

APPENDIX I

Translations of Selections from Ibn Hazm's *Kitāb al-Faṣl fī al-Milal wa al-Ahwā' wa al-Niḥal*¹

This appendix consists of two parts. The first part is the translation of the author's introduction to the book. The second part provides translation of the first few pages of the section on Jews. The third part gives a detailed table of contents of the section on the contradictions of Torah and other Biblical books, which occupies two-thirds of the book's section on Jews.

Part I

Introduction [vol. 1, pp. 35-42]

In the name of Allah, the Most Compassionate, the Most Merciful.

May Allah bless our master Muḥammad and his family and companions, and give [them] peace.

The shaykh, the unique Imam, the memorizer, the noble, helper of the religion, Abū Muḥammad 'Alī ibn Aḥmad ibn Sa'īd ibn Ḥazm, Allah be pleased with him, says:

All praise is due to Allah. May Allah bless His slave and messenger, Muḥammad, the seal of the prophets, morn and eve, and give him peace.

To proceed: numerous people have written too many books regarding the division of people into religions and regarding their beliefs. Some wrote excessively long [books], committed mistakes and [caused] confusion. This prevented understanding and denied [the reader] knowledge [of the contents]. Others omitted and wrote briefly, and ignored many of the strong objections of those who held the beliefs [being studied]. [Such a scholar] was unjust when he himself would not accept such deception in explanation, and was oppressive towards his opponent when he did not fulfill his right of objection. [Such a person] was also neglecting the right of the one who would read his book because he would not be able to prove the falsehood of the other with [such a book]. All of them [the above-mentioned authors], barring very few, wrote in such a convoluted way that it was difficult for most people of understanding to understand their writing. [These authors also] made the meanings so disconnected that the ending of the statement would make one forget the beginning. Most of this occurred from them as veils hiding the incorrectness of the content. Thus, this was unbecoming of them, then and later.

Abū Muḥammad, Allah be pleased with him, says: we collected this book of ours, along with seeking guidance from Allah, the Exalted and Mighty, regarding its compilation. We intended by it to mention the evidences which are derived from sensorial premises, or which refer back to sense, either directly or indirectly (*min qurb aw min bu'd*). [We did this] in accordance with establishment of such proofs which do not contradict the origin from which they are derived for a certain end. [We did this also] so that, of it, only the above-mentioned proofs would be valid. The reason is that there is no truth but this. We have excessively engaged in verbal description and in giving up convolution. We did this, hoping for a great reward from Allah, the Exalted and Mighty, over this. He is the patron of whomsoever seeks Him as his patron, and He gives to the one who seeks from him. There is no god but He. Allah is sufficient for us and He is the best disposer of affairs.

¹ I am using the following edition: Abū Muḥammad 'Alī ibn Aḥmad Ibn Ḥazm al-Andalusī, *al-Faṣl fī al-Milal wa al-Ahwā' wa al-Niḥal*, edited by Muḥammad Ibrāhīm Naṣr & 'Abd al-Raḥmān 'Umayrah, (Beirut: Dār al-Jīl, 1982).

Abū Muḥammad, Allah be pleased with him, says: we say, [acknowledging] that all success is from Allah, that the root of all the sects differing from the religion of Islam are six. Then, each of these sects divides into [many more] sects. We will mention the majority of them, Allah willing.

The six we mentioned are [listed below] in degree of their distance from us:

1. The first of these are those who deny realities. These are the ones whom the *mutakallimūn* call al-Sūfastā'iyah (Sophists).
2. The second of these are those who accept realities but say that the world is pre-eternal, and it does not have an originator or a manager.
3. The third of these are those who accept realities, and who consider the world to be pre-eternal and that it has a pre-eternal manager.
4. The fourth of these are those who accept realities. Some of them consider the world to be pre-eternal; others consider it to be contingent. But they all agree that the world has multiple pre-eternal managers, and that they are more than one. They disagree regarding their [managers'] number.
5. The fifth of these are those who accept realities. They consider the world to be contingent. They consider it to have one pre-eternal manager. However, they deny all prophet hood.
6. The sixth of these are those who accept realities. They consider the world to be contingent. They consider it to have one pre-eternal manager. They also accept prophet hood. However, they disagree regarding some prophets. So they accept some, but deny others.

Abū Muḥammad, Allah be pleased with him, says: between these opinions, other opinions occurred, which are derived from these primary ones, and are composed of them. There are some among them which some groups of people subscribe to such as those which hold the opinion of trans-migration of souls, or those who believe in the un-interrupted existence of prophet hood at all times, and that there are prophets in all types of animals. Examples of these also include some groups which I met and debated who held that the world is originated, and it has a pre-eternal manager, except that the *nafs* (soul), *makān muṭlaq* (mere space), which is space, and *zamān muṭlaq* (mere time) have also existed pre-eternally with Him.

Abū Muḥammad, Allah be pleased with him, says: this is the opinion on which 'Abdullāh ibn Khalaf ibn Marwān al-Anṣārī, 'Abdullāh ibn Muḥammad al-Sulamī, and Muḥammad ibn 'Alī ibn Abū al-Ḥusayn al-Aṣḥabī al-Ṭabīb debated with me. This is the opinion which is reported from Muḥammad ibn Zakariyyā al-Rāzī al-Ṭabīb. We have [written] a unique book regarding this, in response to him, and in critique of his book regarding that. It [the book] is known as *al-'Ilm al-Ilāhī* [Divine Knowledge]. Examples of these [also include] those people who hold that the *falak* (celestial sphere) is pre-eternal, that it is other than Allah Most High, and that it is the manager of the world, who acts in it. They did this out of awe for Him, claiming that it is beyond Allah, the Exalted and Mighty, to be described as doing something. Some of them referred to it [the pre-eternal manager] as *'arsh* (throne). Among these [opinions] is that which we do not know of anyone holding it, but from which not all of the opponents are safe from, when their proofs are applied against them. [Because then], they will be forced to hasten towards it. Therefore, Allah willing, it is necessary to mention those of them which the narrative will require.

An example of such [an opinion] is [the opinion] that the world is originated but it has no originator. With the power of Allah Most High, one must accept the existence of an originator after

discussing the existence of the originated. All success and help lies with Allah Most High, and there is no god but He.

Comprehensive Proofs Which Lead to Knowledge of Truth

[This is] a brief and concise chapter regarding the structure of comprehensive proofs which lead to knowledge of truth regarding all that people differ in, and the method of establishing it.

Abū Muḥammad, Allah be pleased with him, says: we thoroughly presented this chapter in our book known as *al-Taqrīb fi Hudūd al-Kalām* [Limits of Speech Made Easy]. We have examined it thoroughly for you over there. All praise is to Allah, Lord of the worlds. However, we will mention here a sufficient portion [of it] so that it can be an introduction to that which comes after it of those [beliefs and ideas] that people disagree in. [It will be found,] Allah willing, [that such differences] refer back to it [this introduction]. Thus, we say, and all success is with Allah.

