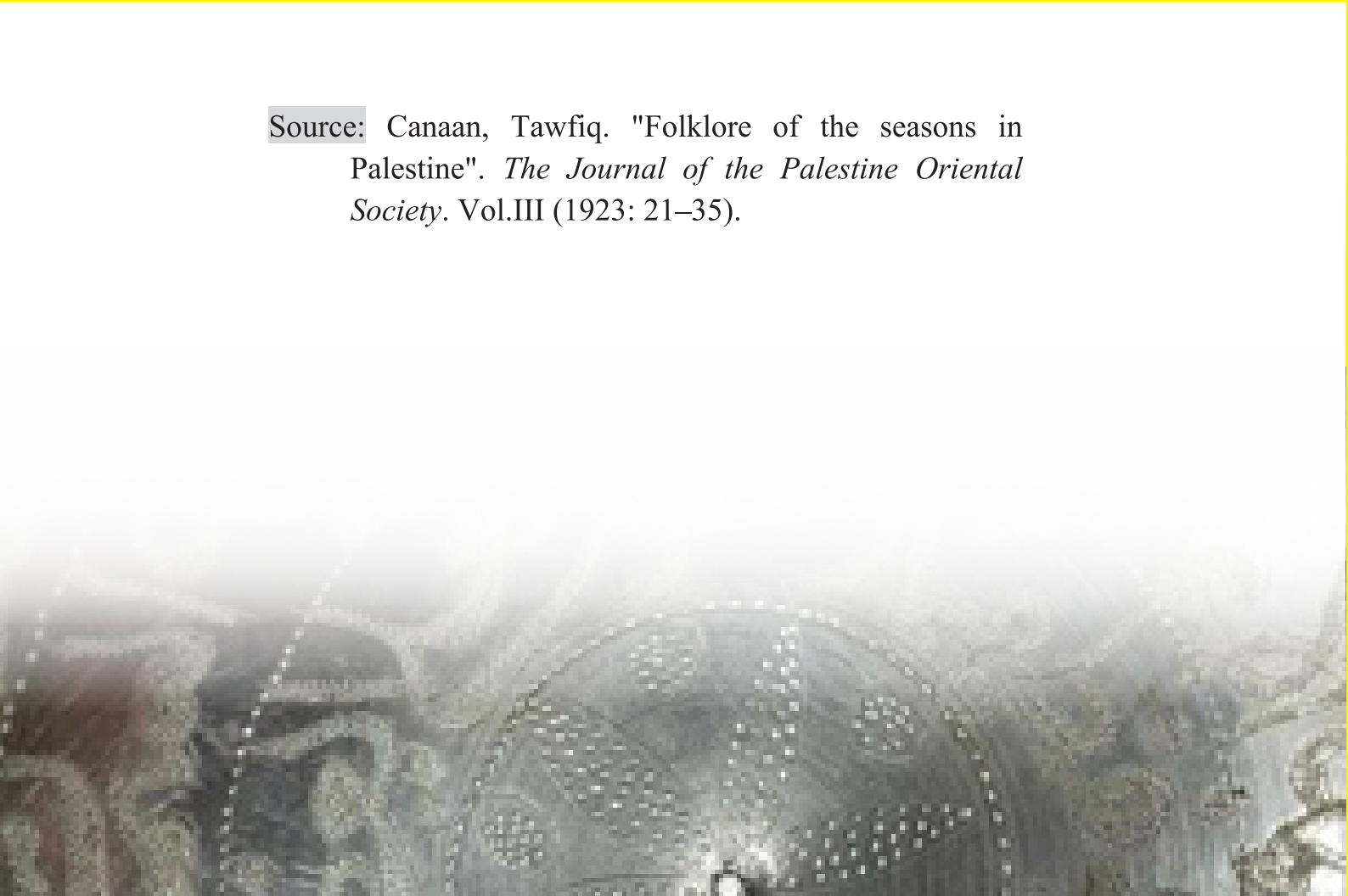


# مجموعه توفيق كنعان

## الموارد / منشورات توفيق كنعان

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## FOLKLORE OF THE SEASONS IN PALESTINE

T. CANAAN

(JERUSALEM)

IN the following paper I wish to describe some material concerning the "weather rules" of Palestine, which I have gathered since the publication of my article "Der Kalender des palästinensischen Fellachen"<sup>1</sup> and which were therefore not included in it. It may serve with the papers of Bauer,<sup>2</sup> Sonnen<sup>3</sup> and Stephan<sup>4</sup> as a supplement to the "Kalender".<sup>5</sup> In order not to repeat what has been already written, many proverbs or sayings will only be given with translation, without going into details about the weather itself.

