the year 317 [of the Hegira]. Al-Muqtadir's brother, Muhammad b. Ahmad, was enthroned in his place. He sat on the throne for only the Sabbath and Sunday, for on Monday, the servants gathered, better known as the al-Masāffiyah,<sup>120</sup> killed Nāzūk and Abū'l-Hayḡā, returned the Caliphate to al-Muqtadir, removed Muhammad ibn Ahmad and sent him back to his home with all honours. In Egypt there was such an indescribable invasion of grasshoppers that they prevented, by their multitude, the sun's rays falling on the earth. The Egyptians had never seen similar grasshoppers. The grasshoppers devastated their vineyards, all the fruit trees, the palms and the leeks, and the gardens and the vineyards were reduced to complete devastation. This took place in the month of *Rabi` al-awwal* of the year 327 [of the Hegira]. (In another text it says "of 317".)

15. In Yamāmah<sup>121</sup> and in Bahrain, there arose a rebel called Sulayman ibn Hasan, better known as Abū Sa'id al-Gānābi (268), who marched on Basra, conquered it, and destroyed it, making a great massacre of the inhabitants. From there he moved to Kūfa, occupied it, and killed the population, taking away a great booty. Then he went on and camped near Baghdad, in a place called "Tell 'Arqūf". There were many battles between him and the soldiers of al-Muqtadir, but, unable to get what he wanted, he returned to Kūfa in the year 313 [of the Hegira]. Then he filled with earth, in order to block them, the water wells that were scattered along the road leading to Mecca and the lowlands. The people of Baghdad and Khurāsān saw themselves thus forced to forgo the pilgrimage, for fear of him, while those of Egypt and Syria continued to make it. It was the 7th of the month of Dhū'l-higga of 317 [of the Hegira] and many people were intent on doing their pilgrimage, when al-Gannābi with his men fell upon Mecca and entered it. Around the Ka'bah, in the mosque and in the markets, he killed such a multitude of people as to fill with corpses the Well of Zamzam.<sup>122</sup> Even the valleys, the streets, the houses and the deserts were full of corpses. Of those who had escaped escape, some were killed by the desert Arabs who deprived them of what they had, others fled to Jedda and took to sea. Al-Gannabi<sup>123</sup> was insatiable of these incalculable riches and furnishings, and he laid his hands on all the gold and silver that was inside the Ka'bah. On the door of the Ka'bah there were silver plates: he prised them off and took them. In a corner of the Ka'bah, outside, there was a black stone that people worshiped and kissed, imploring blessings from God: he removed it and took possession of it. He stayed at Mecca for seven days, stripping it of everything he found. Then he returned to his country, making pilgrimage impossible [to Mecca].

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<sup>119</sup> The Italian word for "rods" is "aste". I have no idea how long this is supposed to be.

<sup>120</sup> A special group of palace slaves.

<sup>121</sup> In central Arabia.

<sup>122</sup> A well in the mosque area south of the Kaaba, 72 feet deep.

<sup>123</sup> Jedda is "Gedda" in the Italian; perhaps al-Gannabi should be al-Jannabi?

16. Elias, Patriarch of Antioch, died, on Saturday, 13th of the month of *gumādā al-ākhar* of the year 317 [of the Hegira]. He had held office for twenty-eight years. Muhammad ibn ‘Ali b. Muqla was dismissed as minister on a Tuesday, eleven days before the end of the month of *gumādā al-awwal* and there was appointed as minister Sulaymān ibn al-Hasan b. Makhlad on Thursday, thirteen days before the end of the month of *ġumādā al-awwal*, of the year 318 [of the Hegira]. He was dismissed eight days before the end of the *raġab* month of year 317.<sup>124</sup> There was made minister ‘Ubayd Allah b. Muhammad al-Kaddāni on Saturday, six days before the end of the month of *Ragab* of the year 319 [of the Hegira] and he was dismissed. There was appointed as minister al-Hasan ibn al-Qasim b. ‘Ubayd ad-Dīn Sulaymān b. Wahb on Saturday, three days before the end of the month of *Shawwāl* of the year 319 [of the Hegira] and he was nicknamed ‘Amīd ad-dawla b. Wali ad-dawla. He was dismissed and there was appointed as minister Abū’l-Fadl b. Ga’far b. al-Furāt b. Khayzurānah, on Sunday, three days before the end of the month of Rabi al-ākhar of the year 320 [of the Hegira]. His genealogy was derived from his mother, because it was his mother who was called Khayzurānah.

17. As for the Rūm, Christopher, son of Domitius, died and Domitius embraced the monastic life. Constantine alone remained in the government of the empire. Stephen, patriarch of Constantinople, died after having held office for three years. There was made patriarch of Constantinople Atrānfinūs.<sup>125</sup> Christodoulos, Patriarch of Alexandria, died on Wednesday, eleven days before the end of the month of *Dhul-qa’da* of 320,<sup>126</sup> or November 25, 649 of the era of Diocletian. He was buried at Fustāt-Misr. He had held office for twenty-six years and six months. He was buried in the church of [St] Michael. The officers who were stationed in Baghdad rose up against al-Muqtadir, along with the eunuch Mu’nis and provoked rioting against him. [Al-Muqtadir] went out against them to fight against them, but they killed him and with his head, hoisted on top of a spear, they went around the city. It was the Wednesday, two days before the end of the month of *shawwāl* of the year 320 [of the Hegira]. His caliphate lasted twenty-four years, eleven months and fifteen days. His minister was al-Fadl b. Ga’far b. al-Furat.