Man comes out to this world while his soul has lost all memory. This is according to the one who says that it had memory before that. Or [he comes out] while it never had any memory. This is according to the one who says that it is originated then, or that it is a newly-occurred mixture (*mizāj*). [There is this difference of opinion regarding pre-birth] except that this much is known [with everyone agreeing] that the child has no memory or discernment at the time of its birth, except that which all animals have, viz. only sensation and intentional movement. Thus, you see it contracting its legs and stretching them, and turning its limbs according to its power. It feels pain when it senses cold or heat or hunger, and when it is hit or pinched. Apart from that, it has those features which are common to both animals and those growing beings that are not animals, such as seeking food for the preservation of its body as it is, and for its growth. Thus, it naturally suckles and discerns it with its mouth and not from the rest of its limbs. This is similar to how leaves of trees and plants take moistness of the soil and water for the preservation of their bodies as they are, and for their growth. Thus, when the soul becomes strong, according to the one who says that it is a mixture, or that it is originated then; or when it begins to remember its memory and discernment, according to those who say that it had memory before that or that it is [like] someone who recovered from sickness, then the first discernment which occurs for it, which makes the rational animals (*ḥaywān nāṭiq*) unique is, understanding of that which it perceives through its five senses. These are like the following: its knowledge that good smell is naturally pleasing and bad smell is naturally repulsive; its knowledge that red is different than green, yellow, white, and black; [its knowledge of] the difference between rough and smooth, and between compact, dispersed, and stretched, and between hot, cold and warm; [its knowledge of] the difference between sweet and sour, between bitter, salty, and acrid, between spicy and bland, and between sweet and acrid; and [its knowledge of] the difference between sharp sound and a thick one, and between soft, joyful and dreadful [sounds].

Abū Muḥammad, Allah be pleased with him, says: So these are the perceptions of the senses for what they sense.

The sixth perception is its [soul's] knowledge of given facts of reason [*badhiyyāt*]. Among these is its knowledge that a part is smaller than the whole. Thus, when a small child who has just achieved discernment is given two dates, he cries but if he is given three, he is pleased. This is his knowledge that the whole is greater than the part, even though he is unable to delineate what he knows of that. Among that is his knowledge that two contradictory things cannot occur together. Thus, if you force him to stand, he cries and argues to sit down, knowing that he cannot be standing

and sitting at the same time. Among that is his knowledge that a single body cannot be in two places [at the same time]. Thus, if he intends to go to some place, and you forcibly stop him, he cries, and says something to the effect that “let me go.” [He does this] knowing that he cannot be in the place where he wants to go, as long as he is in one place. Among that is his knowledge that two bodies cannot be in the same space. Thus, you see him arguing to be in the place in which he wants to sit, knowing that that place is not enough for him as long as whatever is in it is still there. Thus, he pushes whoever is in that place in which he wants to sit, because he knows that as long as that which occupies that space is there, it is not enough for him. If you say to him, “give me that which is in this wall,” while he does not perceive it, he will say, “I don’t see it.” This is because of his knowledge that long is greater in measurement than that which is shorter than it. You see him walking towards something that he wants to get to. This is because of his knowledge that a finite [body] is limited and is crossed by traversing, even though he is unable to delineate what he knows of it properly. Among that is his knowledge that no one knows the unseen. Thus, if you ask him about something he does not know, he denies it, and says, “I do not know.” Among that is his distinguishing between truth and falsehood. Thus, if he is told of some report which you find happening sometimes, he will not accept it until he considers it to be strengthened by another person’s reporting it. Then, he will accept it, and will be satisfied with it. Among that is his knowledge that something can only occur in some time. Thus, when you mention some matter to him, he will ask “when was it?” If you say to him, “why did you do such and such?”, he will say “when was I doing that?” This is because of his knowledge that everything in the world does not exist except in time. He knows that things have natures and essences (*māhiyyāt*), which limit them and they do not transgress them. Thus, you see that when he sees something which he does not know, he says: what is this thing? When it is explained to him, he is satisfied. Among that is his knowledge that an action cannot take place except by some doer. Thus, when he sees something, he says “who did this?” He is not satisfied at all [if told] that it happened without a doer. If he see something in someone else’s hand, he says “who gave him that?” Among that is his knowledge that a report is either true or false. Thus, you see him denying some of that which he is told, while accepting some, and pausing in some.

All of this is observed in all people from the time they begin to grow up.

Abū Muḥammad, Allah be pleased with him, says: these are the first principles of intellect/beginnings of intellect (*awā’il al-‘aql*) in which people of intellect do not differ. Here, there are other things as well which we did not mention; if they are investigated, they will be found, and each person of intellect will discern them in himself and others. No one knows how in any way did he acquire knowledge of all of these things?

A person of sound discernment will not disagree that all of these things are correct, and there is no doubt regarding them. Only someone whose intellect is afflicted by a calamity, and whose discernment is corrupted or who has inclined towards one of the corrupted opinions, will doubt in these things after having sound knowledge of them. This will also be a calamity which befalls his discernment, such as the calamity which afflicts someone who has cholera. Thus, such a person finds honey bitter. [Similarly,] the one who is beginning to experience eye disease, sees things which are unreal. It is similar to all the calamities which afflict the senses.

Abū Muḥammad, Allah be pleased with him, says: these are the valid premises which we mentioned, in which there is no doubt. No one will find room here for demanding a proof for them except a crazy person or an ignorant person who does not know the realities of things, and someone

from whom the child is more guided. This is a matter, admitting to which, is common to the young and old of all of the children of Adam, peace be upon him, in the [many] regions of the world, except the one who deceives his sense, and contradicts his intellect, thus joining the crazies. The reason is that deduction for something cannot be, except in some time. It is necessary that this be known in the beginning of intellect because it is known by necessity of intellect that everything in the world does not exist except in some time. There is no moment at all between the first time of discernment of intellect in this world and between its perceiving all that we mentioned. It is neither a minute, nor less or more. Therefore, there is no way to seek proof for it because there is no time in which seeking a proof for it would be possible. Thus, it is proven that these are necessarily known things which Allah Most High puts in the soul. There is no way to reason at all except with these premises. Nothing is proven valid except by testing it with them. Thus, whatever any of these premises testify to as being valid, is valid and certain; and whatever's validity they do not testify to, is null and void. It is true that sometimes, referring to these premises is direct and sometimes indirect. That which is direct is clearer to every soul, and is easier to understand. Whenever the above-mentioned premises go farther, the process of deduction becomes difficult, until one commits that mistake, except the one with strong power of understanding and discernment. Just as that [the above-mentioned] premise is true, that which refers back to it is also true. It cannot be objected to. There is no difference between them in that they are true. This is similar to numbers. Whenever, the numbers are less, it is easier to add them, and mistake does not occur in it. When the numbers increase, and the process of adding them also increases, then it becomes difficult such that mistake occurs in it except in the case of an expert mathematician. Whatever is near to it or far from it, is all true. We do not differentiate between any of that. Neither does any premise among them as mentioned by us contradicts any other premise of them, nor does it contradict that whose validly refers back to another premise of them. All of this is known with certainty. Because of the knowledge of the soul that unseen is not known, it is necessarily valid that it is not possible that someone narrates a long false report, and then another person who has not heard it narrates the exact same report, without increasing or decreasing in it. The reason is that if that were to be possible, then the narrator of such a report would be knower of the unseen because this is knowledge of the unseen itself, which is reporting about *mukhbar 'anhu* (about which the report is being given) as it really is. If that is the case without a doubt, then whatever report two or more different people about whom we can be certain that they did not get together or discuss, narrate and do not disagree in it, then it is necessarily known that it is true and certain, and its being unseen is definitive. Through this, truth of the death of the one who dies, of the birth of the one who is born, the removal from power of whomever is removed, assumption of power of whoever takes power, sickness of whoever falls sick, recovery of whoever recovers, catastrophe from among catastrophes, the lands distant from us, events and kings, the prophets, peace be upon them, their religions, the scholars and their opinions, and the philosophers and their wisdom, is necessarily known. Anyone whose intellect has given him his full share has no doubt regarding anything which we mentioned. And Allah Most High give success.