Repeated enquiries about the names of the months used in Palestine elicited only the lists mentioned in the "Kalender". Some months bear different names in different places, as is noted by Stephan and Bauer (l. c.), but I have never found *two* Adjrads (as described by Bauer), one for November and the other for December. The name *Adjrad* (December) comes from *djarada*, "to strip, to peel", and means "the bare, stripped without vegetation," like trees stripped of all their leaves. An expression with this meaning which I heard from a woman in Jerusalem is: *el-adjrad biydjrid*<sup>6</sup> *eš-sadjar min*

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<sup>1</sup> Z. D. P. V. XXXVI, pp. 266—300.

<sup>2</sup> Z. D. P. V. XXXVIII, pp. 54—57: Bemerkungen zu Dr. Canaan's "Der Kalender etc."

<sup>3</sup> Landwirtschaftliches vom See Genesareth, *Das Heilige Land*, Heft 1, 1921.

<sup>4</sup> The Division of the Year in Palestine, J. P. O. S. pp. 159—170.

<sup>5</sup> A few details about the same subject are found in the following articles: *Blätter aus Bethlehem*, Bauer, "Volksleben im Lande der Bibel", pp. 112—120. Canaan, "Die Wintersaat in Palästina", Z. D. M. G. 70, pp. 164—178. The weather rules mentioned by Bauer are mostly taken from the *Blätter aus Bethlehem*. Sonnen does not give any literature.

<sup>6</sup> Or *bydjrid*.

*waraqūh u ba'd el-marrāt es-seneh min šitāh* = "December strips the trees of their leaves and sometimes (it strips) the year of its (the month's) rain."<sup>1</sup>

The Bedouin<sup>2</sup> believe that those who fall sick in January (*el-ašamm*) suffer long from their illness. The same belief exists with respect to animals: *fī kānūn el-ašamm bibauwil el-ehmār qēh u damm* = in January<sup>3</sup> the ass urinates pus and blood.<sup>4</sup>

In the *safārī* months (September, October and November) especially in the last two, the Bedouin take care not to eat much fatty food (*záfār*), as they are afraid of becoming sick.<sup>5</sup>

The name *hamīs* for April denotes the fifth month of the year (December being the first), just as *hamīs*, Thursday<sup>6</sup> is the fifth day of the week. I do not think that Bauer's supposition that the name *hamīs* for April comes from its first or second Thursday can be accepted. The following facts speak against the probability of this explanation:

1. The 4—6 special Thursdays do not always fall in this month.
2. In most cases Friday (*djum'ah*) is substituted for Thursday (*hamīs*), as will be noted later. Only in the case of *hamīs el-amwāt* does the word *hamīs* come more often than *djum'ah*. In *hamīs en-nabāt* both expressions are used equally. In all others only *djum'ah* is known.
3. The different Thursdays are not known in all districts where *hamīs* is used for April.<sup>7</sup>
4. If the Nebī Mūsā feast begins, as Bauer correctly says, eight days after *hamīs el-amwāt* and 15 days after *hamīs en-nabāt*, then his first statement "Seinen (Monats-)Namen hat er von seinem ersten Donnerstag, etc." can not hold true, since the Nebī Mūsā feast always coincides with the Greek Easter, which changes every year.

The various Thursdays, which, as I have already observed, are called much more often *djum'ah* = Friday, bear other names in the cities than they do among the *fellāhīn* or Bedouin. The celebration

<sup>1</sup> The latter part is not always included in this saying.

<sup>2</sup> Heard from the 'Idwān tribe (Transjordanian).

<sup>3</sup> *El-ašamm* = the deaf.

<sup>4</sup> Heard in Jerusalem.

<sup>5</sup> Bedouin.

<sup>6</sup> See *Mukīt el-mukīt* I, 594.