18. The Patriarch of Constantinople [Tryphon] died after having held office for three years. There was made patriarch Dumniyūs, his own son, called Brufilaqta.<sup>127</sup> He was an eunuch and he was twenty-two years old.

### CALIPHATE OF AL-QĀHIR (320-322/932-934).

1. *The bay’ah* was given to al-Qāhir bi’llāh Muhammad b. Ahmad al-Mu’tadid on Thursday, the last day of the month of *Shawwāl* of the year 320 [of the Hegira]. He named as his minister Muhammad b. ‘Ali b. Muqla.

2. In the first year of his caliphate, there was made patriarch of Alexandria Sa’id ibn Batrīq,<sup>128</sup> the physician, a native of of Fustāt-Misr, and later called Anba Euty chius, on Thursday 13th of the month of Safar of the lunar year 321.

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<sup>124</sup> Should be 319.

<sup>125</sup> Tryphon, who held office 927-31 AD.

<sup>126</sup> I.e. 22-23 November, 932 AD.

<sup>127</sup> Theophilus, 933-56 AD.

<sup>128</sup> I.e. Euty chius himself, who held office 7 Feb. 933-11 May 940.

## CALIPHATE OF AR-RĀDĪ [BI'LLĀH] (322-329/934-940).

1. The *bay'ah* was given to ar-Rādī, i.e. Abū'l-`Abbās Muhammad b. Al-Muqtadir, on Wednesday 6 *ḡumādā al-awwal* of 322 [of the Hegira]. He named as his minister Muhammad b. Muqla.

2. In the first year of his caliphate there was made patriarch of Antioch anba Theodosius, i.e. Stephen, the scribe who was in Baghdad with the eunuch Mu'nis, in the month of Ramadan of the year 323 [of the Hegira]. On the 3rd of the month of *dhū'l-qada* of that year, there was a frightening earthquake in Egypt and a confused movement of falling stars.

3. Muhammad ibn Tu'g<sup>129</sup> fled to Barqah with a group of officers and people. Then they gathered and returned to Alexandria while those in the city fled to the Gulf of Rosetta. Ibn Tughğ sent an army with his brother Abu'z-Zafar at the head. He repulsed them in the year 304 [of the Hegira],<sup>130</sup> killing some of them and making some of them prisoners. The people then returned to Alexandria.<sup>131</sup>

4. Ar-Rādī withdrew his favor from his minister Muhammad b. Ali and appointed as his minister 'Abd ar-Rahmān b. 'Isa in the year 324 [of the Hegira].

5. On Palm Sunday of the year 325 [of the Hegira] the Muslims made an uprising against the church of Jerusalem, focusing on the southern gates of the church of Constantine and the portico.<sup>132</sup> The patriarch was from Ascalona, had two sons and two daughters and was called Christopher.<sup>133</sup> The fire occurred in the first Easter of his period of patriarchy. [The Muslims] also attacked the Place of the Skull and the Place of the Resurrection.<sup>134</sup> In year 325 [of the Hegira] ar-Rādī removed his favour from 'Abd ar-Rahmān b. 'Īsā and dismissed him, appointing as his minister al-Fadl b. Ga'far. In the year 326 [of the Hegira] there was a satisfactory truce between the Rum [and the Muslims]. That same year Theophilus, patriarch of Constantinople, sent his own message to the patriarchs of Alexandria and Antioch asking them to mention their name in their prayers and in their masses, as this was no longer done from the time of the Umayyads. They welcomed his request.

6. Here ends the book of Sa'īd ibn Batrīq the doctor, namely Eutychius the Melchite, who became patriarch of the city of Alexandria in the year 321 of the Islamic Hegira at the age of sixty lunar years. But if you want to know the date of the beginning of this book and from when it is composed, start your calculations from this date, i.e. from the day when Sa'īd ibn Batriq became patriarch, i.e. from the 8th of the month of Safar of the year 321 of the Islamic Hegira. May God keep us in good health!

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<sup>129</sup> This is Muhammad b. Tughğ al-Ikhshīd, founder of the Ikhshid dynasty who controlled Egypt for three decades.

<sup>130</sup> Should read 334.

<sup>131</sup> This paragraph doesn't make sense, as far as I can see. The Italian is: "Muhammad ibn Tu'g (284) fuggì a Barqah assieme ad un gruppo di comandanti e al popolo. Poi si riunirono e fecero ritorno ad Alessandria mentre quelli che si trovavano in città fuggirono verso il golfo di Rosetta. Ibn Tughğ mandò un esercito con a capo il fratello Abū'z-Zafar. Costui li sgominò nell'anno 304 /dell'ègira/ (285), in parte uccidendoli e in parte facendoli prigionieri. La popolazione fece così ritorno ad Alessandria."

<sup>132</sup> Pirone: Recorded in PG 111, 1155-6: "The Muslims set fire to the basilica of Constantine while the patriarch was officiating. The episode is commemorated in the Jerusalem calendar on March 24th.

<sup>133</sup> Probably Christodoulos is meant here. If so, this means that Eutychius omits the reign of Athanasius I, his predecessor.

<sup>134</sup> Cf. PG 111, 1083.



The book has been completed with the help of God Most High, O munificent King.

## Version Control

Version Number	Date	Changes
0.1	30 March 2024	Combined all blog posts into single Word document.