Part II

About the Jews, Those Christians Who Reject Trinity, [About] the Religion of the Sabians, and [About] Those Magians Who Accept the Prophet hood of Zoroaster and Reject Other Prophets, Peace Be Upon Them, Besides Him. [vol. 1, pp. 177-180]

Abū Muḥammad, Allah be pleased with him, says: the people of this religion, i.e. the Jews, and the people of this sect, i.e. those Christians who reject trinity, agree with us in accepting oneness of God, the prophet hood, the signs [miracles] of prophets, peace be upon them, and the sending down of books from Allah, the Exalted and Mighty. However, they disagree with us regarding some prophets, peace be upon them, and not others. Similarly, the Sabians and Magians agree with us in accepting some prophets, and not others. As for the Jews, they are divided into five sects. These are as follows:

1. Al-Sāmiriyyah (Samaritans): They say that the blessed city (*madīnat al-quḍs*) is Nablus, which is eighteen miles from Bayt al-Maqdis. They do not know any sanctity for Bayt al-Maqdis, and they do not respect it, and they have a Torah other than the Torah which is in the hands of all the Jews. They deny all the prophet hoods (*nubuwwāt*) which existed among the Children of Israel after Mūsā, peace be upon him, and Yūsha‘, peace be upon him. They deny the prophet hood of Sham‘ūn, Dāwūd, Sulaymān, Ish‘iyā, al-Yasa‘, Ilyās, ‘Āmūš, Ḥabqūq, Zakariyyā, Irmiyā, and others. They do not accept resurrection at all. They are located in Syria. They do not consider it permissible to leave it.
2. Al-Sadūqiyyah (Saducees): They are named after a person called Ṣadūq. Among all the Jews, they claim that al-‘Azīz [sic. ‘Uzayr?] is the son of Allah; Allah is beyond such things. They are found in the direction of Yemen.
3. Al-‘Anāniyyah (Karaites): They are the companions of the Jew, ‘Ānān al-Dāwūdī. The Jews call them al-Qarrāyīn (Karaites) and al-Mīn/al-Mayn. Their opinion is that they do not go beyond the laws of Torah, and that which is to be found in the books of the prophets, peace be upon them. They wash their hands of the opinion of the Rabbis (*al-aḥbār*), and deny them. This sect is found in Iraq, Egypt and Syria. In al-Andalus, they are found in Toledo and Talavera.
4. Al-Rabbāniyyah (Rabbanites): They are al-Ash‘aniyyah. They subscribe to the opinions of the Rabbis (*al-aḥbār*). Their religion is the religion of the majority of Jews.
5. Al-‘Īsawiyyah: They are the companions of Abū ‘Īsā al-Aṣbahānī, who was a Jewish man. He was in Isfahan. It has reached me that his name was Muḥammad ibn ‘Īsā. They believe in the prophet hood of ‘Īsā, peace be upon him, and of Muḥammad, Allah bless him and give him peace. They say that Allah, the Exalted and Mighty, sent ‘Īsā to the Children of Israel as is mentioned in al-Injīl, and that he is one of the prophets of the Children of Israel. They say that Muḥammad, Allah bless him and give him peace, is a prophet whom Allah sent with the laws of the Qur’an to the Children of Ismā‘īl, peace be upon them, and to all the Arabs, just as Ayyūb (Job) was a prophet among the Children of ‘Īṣ, and just as Bal‘ām was a prophet among the Children of Mu‘āb, as agreed to by all sects of the Jews.

Abū Muḥammad, Allah be pleased with him, says: I met many among the Jewish elite who subscribe to this opinion. I have read in [a book of] their history, which was compiled by an Aaronite man. He was among them in ancient times, and was among their elders and leaders, and among those who were surrounded by one-third of their city, by one-third of their wars, and one-

third of their armies during the period of the War of Titus and the destruction of the House. He had great affect during these wars. He was alive at the time of the matter of the Messiah (Jesus), peace be upon him. His name is Yūsūf ibn Hārūn. He mentioned their kings and their wars until he reached the [case of] the murder of Yaḥyā ibn Zakariyyā (John the Baptist), peace be upon him. He mentioned him in a beautiful manner, extolled his station, and [mentioned] that he was killed unjustly because of his true speech. He mentioned the matter of al-Ma‘mūdiyyah in a good way. He did not deny them or reject them. Then, while mentioning that king Hardūs ibn Hardūs, he says the following: it has been said that this king was among the wise men of the Children of Israel and was the best of the community. He did not mention the Messiah, son of Maryam, peace be upon them both, more than this.

Abū Muḥammad, Allah be pleased with him, says: I mentioned this statement because I think this opinion was dominant amongst them, and was wide-spread among their leaders from then until now.

The Jews altogether are divided into two groups: those who deny abrogation (*naskh*) [of Torah], and do not consider it possible, and the second type, who consider it possible but hold the opinion that it did not take place.

The main basis of those who deny abrogation is that it is impossible for Allah, the Exalted and Mighty, that He would command something and then forbid it. If that were the case then truth would become falsehood, obedience would become disobedience, falsehood would become truth, and disobedience would become obedience.

Abū Muḥammad, Allah be pleased with him, says: we do not know any other evidence for them besides this, and this is the weakest misrepresentation which has nothing to stand on. The reason is that the one who ponders over all of the actions of Allah Most High, and all of His rulings and commands in this world, will be certain of the falsity of this opinion of theirs. The reason is that Allah Most High gives life, and then gives death, and then gives life. He transfers power from a people whom He honored and then dishonored, to a humbled people whom He honors. He bestows whatever He wills of good and bad character upon whomever He wills. “He will not be asked about what He does and they will be asked” [Qur’an, 21:23].