<sup>7</sup> Thus a man of 'Anātā did not know the Bedouin names of the months.



of the day—or in some cases only the preparation of the feast—always begins according to Oriental computation with the eve of the preceding day,<sup>1</sup> in our case (Friday) from the eve of Thursday,<sup>2</sup> and continues all day Friday. These twenty-four hours make up our Friday. *Lēlatu-djum'āh* (the night of Friday) means the night between Thursday and Friday.<sup>3</sup> Ramaḍān begins with the eve of the last day of Šabān and ends with the eve of its last day.<sup>4</sup>

Following are the different Fridays which bear different names and enjoy special celebration:

Order of Fridays	Compared with the Greek Easter	Names of Fridays in Jerusalem (and environs)	Names among peasants and Bedouin
first	14 days before Good Friday	<i>djum'et el-mnādāt</i> <sup>5</sup>	<i>hamīs</i> or <i>djum'et en-nabāt</i> <sup>6</sup>
second	8 days before Good Friday	<i>djum'et el-bēraq</i> <sup>7</sup>	<i>hamīs el-amwāt hamīs</i> or <i>djum'et el-bēd</i>
third	Good Friday	<i>dj. el-'elēmāt</i> <sup>8</sup>	<i>dj. el-maghrī</i> or <i>dj. el-haiwānāt</i>
fourth	8 days after Good Friday	<i>dj. er-raghāib</i> or <i>dj. el-halāwi</i> or <i>ed-dj. el-tāūli</i> <sup>9</sup>	
fifth	14 days after Good Friday	<i>dj. el-ghurabā</i>	
sixth	21 days after Good Friday	<i>dj. el-ḥazānā</i> <sup>10</sup>	

<sup>1</sup> This may account in some cases for the use of Thursday.

<sup>2</sup> Of course one should not take the word "eve" too strictly, for many festivals begin already in the afternoon.

<sup>3</sup> *Lēlat 'id eṣ-ṣalīb* means the eve preceding the feast itself.

<sup>4</sup> This shows that the criticism on p. 56, § 3 of Z. D. P. V. 1915 does not hold.

<sup>5</sup> It bears this name because it is announced on this Friday that the Nebī Mūsā feast will begin in eight days.

<sup>6</sup> This expression is not applied to the third Friday, which falls with Good Friday (as by Stephan).

<sup>7</sup> Also called *djum en-nazleh* (Stephan). The Nebī Mūsā flag is carried in great procession from the Omar mosque to the sanctuary.

<sup>8</sup> The expression *dj. el-'eleizm* (Stephan) is not much used. See for further details, Canaan, *Aberglaube u. Volksmedizin im Lande der Bibel*, p. 87.

<sup>9</sup> *Ed-djum'āh el-hāmigh* falls on the preceding week and not on this Friday. *'Id el-muntār* coincides with this Friday.

<sup>10</sup> It used also to be called *dj. en-nawar*, an expression which is at present unknown.

Many say that the three Fridays following *djum'et el-'elēmāt* are known collectively as *djuma' er-raghāyb* (the Fridays of desires), the first bearing this designation *par excellence*, while the last is known as *el-hazānā* (the Friday of the sorrowful). According to the people of Jerusalem only the first Friday bears the name of *djum'et er-raghāyb* (also *djum'et el-ḥalāwī*,<sup>1</sup> the Friday of the sweets<sup>2</sup>). In all three the peasants buy sweets to be distributed to members of their families and to others. On the first Friday the members of the family enjoy the sweets, on the second *djum'et el-ghurabā* (the Friday of the strangers) strangers, and on the third the "sorrowful" are presented with them. By "sorrowful" are meant widows and orphans, since they have no male support. It is to be noted here that this exact division, although known, is not preserved everywhere. The last week used to be called in Jerusalem *djum'et en-nāwar* (the Friday of the gypsies), but this expression is no longer known. The gypsies used to go in a body, dressed in their best clothes, to the mosque of Omar on this day.

Poor women or those having no male support are said to express their grief on such a day by the saying:

*fī djum'et er-raghāyb yāwēl illī djōzhā ghāyb*

"On the Friday of the desires woe to the woman whose husband is absent."

In *djum'et* (also called *ḥamīs*) *en-nabāt* the young unmarried girls go out Thursday afternoon to the fields and gather flowers and sweet-smelling herbs. In cutting the herbs they ask the plants:

*taqš<sup>3</sup> u-natš<sup>4</sup> šū dāwā er-rās yā šdjèrah*

"Crack and pull out—what is the remedy for the head,<sup>5</sup> O little tree."<sup>6</sup> These flowers are placed in water and left all night under the open sky, in order to be acted upon by the stars. This practice

<sup>1</sup> *Ḥalāwī* is a special kind of Oriental sweetmeat. The day bears this name because all peasants buy and eat sweets on this occasion.

<sup>2</sup> Some call it also *ed-djum'ah et-tawīleh* = the long Friday (week).