Part III

Detailed Table of Contents for the Section on the Contradictions of Torah and other Biblical Books

This list is based on the list given by the editors of the edition under consideration. It is not clear whether Ibn Ḥazm himself made such headings in his work. The section on Judaism is from the beginning of p. 177 till the end of p. 329. Of this, the section on the contradictions of Torah and other Biblical books begins on p. 201 and lasts until p. 285. This is followed by a section on how Torah was corrupted, which begins on p. 287 and lasts until p. 329.

1. The Samaritan Torah
2. Lack of disagreement regarding the Jewish Torah
3. Discussion of rivers in Torah
4. Torah's claim that Adam is one of the gods
5. Section regarding Qābīl (Cain) and Hābīl (Abel)
6. Torah's discussion of Hābīl
7. Torah's claim that Allah's children took women [as sexual partners]
8. Confusion in Torah regarding human ages
9. Nūḥ's (Noah) giving blessing to his son Sām
10. Confusion in Torah regarding the actual ages of Nūḥ's sons and about the deluge/flood
11. Torah's opinion regarding the dispersion of the progeny of Ibrāhīm, peace be upon him
12. Torah's claim that the progeny of Ibrāhīm will rule the land between the Nile and Euphrates
13. Expulsion of Ibrāhīm from the land of the Kurds to a safe land
14. Ibrāhīm's meeting with the angels, peace be upon them
15. Glad tidings of the birth of a son to Ibrāhīm
16. Ibrāhīm asking his Lord to not destroy all of Lūṭ's people
17. Torah's claim that Lūṭ, peace be upon him, slept with his daughters
18. Pharaoh imprisons Sarah, the wife of Ibrāhīm, peace be upon him
19. Torah's claim that Ibrāhīm, peace be upon him, had more than one wife
20. Ishāq asking his son 'Īsū to hunt
21. Mention of Ya'qūb serving his maternal uncle Lābān and his marrying Rāḥīl
22. Ya'qūb returning from his journey with his wives
23. Ya'qūb's love for his son Yūsuf, peace be upon them both
24. Mention of the sale of Yūsuf, peace be upon him
25. Children of Ya'qūb born in Syria
26. Ya'qūb, peace be upon him, blessing his children
27. Torah informs of giving leadership to the children of Yahūdḥā
28. Sending Mūsā, peace be upon him, to the Pharaoh
29. Miracles of Mūsā, peace be upon him, in front of the Pharaoh
30. Mention of some of the miracles of Mūsā, peace be upon him
31. Confusion in Torah regarding the time the Children of Israel stayed in Egypt
32. The corrupted Torah describes God with words unsuitable for Him
33. Torah's description of the manna which came down from the sky

34. Anthropomorphism of Torah, and its describing Him with human attributes
35. Torah accuses Hārūn, peace be upon him, of making the calf
36. God responds to Mūsā's, peace be upon him, beseeching [Him] to forgive the Children of Israel
37. God's demand that Mūsā and his people go to Palestine
38. Torah's claim that Allah promised Mūsā that he will see Him from His back and not from His face
39. Confusion in books of the Jews regarding their number at the time of their exodus from Egypt
40. Torah's mentioning of the Israelite tribes who left Egypt
41. Israelites desire for earthly vegetables
42. Opposition of Hārūn and Maryam to Mūsā, peace be upon them
43. Mūsā's asking the tribes to go out to the holy land
44. Mūsā's asking his people to not listen to the claim of prophet hood

APPENDIX II

Translations of Selections from al-Shahrastānī's *Kitāb al-Milal wa al-Niḥal*²

This appendix consists of two parts. The first part is the translation of the author's introduction to the book. The second part begins with the author's introduction to his sections on the people of the book. This is followed by the translation of the section on Jews.

Part I³

Introduction [vol. 1, pp. 17-20]

Praise be to Allah, that is due from all the grateful, a fullness of praise for all His blessings, a praise that is abundant, pure and blessed as is His due. May Allah bless Muhammad, the chosen one, the messenger of mercy, the seal of the prophets, and his pure family; a blessing lasting till the Day of Judgment, just as He blessed Ibrāhīm and the family of Ibrāhīm. Indeed, He is worthy of all praise, the Majestic.

To proceed: when Allah Most High gave me the power to study the beliefs of people of the world, i.e. people of religions and creeds, and people of opinions and sects, [and gave me the power] to become aware of their sources and their applications/relevance, and to acquire their important and obscure facts, I intended to gather all of it in a brief volume which would encompass what religionists follow, and which plagiarists claim to profess, as a warning to the one who reflects, and as a reflection for the one who draws a lesson.

Before delving into my main purpose, I must present five premises.

1. First Premise regarding the general types of the people of the world.
2. Second premise regarding the principle on which the number of Islamic sects is based.
3. Third premise regarding the first doubt that occurred regarding the caliphate, who was its source, and who brought it to light?
4. Fourth premise regarding the first doubt that occurred in the Islamic *millah* (religious community), the situation of its differentiation, who was its source, and who brought it to light?
5. Fifth premise regarding the cause which necessitated the organization of this book mathematically.

The First Premise Regarding the General Types of the People of the World

There are those among people who divide people of the world according to the seven regions [of the world]. [Such people] assign each region its share of varied natures and dispositions which are indicated by the colors [of their skins] and languages.

There are those among them who divide people according to the four directions, which are east, west, south and north. [Such people] assign each direction its share of varied natures and different laws.

² I am using the following edition: Abū al-Faḥ Muḥammad ibn 'Abd al-Karīm al-Shahrastānī, *Kitāb al-Milal wa al-Niḥal*, edited by Amīr 'Alī Mahnā & 'Alī Ḥasan Fā'ūr, (Beirut: Dār al-Ma'rifa, 1993).

³ For this part, I have consulted Kazi and Flynn's translation of *Kitāb al-Milal wa al-Niḥal*'s chapters on Muslim sects. See A. K. Kazi & J. G. Flynn, *Muslim Sects and Divisions: The Section on Muslims Sects in Kitāb al-Milal wa al-Niḥal by Muḥammad ibn 'Abd al-Karīm al-Shahrastānī*, (London: Kegan Paul International, 1984), 8-10. The responsibility for this translation, nevertheless, is mine.

Then, there are those among them who divide them according to nations. Thus, they say that the great nations are four: Arabs, Persians, Romans, and Indians. Then, they make pairs between nations, saying that Arabs and Indians are close to one another to the extent of being on a single religion. They [Arabs and Indians] are generally interested in determining the particular characteristics of things, and in judgment regarding the rulings of essences and realities, and pursuing spiritual matters. The Romans and Persians are close to one another to the extent of being on a single religion. They [Romans and Persian] are generally interested in determining the natures of things, and in judgment regarding rulings of conditions and quantities, and pursuing physical/material matters.

Then, there are those among them who divide them according to opinions/beliefs. That is our purpose in compiling this book. According to the foremost correct division, they [people of the world] are divided into people of religions and religious communities, and people of opinions and creed.

Examples of those who just follows religions are Magians, Jews, Christians and Muslims. Examples of those who follow desires and opinions are philosophers, *Dahriyyah* (atheists), Sabians, worshippers of stars and idols, and Brahmins.

Each of these are divided into sects. The opinions of those who follow desires are not limited by a known number. However, the number of sects of those who follow religions is limited by the report [of the Prophet (Allah bless him and give him peace)] regarding it. Thus, the Magians were divided into seventy sects; the Jews into seventy-one sects, the Christians into seventy-two sects, and the Muslims into seventy-three sects. Those who will be delivered (*nājiyah*) are always one of the sects because truth is only one when considering two opposing propositions. When there are two opposing and contradictory propositions, then they must be divided into true and false. Thus, the truth will be in one of them and not the other. It is rationally impossible to declare two contradictory opponents to be right and truthful.

Since, truth in every rational issue is one, therefore, in all issues, truth must be with one sect as well. We know this through transmitted evidence. The revelation informs us of this in the divine statement: “from among those whom We created is a nation who guide by the truth and dispense justice by it” [Qur’an, 7:181].

The Prophet, blessings and peace be upon him, said: “my nation will divide into seventy-three sects. Only one of them will be delivered; the others will perish.” It was said: who are the delivered ones? He said: “those of the way/example (*sunnah*) and community.” It was said: what is the way/example and the community? He said: “That upon which I am and my companions are.”

The Prophet, blessings and peace be upon him, said: “a group from my nation will always be dominant upon the truth until the day of resurrection.” He, blessings and peace be upon him, [also] said: “my nation will not agree on misguidance.”

Part II

Chapter 2: People of the Book [vol. 2, pp. 13-24]

Those who are outside of the straight religion (*al-millah al-ḥanīfiyyah*) and the Islamic law but who follow some law, rules, and limits (*ḥudūd wa a'lām*), are divided into those who have an actual book like Torah and Injīl (Gospel). These are the ones whom the revelation refers to as the people of the book. [The second category is of] those who have something akin to a book, such as the Magians and the al-Mānawiyyah (Manichaens). This is so because the books (*ṣuḥuf*) of Ibrāhīm, peace be upon him, were raised to the sky because of things that the Magians caused. This is why it is permissible to establish a treaty and relationship of *dhimmah* with them, and they are to be treated the way Jews and Christians are treated because they are from among the people of the book. However, it is not permitted to inter-marry with them, nor to eat their slaughtered [animals] because the book was raised from them.

We will first mention the people of the book because of their precedence due to the book, and later we will mention those who have something akin to a book.

The People of the Book and the Un-lettered Ones (*Ummiyyūn*):

The two sects who opposed each other before the prophetic mission (*mab'ath*) were people of the book and the un-lettered ones. An *ummī* is the one who does not know how to write. The Jews and Christians were in Madinah while the unlettered ones were in Makkah.

The people of the book supported the religion of the tribes (*asbāt*), and followed the religion of the Children of Israel. The unlettered ones supported the religion of the tribes (*qabā'il*) and followed the religion of the Children of Ismā'īl. The light which had come from Adam, peace be upon him, to Ibrāhīm, peace be upon him, spread and then from him it was passed on to two sections; a section in the Children of Israel and a section in the Children of Ismā'īl. The light which came from him to the Children of Israel was apparent, while the light which came from him to the Children of Ismā'īl was hidden. The apparent light was known from the appearance of individuals (*ashkhāṣ*) and from the appearance of prophet hood in a person. The hidden light was known from the appearance of rituals [of the annual pilgrimage], signs and its concealment in individuals.

The *qiblah* (direction to turn to for worship) of the first group was Bayt al-Maqdis, and the *qiblah* of the second group was the sanctified house of Allah which was erected for people in Makkah as a blessing and a guidance for the worlds.⁴ The law of the first [group] was apparent rulings, and the law of the second was observance of the sanctified rituals. The opponents of the first group were non-believers like Pharaoh and Hāmān, while the opponents of the second were polytheists like worshippers of idols. Thus the two groups are symmetrical and the division is valid in terms of these two opposing dimensions.

The Jews and the Christians are from among the two main nations of the people of the book. The Jewish nation is greater because the law was Mūsā's (peace be upon him), and all of the Children of Israel submitted to it, and were obligated to follow the rulings of Torah.

The Injīl that was sent down to 'Īsā, peace be upon him, did not comprise rulings, and did not include permissible and the impermissible. Rather, it was signs and examples, and reminders and admonishments. As for the other rulings and laws, they had to be in accordance with Torah, as we shall explain. For this reason, the Jews did not submit to 'Īsā, son of Maryam, peace be upon her. They claimed against him that he was obliged to follow Mūsā, peace be upon him, and to be in

⁴ This is an obvious reference to the Qur'anic verse [3:96].

agreement with Torah, but that he had changed and altered. They counted these changes [as proof] against him. Amongst these was changing of the Sabbath to Sunday, and changing of eating pork while it had been impermissible in Torah. These also included circumcision and bathing, and others.⁵

The Muslims have explained that the two nations have changed and altered. Otherwise, ‘Īsā, peace be upon him, was confirming that which Mūsā, peace be upon him, had brought, and that both had given glad tidings of the coming of our Prophet Muhammad, the prophet of mercy, may the blessings of Allah be upon them all. Their leaders, their prophets and their books had commanded them of that. Their ancestors had built forts and castles near Madinah only for helping the Messenger of Allah, the Prophet of the end times. They [their leaders] commanded them [the Jews] to migrate from their lands in Syria to these castles and these areas, until when the truth appeared and was manifest in Fārān, and then migrated to the abode of migration, they abandoned him and gave up helping him. That is [contained in] the divine statement: “Before they used to seek victory [through him] against the disbelievers. But when that which they recognized came to them, they disbelieved in him. The curse of Allah be upon the disbelievers” [Qur’an, 2:89].⁶

The disagreement between the Jews and the Christians would not have been removed except with his judgment because the Jews used to say “the Christians have nothing to stand on” [Qur’an, 2:113], and the Christians used to say “Jews have nothing to stand on, while they [both] recited the book” [Qur’an, 2:113]. The Prophet, Allah bless him and give him peace, used to say to them: “You have nothing to stand on unless you establish Torah and Injīl” [Qur’an, 2:68]. It was not possible for them to establish them except through establishing the Wise Qur’an, and through the judgment of the Prophet of mercy, the Messenger of the end times. When they refused that and rejected the signs of Allah, “they were struck with wretchedness, and they incurred the wrath of Allah. That is because they used to deny the signs of Allah...” [Qur’an, 2:61].

Section 1: The Jews

Hāda al-rajul means he returned and repented. This name stuck with them because of the saying of Mūsā, peace be upon him: “Indeed we return to You, i.e. we return and beseech [You].”