<sup>3</sup> *Taqš* comes from *taqaša* (unknown in either *Mūhit el-mūhit*. Hava, Kassāb and Hammām or Wāhrmund) is the sound made by cracking or breaking a twig or an egg against another.

<sup>4</sup> *Natš* is the popular name for "thistles" in general. I think that it is used here only for the assonance like *šādar maḍar* etc.

<sup>5</sup> I. e. for headache, as well as for growth of hair and beauty of complexion.

<sup>6</sup> Heard from a woman of Dêr Ghassāneh.

is known as *tandjîm*.<sup>1</sup> With this water they wash their hair on the following day (Friday) believing that it will grow thicker and longer. Some mix the water with their bath. They dress themselves afterwards in their best clothes and go out into the fields.<sup>2</sup> Many think that performing these acts will hasten their chances of marriage.<sup>3</sup>

A corruption of a well known proverb points indirectly to this day: *talâti bitâwilû el-'umr mašyak 'ala nabât*<sup>4</sup> *urukbak 'alâ eš-sâfinât u ahdak el-banât*

Three (things) will prolong thy life: walking on grass, riding on good horses<sup>5</sup> and taking girls (in marriage).<sup>6</sup>

In *djum'et el-amwât*, better known as *hamîs el-amwât*, the women of Jerusalem go on Thursday afternoon to the cemeteries to visit their dead. They take with them dyed eggs, sweets and even cooked food and meat. The greater part is distributed to the poor—who gather on such a day—as an *adjr*<sup>7</sup> (recompence). The meaning is that, since some help is given to the needy in the name of the deceased, God will reckon such an act in his favour. In some villages the women go before sunrise<sup>8</sup> to the cemetery, believing that a visit after this time is not so good. Soon after sunrise they go home.<sup>9</sup> The children of the peasants go on Thursday afternoon to the houses of their neighbours and beg: *a'ûnî bêda 'an amwâtkum*, “give me an egg in the name of your dead”. Those in the house give an egg, dried figs, raisins or a piece of bread. The children express their thanks with the words *allah yirhamhum*, God be merciful to them. This day, therefore, bears also the name *hamîs el-bêd* (Thursday of eggs).

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *Aberglaube u. Volksmedizin*, pp. 96, 126.

<sup>2</sup> The above description shows that only one part of this day's work falls on Thursday, while the greater part comes on Friday (evening, night and day).

<sup>3</sup> A man of Artâs assured me that all butter stowed up to this day must be boiled, else it will spoil.

<sup>4</sup> This word is substituted for *tabât* (firmly).

<sup>5</sup> The word represents “a horse standing on three feet and touching the ground lightly with the fourth” (Hara 392).

<sup>6</sup> The opposite is: Three things will shorten life: walking behind funerals, going through deserts, and marrying widows (or divorced women).

<sup>7</sup> Not *adjar* as Bauer has in *Z. D. P. V. XXXVIII*, 54. *Adjâr* = lease, rent; *adjrah* = wages, salary; *adjr ('ind allah)* = recompence (with God).

<sup>8</sup> As soon as the sun rises, the spirits disappear. Compare Gen. 32, 25.

<sup>9</sup> In Jerusalem the cemeteries are visited all day. It is customary for the relatives of the recently deceased to spend most of the day around his tomb.

In *djum'et el-haiwânât* better known as *djum'et el-maghrî* (but never as *hamîs*) the useful animals<sup>1</sup> (cows, horses, sheep and goats<sup>2</sup>) are dyed with red. The frontal portion, between the horns, is the part chosen for dying, but the horns and the back, especially of sheep, may also be dyed. All animals enjoy a yearly rest day. They are not sent to work, and the milk is not sold but used or distributed to the poor. *Lêlatu djum'ah* and Friday morning the animals are not milked. This is done about noon.<sup>3</sup> In some places even the jars where milk and its products (butter, sour milk, etc.) are stored, are dyed with *mighrî*. Cattle are protected on this day against serpent bites in the following way.<sup>4</sup> Living serpents are thrown into a mixture of boiling oil and water, and all is left for some time to boil. Every animal is touched on different parts with this solution, which is supposed to contain a prophylactic antitoxin. This procedure is known by the name *hawî el-halâl*.<sup>5</sup>

The other days—*dj. el-elêmât*, *dj. el-mnâdât*, *dj. el-bêraq*, *dj. el-hâmyéh*<sup>6</sup> etc.—need no description, since they have been fully described elsewhere. It is important to note that many local festivals, which are connected with a *welî* takes place on the third Friday (*dj. el-elêmât*).