They are the nation of Mūsā, peace be upon him. Their book is Torah, which is the first book sent down from the sky. By that I mean that whatever was sent down upon Ibrāhīm and other prophets, peace be upon them, was not called *kitāb* (book); rather [they were called] *ṣuḥuf* (scrolls). A tradition has been reported from the Prophet, Allah bless him and give him peace, that he said: “Indeed, Allah created Adam with His hand, and created the Garden of Eden with His hand, and wrote the Torah with His hand.” Thus, he proved a specialty for it over the rest of the books. It comprised *asfār* (books). Thus, the beginning of creation would be mentioned in the first *sifr*. Then the rulings and limits, and conditions and stories, and sermons and reminders would be in different *asfār*.

Tablets (*alwāḥ*), which were like an abridgement of that which is in Torah, were also sent down upon him. They comprised practical and theoretical types. Allah Most High says: “and We

⁵ It seems these claims are from the Jews of later times against the Christians, and by extension, against ‘Īsā, peace be upon him. Author’s statement in the next paragraph suggests that.

⁶ The translations of Qur’anic verses throughout this document are based on Muftī Taqī ‘Usmānī’s and Prof. Abdel Haleem’s translations with some modifications on my part. See Muftī Taqī ‘Usmānī, *The Meanings of the Noble Qur’an with Explanatory Notes*, (Karachi: Maktaba Ma‘ārif al-Qur’an, 2007) and M. A. S. Abdel Haleem, *The Qur’an: A New Translation*, (London: Oxford University Press, 2005).

wrote advice of every kind for him in the tablets” [Qur’an, 7:145]. This is a reference to the whole theoretical type. [He Most High also says]: “and explanation of all things” [Qur’an, 7:145]. This is a reference to the whole practical type.

They say:⁷ Mūsā, peace be upon him, used to inform Yūsha‘ ibn Nūn, his deputy [*waṣiyy*] and servant, who established the matter after him, of the secrets of Torah and the tablets, so that he would inform the children of Hārūn. The reason is that the matter was shared between him and his brother Hārūn, peace be upon them both. This is so because He Most High said regarding Mūsā, peace be upon him, regarding his prayer when he first received the revelation: “and make him share my task” [Qur’an: 20:32]. He was his deputy. When Hārūn died in the lifetime of Mūsā, the deputyship was transferred to Yūsha‘ ibn Nūn as a trust so that he would pass it on to Shabbīr and Shibr, the two sons of Hārūn, [where it was supposed] to reside. This is so because some forms of deputyship [*waṣiyyah*] and leadership [*imāmah*] are stable while others are a trust.

The Jews claim that *Sharī‘ah* (law) can only be one. It began with Mūsā, peace be upon him, and ended with him. There was no *Sharī‘ah* before him except rational limits and useful [ad-hoc] rulings.

They do not permit *naskh* (abrogation of divine command) at all. They say: there can be no *Sharī‘ah* after him at all because abrogation in commands is *badā’* (God changing His mind because of new information that was previously unknown to Him), and *badā’* is not possible for Allah Most High.

Their [theological] issues revolve around the permissibility/possibility or otherwise of abrogation, and upon the permissibility/possibility or otherwise of anthropomorphism (*tashbīh*), and upon believing in free will or compulsion, and upon the possibility or impossibility of rescission (*raj‘ah*).

As for abrogation, it is as we mentioned earlier.

As for anthropomorphism, this is because they found Torah filled with ambiguous ideas such as image, handshake, speaking aloud, descending upon Mount Sinai [Ṭūr] as a [physical] transfer, establishment on the throne as a permanent residence, and the possibility of being seen above, and others.

As for believing in free will, they disagree regarding it like the disagreement of the two parties in Islam. The Rabbanites are like the Mu‘tazilah among us, and the Karaites are like the Mujbarah⁸ and the Mushabbihah (anthropomorphists) among us.

As for the possibility of rescission (*raj‘ah*), this occurred for them only because of two matters. One of these is the report of ‘Uzayr, peace be upon him, when Allah caused him to die for a hundred years, and then resurrected him. The second is the report of Hārūn, peace be upon him, when he died in Tih. They had accused Mūsā of murdering him with his tablets. They said, he was jealous of him because the Jews were more inclined towards him than Mūsā. They disagreed regarding his death. There were some of them who said that he died and will soon return, and there were some of them who said that he has gone into hiding and will soon return.

It should be known that all of Torah comprised indications and signs [declaring] that the *Sharī‘ah* of our prophet, the chosen one, peace and blessings upon him, is true, and that the one

⁷ Here, he is apparently referring to the Jews.

⁸ Mujbarah is another name for the Qadariyyah, which was an Islamic sect that believed that humans do not have a free will.

who brings that *Sharī'ah* is [also] truthful. However, they altered it and changed it either through alteration in terms of writing and image, or in terms of exegesis and interpretation.

The most obvious of these is the mention of Ibrāhīm, peace be upon him, and his son Ismā'īl, his prayer for him and for his progeny, and God's acceptance of it [saying] I have blessed Ismā'īl and his progeny, I have placed all good in them, I will dominate them over all nations, and I will soon send in them a messenger from among them who will recite My verses upon them.

The Jews acknowledge this matter, except that they say: Allah accepted his prayer for kingdom and not for prophet hood and messenger-ship.

I forced⁹ them to accept [our argument by saying] that the kingdom which you accept [for him], was it kingship with justice and truth or was it without them? If it was not with justice and truth, then how is He reminding Ibrāhīm, peace be upon him, of a favor upon his children whereas it was tyranny and oppression. And if you accept justice and truth in terms of kingdom, then it is necessary that the king should be truthful with respect to Allah Most High in what he claims and says about Him. How can someone who lies against Allah Most High be a person of justice and truth because there is no oppression worse than lying against Allah Most High? Thus, in his denial is his tyranny, in tyranny is removal of favor with blessing, and that is non-fulfillment of promise.

It is strange that it is said in Torah that the descendants (*asbāt*) from the Children of Israel used to refer to tribes (*qabā'il*) from the Children of Ismā'īl, and they knew that there is such divinely provided knowledge (*'ilm ladunnī*) in those people, which Torah does not contain. It is mentioned in histories that the Children of Ismā'īl were called family of Allah (*Āl Allāh wa Ahl Allāh*), while the Children of Israel were called family of Ya'qūb, family of Mūsā, and family of Hārūn. This is a great defect (*kasr*).

It is mentioned in Torah that Allah came from Mount Sinai (Ṭūr Sīnā'), and appeared at Sā'īr, and manifested at Fārān. Sā'īr refers to the mountains of Bayt al-Maqdis which was the place of appearance of 'Īsā, peace be upon him, and Fārān refers to the mountains of Makkah, which was the place of appearance of the Chosen One, Allah bless him and give him peace.