Beside this division we should note another period which plays a minor rôle: The *mustaqrêdât* (the last three days of February and the four first of March)<sup>7</sup> are thought by some to be *ayâm el-husûm* mentioned in Sûrah 69, 7 of the Qorân. As is it thought that every child which is begotten in these days will be born either undeveloped or badly developed, all intercourse with women at that time is stringently forbidden.<sup>8</sup> Even trees which are pruned during these days will dry up.<sup>9</sup>

A variation to the rhyme given in the "Kalender", p. 279, relating what February says to March in these days is

<sup>1</sup> Mules and asses are generally not dyed.

<sup>2</sup> Sheep and goats are more often dyed than horses and cows.

<sup>3</sup> Heard from a man of 'Abwên.

<sup>4</sup> Heard from Omar Effendi el-Barghûthî.

<sup>5</sup> Halâl here means "cattle". It may also stand for "wife".

<sup>6</sup> These are never called *hamîs*.

<sup>7</sup> See "Kalender", l. c.

<sup>8</sup> Heard from inhabitants of Jerusalem, as well as from *fellâhîn*.

<sup>9</sup> Heard from a peasant of Artâs.

*aḍār yâ ibn 'ammî talâteḥ minnak u arba'ah minnî tanhallî wâdha  
ighannî*

March, my cousin, let three days of you and four of mine (unite in bringing so much rain) that we cause her (the village's, according to others the old woman's) valley to sing (i. e. much water will flow through the *wâdî*). The story relates that the old woman had her poor hut (*ḥarbūseh*) in the *wâdî*, and, as she cursed February, the above saying was uttered.

While *ṣawwâl* is also known by the name *ṣahr es-sitt ayyâm*, or *ṣahr es-sitteh* — the month of the six days (cf. Stephan), a very rarely heard name, *Radjab* is also called *ṣahr es-sitt* (the month of the lady, also a rare appellation) since it is believed that Faṭmeh, the daughter of the Prophet, gave birth to her children in this month.

Regarding Ramaḍân it is said: *inn 'aššar daššar*, i. e. if ten days pass, he (the month) will soon leave (close). Others divide it into three periods of ten days each:

*'ašarah maraq 'ašarah daraq<sup>1</sup> 'ašarah ḥalaq.*

Ten pass, (the other) ten (will) go quickly, (and the last) ten shave (i. e. finish) the month.

Let us now consider the weather rules from which the peasant tries to foretell the weather conditions on which he bases his work. We shall begin with the latter part of the autumn, which is really nothing but the period before the winter. The weather begins to get colder after the Feast of the Cross<sup>2</sup> as illustrated by the following rhyme:

*mâ lak ṣefiyât ba'd eš-ṣalîbiyât*

“You have no summers after the Feast of the Cross.”

At the same time any sign of winter at this early period is a good omen:

*inn barraqat 'alâ -š-ṣalîb mâ bitghîb,<sup>3</sup>*

“If there is lightning on the Feast of the Cross, it (the rain) will never depart.”

<sup>1</sup> See *Muḥîṭ el-muḥîṭ*.

<sup>2</sup> 14<sup>th</sup> of Sept., old style (Julian calendar).

<sup>3</sup> In Bêt djâlâ they say *barq iš-slaiyyib mâ bighayyib*. The lightning of the *slaiyyib* will not depart (except with heavy rain), i. e. it foretells good rain. The *slaiyyib* is the mountain to the N. E. of Bêt djâlâ.

Other sayings are:

*fī 'īd mār Ilyās biḥallaq el-ghēm,*

“On (about) the Feast of St. Elias<sup>1</sup> the clouds begin to be formed.”

*eilūl ṭarafuh biš-šitā mablūl*

“The end of September is wet with rain.”

When rain does not fall at its expected time everyone watches for clouds, which are its forerunners:

*lau biḍḍha tišti ghayyamat*

“If it intended to rain it would have become cloudy.”

Murkiness brings rain:

*mā biyu'qub el-ghabās illā er-ršās*

“Nothing follows murkiness except sprinkling.”

Some Christians believe that if it begins to rain on a Sunday the downfall will continue for some time:

*Inn ḥaddat maddat,* “If it (the rain) remains (falling all) Sunday, it (this condition) will continue.”