Since the divine secrets and divine lights regarding revelation, prayer and interpretation are of three levels: beginning, middle and perfection; and [since,] arrival (*majī'*) is similar to beginning, appearance (*zuhūr*) is similar to middle, and manifestation (*i'lān*) is similar to perfection; therefore, Torah referred to the rising of the morning of *Sharī'ah* and revelation as coming from Mount Sinai, it referred to the rising of the Sun as appearance on Sā'īr, and referred to reaching perfection as zenith and manifestation on Fārān. These words contain the proof of the prophet hood of 'Īsā, peace be upon him, and that of Muḥammad, the chosen one, Allah bless him and give him peace.

The Messiah (Masīḥ) has said in Injīl: I have not come to nullify the Torah; rather I have come to complete it. The one who brought Torah said: "a soul for a soul, an eye for an eye, a nose for a nose, an ear for an ear, a tooth for a tooth, and wounds are to be retaliated for." I say: "if your brother slaps you on your right cheek then put [forward] your left cheek for him."

The last *Sharī'ah* came with both the matters. As for retaliation, this is in the divine statement: "retaliation is prescribed for you in cases of murder" [Qur'an, 2: 178]. As for forgiveness, it is in the divine statement: "forgiveness is closer to God-fearingness" [Qur'an, 2: 237].

⁹ This suggests al-Shahrestānī had engaged in debates with Jews.

Torah's rulings contain rulings for apparent and general management, while Injil contains rulings for inward and specific management. The Qur'an has both types of management. [Thus,] "there is life for you in retaliation" [Qur'an,] refers to realization of apparent management, while the divine statements "forgiveness is closer to God-fearingness" [Qur'an, 2: 237] and "forgive and enjoin good and turn away from the ignorant" [Qur'an, 7:199] refers to realization of internal management. The Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, has said: "it is that you forgive the one who oppresses you, and you give to the one who denies you, and you join [ties of kinship] with the one who cuts them from you."

It is strange that the one who sees someone else confirming what he has and perfecting it and raising it from one level to another, how it is permissible for him to deny him?

In reality, abrogation is not nullification; rather, it is perfection. Torah contains general rulings, and those that are specific to individuals or eras, and when the era ends, these must end as well. This cannot be called nullification or *badā'*. The same is the case here.

As for the Sabbath, if the Jews [only] knew that the obligation was not observance of the Sabbath. Whose day is it? With respect to which condition or time is it? [If they knew this] they would have known that the last *Sharī'ah* is the truth, and that it has come to confirm the Sabbath and not nullify it. They are the ones who transgressed with respect to the Sabbath such that they were mutilated as monkeys, and were despised. They admit to it and to that Mūsā, peace be upon him, built a house and drew in it images and individuals, and explained the levels of images, and pointed at those signs. However, when they could not find the door i.e. the door of forgiveness, and it was not possible for them to climb over the habits of thieves, they were confused and lost, and wandered in confusion. Thus, they divided into seventy-one sects.

Of these, we will mention the most famous and the most apparent among them. We will leave the rest. And Allah alone gives success.

1. Al-'Anāniyyah:

These are attributed to a person called 'Anān ibn Dāwūd, who was the *Ra's al-jālūt* (exilarch, i.e. the head of community during its captivity).¹⁰ They differ from all the Jews with respect to the Sabbath and the festivals. They forbid eating birds, deer, fish and locusts. They slaughter the animal on the nape. They confirm 'Īsā, peace be upon him, in his advices and signs. They say he did not oppose the Torah at all; rather, he affirmed it, and called people towards it. [They also say that] he was from the Children of Israel who submitted to the Torah, and was from among those who responded to Mūsā, peace be upon him. [They say all this] except they do not accept his prophet hood and his messenger ship.

Among them, there are those who say that 'Īsā, peace be upon him, did not claim that he is a prophet sent from on high. [They also claim] that he is not from the Children of Israel, and that he did not bring a *Sharī'ah* which abrogated the *Sharī'ah* of Mūsā, peace be upon him. Rather, he is from among the sincere friends of Allah, who knew the rulings of Torah. [They also say] that Injil is not a book sent down upon him as a revelation from Allah Most High; rather, it is a collection of his accounts from his beginning until his perfection. It was only gathered by four of his companions (*hawāriyyūn*); therefore, how can it be a revealed book?

¹⁰ This was the title used for the official head of the Jewish community under Muslim rule. See Camilla Adang, *Muslim Writers on Judaism and the Hebrew Bible: From Ibn Rabban to Ibn Hazm*, (Leiden: Brill, 1996), 77.

They say: the Jews transgressed when they denied him at first while they did not recognize him, and [they transgressed when] they killed him at the end while they did not know his place or his importance. The mention of Mashīḥā occurs in Torah in a number of places. That is the Messiah (al-Masīḥ). However, it does not mention prophet hood or an abrogating *Sharī'ah* for him. Fārqaḻīt, who is a knowledgeable man is mentioned [in it]. Similarly, he is mentioned in the Injīl. Therefore, it is obligatory to interpret it to refer to that which is found. Only the one who claims otherwise has to prove it.

2. Al-‘Īsawīyyah:

They are attributed to Abū ‘Īsā Ishāq ibn Ya‘qūb al-Asfahānī. It has been said that his name was ‘Ūfīd Aloḥīm i.e. worshiper of Allah. He was in the time of al-Manṣūr. His call began during the time of the last of the Umayyad kings, Marwān ibn Muḥammad al-Ḥimār. A large number of Jews followed him, and claimed for him signs and miracles. They [also] claimed that when he was fought, he drew a line around his companions with a myrtle stick, and said: stand in this line, and the enemy will not be able to hurt you with weapons. The enemy would attack them until they reached the line [but then] would retreat from them out of fear of the magic or the spell which he had perhaps placed. Later, Abū ‘Īsā came out of the line alone on his horse, and fought. He killed a lot of Muslims and [then] went to the companions of Mūsā ibn ‘Imrān who were across the sandy river to make them hear the speech of Allah. It has [also] been said that when he fought the companions of al-Manṣūr, him and his companions were killed.

Abū ‘Īsā claimed that he was a prophet and the messenger of the awaited Messiah. He claimed that the Messiah would have five apostles before him who would come one after another. He claimed that Allah Most High had spoken to him, and had given him the responsibility to free the Children of Israel from the hands of the transgressing nations and oppressing kings. He claimed that the Messiah is the best of the children of Adam, and that he was above the previous prophets in rank, and because he [Abū ‘Īsā al-Asfahānī] was his apostle; therefore, he was superior to everyone as well. He claimed that it was obligatory to confirm the Messiah. He would give great importance to the call of the caller. He also claimed that the caller was the Messiah.

In his book, he forbade all kinds of sacrifice, and forbade eating of any living being, be it a bird or animal. He made ten prayers mandatory, and commanded his companions to establish them and to remember their times. He opposed the Jews in many of the rulings mentioned in Torah.

The Torah of the people is the Torah which thirty rabbis gathered for some king of Rome so that every ignorant person would not tamper with its rulings. And Allah alone gives success.

3. Al-Maqāribah and al-Yūdh‘āniyyah:

They are attributed to Yūdh‘an from Hamadān. It has been said that his name was Yahūdḥā. He used to exhort [people] to asceticism and increase in prayer, and forbade them from meats and wines. Among the things reported from him is exalting the matter of the caller. He used to claim that Torah has an outward and an inward, a revelation and an interpretation. He opposed the generality of Jews with his interpretations. He opposed them in anthropomorphism (*tashbīḥ*), and was inclined towards free-will. He insisted that in reality, deeds belonged to the slave. [Therefore] the reward and punishment was based on it. He went to extreme in this regard.

4. Al-Mūshkāniyyah:

They are the companions of Mūshkān. He was on the way of Yūdh‘ān except that he considered it obligatory to go out [to fight] against his opponents, and ordained fighting against them. He went out among nineteen men, and was killed near Qom. It is mentioned from a group of Mūshkāniyyah that they considered the prophet hood of Muḥammad, the chosen one, peace and blessings be upon him, to be for the Arabs and all people except the Jews because they were [already] people of a religion (*millah*) and a book.

A group of Maqāribah claimed that Allah Most High had snatched away the prophets, peace and blessings be upon them, through an angel which He had chosen, and given him precedence over all creation and made him a successor over them. They say: all that is in Torah and all the books regarding attribute of Allah Most High, is [in fact] a report about that angel. Otherwise, it would not be permissible to describe Allah Most High with an attribute.

They say: the one who spoke to Mūsā, peace be upon him, was that angel, and the tree mentioned in the Torah was that angel. God Most High is exalted above speaking to any man. They interpret all that is mentioned in Torah viz, asking for vision, shaking hands with Allah, Allah came, Allah looked from the clouds, He wrote the Torah with his hands, He established Himself on the throne permanently, that He has the image of Adam, short curly hair, black hair extending to the ears (*wafrah*), that He cried over the flood of Noah until His eyes became swollen, that the Almighty laughed until His molar teeth showed, and so on, to refer to that angel. He said: it is permissible in custom that He sends a spiritual angel from among His closest group, and uses His name for him, and says: this is My messenger, and his position among you is that of My position [among you], that his word is My word, that his matter is My matter, and his dominance over you is My dominance. Thus is the situation of that angel.

It has been said that when Arnaūs said regarding the Messiah that he is Allah, and that he is the chosen of the world, he took his statement from them. They were before Arnaūs by four hundred years, and were people of asceticism and mortification.

It has been said that the one who made this statement was Benyāmīn al-Nahāwandī. He established this way for them, and told them that all of the ambiguous verses in the Torah were to be interpreted metaphorically, and that Allah cannot be described with human attributes, and that neither does He resemble any of His creation, nor does any of it resemble Him. [He also said] that these statements which appear in the Torah refer to that great angel.

This is similar to how coming [of God] in the Qur’an is interpreted to refer to an angel from among the angels. It is like what Allah Most High said regarding Maryam, peace be upon her, that “We breathed into her of Our spirit” [Qur’an, 21:91] and in another place “We breathed into him of Our spirit” [Qur’an, 66:12]. The one who breathed was only Jibrīl, peace be upon him, when he appeared before her in the form of a perfect man to give her [the gift of] a pure son.

5. Al-Sāmīrah

These people live in the mountains of Bayt al-Maqdis and in some villages in some districts of Egypt. They mortify themselves for purification more than the mortification of all the Jews. They accept the prophet hood of Mūsā, Hārūn, and Yūsha‘, peace be upon them, and deny the prophet hood of other prophets after them. They say that Torah gave glad tidings of only one prophet who would come after Mūsā, who would confirm the Torah before him, would judge according to it, and would not oppose it at all.

A person called al-Alfān appeared in al-Sāmīrah. He claimed prophet hood, and claimed that he is the one that Mūsā, peace be upon him, had given glad tidings of, and that he is the shining star, [about] which [it] is mentioned in the Torah that he will give light like moonlight, and that his appearance will be about a hundred years before the Messiah, peace be upon him.

The Sāmīrah divided into Dūstāniyyah, who are the Alfāniyyah, and the Kūstāniyyah. The meaning of Dūstāniyyah is “a separate denying group,” while Kūstāniyyah means “the truthful group.” They accept the hereafter, and reward and punishment in it; while the Dūstāniyyah claim that reward and punishment is in the world. There is disagreement between the two groups regarding laws and rulings.

The *qiblah* of the Sāmīrah is a mountain called Kuzayrīm, which is between Bayt al-Maqdis and Nablus. They say that Allah Most High commanded Dāwūd to build the Bayt al-Maqdis on the mountain of Nablus, which is the Tūr, on which Allah spoke to Mūsā, peace be upon him. Dāwūd changed it to Īliya’, and built the house there. He opposed the command, so he transgressed. The Sāmīrah apart from all the Jews, turn towards that *qiblah*. Their language is other than that of the Jews. They claim that Torah was in their language, which is closer to Hebrew than Syriac.

These four sects are the larger ones.¹¹ They [the Jews] were divide into seventy-one sects.

All of them agree that Torah gave glad tidings of one [prophet] after Mūsā. Their disagreement is only regarding the identification of that one person, or regarding increase over that one. Mention of the Mashīhā and his signs are apparent in the books (*asfār*). The appearance of one person in the end times who will be a shining star, through whose light the earth will lit up, is also agreed upon. The Jews are waiting for him. Sabbath is the day of that man. It is the day of [God] establishing [Himself over the throne] after creation.

All the Jews agree that when Allah Most High completed the creation of the heavens and the earth, He established Himself over His throne, lying down on His back, placing one of His feet over the other.

A group of them says that the six days in which Allah Most High created the heavens and the earth, were [actually] six thousand years because a day with Allah is like a thousand years of what you count, according to the lunar calendar. That is the time that has passed since Adam, peace be upon him, until our time. Through that the creation was completed. Then, when creation reached the end, the command began. From the beginning of command is establishment over the throne and completion of creation. That is not a matter which happened in the past; rather, it is in the future if we count the days in thousands.

¹¹ This statement seems to contradict the number of sects discussed above which is five. To resolve this, I consulted another edition of *Kitāb al-Mīlāl wa al-Niḥāl*, in which only four sects are discussed. The Mūshkāniyyah are listed as a sub-sect of the Maqāribah and the Yūdh‘aniyyah. See Abū al-Faḥ Muḥammad ibn ‘Abd al-Karīm al-Shahrastānī, *Kitāb al-Mīlāl wa al-Niḥāl*, ed. ‘Abd al-‘Azīz Muḥammad al-Wakīl, (Cairo: Mu‘assasat al-Ḥalabī wa Shurakah, 1968), 2: 21-23.