When the sun shines abnormally hot during the winter season it is thought—as this condition is unnatural—that it will be followed by rain, and it is called: *samsha marḥūmeh*. This expression means: “Its sun is followed by *raḥmeh* (mercy, an expression used at times figuratively for rain).<sup>2</sup> It may also mean: “Its sun is dead”. The Palestinian Arab never speaks of any dead person without adding: *il-marḥūm flān*, “N. N. treated with mercy”, or *raḥmet allāh 'alēh*, “N. N., the mercy of God be upon him”. I incline more to the first explanation, although both point to the idea that the sun must be followed by rain.

If the sun shines after a heavy rain it is said: *il-ḥardōn bilā'ib bintoh*, “the lizard plays with his daughter.”<sup>3</sup> This saying, which is used by children, tries to express the idea that reptiles leave their holes at this time.

Whenever it hails until a white layer of hailstones covers the ground it may be followed by snow, for *il-barād fraš 'it-taldj*, “the hail is the bed of the snow.” The snow is said to be “the salt of the earth”:

<sup>1</sup> 20<sup>th</sup> of July, old style.

<sup>2</sup> See also Z. D. P. V. XXXVI, 292, note 5.

<sup>3</sup> Others say: *el-ḥardōn bidjawwiz ibnuh*, “the lizard marries his son.”

*it-taldj milh il-arl*. Some define such a hail as being one which is composed of the smallest grains (*ibrim*), while hail of larger grains is known by the term *haranza*.

It may not be without interest to note the different expressions for different kinds of rain:

<i>naqqatat</i>	it drips gently,
<i>rasrasat</i>	it drips rapidly,
<i>bahhat</i>	it rains fast with small drops,
<i>zahhat</i>	it rains fast with larger drops,
<i>'aburah</i>	shower falling from a cloud, which passes away in a short time,
<i>za'ug</i>	the same with heavy downpour,
<i>sabb</i> or <i>kabb min ir-rabb</i>	very heavy, continuous rain (from the Lord).

When it begins to rain the following expressions are used: *'amarat*, *nizlit* (or *ṭāhat*, rarely) *id-dunyā*, "the world is being renewed or cultivated, or is pouring." When the rain stops for a short time the term *shat*, for a long time *amsakat*, and when the rain is over, *aftamat* is used.<sup>1</sup>

The peasants believe that if a rainbow stretches north to south it stops the rain: *qôs* (or *qās*) *hadjdjâz* (preventing bow), but if it goes east to west it is a sign of more rain, *qôs jarrâr* = "drawing bow" (heard from a woman of Bêt djâlâ).<sup>2</sup>

The different degrees of cloudiness are:

<i>ghayyamat</i>	it is cloudy,
<i>ghattamat</i>	it is somewhat murky from cloudiness,
( <i>i</i> ) <i>swaddat</i> ( <i>'attamat</i> )	it is dark,
<i>raḥaṣah</i>	it is very dark and the sky is full of thick clouds.

When violent lightning and thunder follow each other in rapid succession it is said to portend heavy rain:

<sup>1</sup> For snowing they use *nadafat* and *barghalat* (the last is used when the snow is in round small grains). The snow itself belongs to one of the following categories: *raqâqî*, *Kabâtil*, *naṣṣ*. For *Kabâtil* some use *Kawâtil*. In Bêt djâlâ I heard also the expression *çuč* (perhaps from *kûk*) for large pieces of snow.

<sup>2</sup> A weather rule about the rainbow runs as follows:

*qôs eṣ-ṣabâḥ 'aduw l-fallâḥ*  
*qôs el-mâsâ dalîl eṣ-ṣâfâ*

"The rainbow of the morning is the enemy of the peasant,  
The rainbow of the evening is the sign of clearness."

*ida abraḡat war'adat*  
*i'lam inn mazârîbhâ tarḡaqat*

"If it lightens and thunders, know that is gutter-pipes clash."

I have also collected some new sayings about 'id Lydd:<sup>1</sup>

*fî 'id Lydd šidd yâ fallâh, šidd*  
*mâ biḡî laš-šitâ didd*

"On the Feast of Lydd yoke (your plough) O, peasant, yoke, none will oppose (the coming of) the rain."

*fî 'id Lydd kullu šaddâdin išidd*  
*u kullu rammâkin ihidd,<sup>2</sup>*

"On the Feast of Lydda let every yoker (of a plough) yoke, and let every possessor of a mare have her fertilized."<sup>3</sup>

It is believed that animals (mares, cows, she-asses) and women who are fecundated in this day bring forth strong and healthy offspring.<sup>4</sup> Accordingly we have the agricultural rule: *awwal el-wsûm*<sup>5</sup> *lâ thûm*, "Do not run about in the first of the seasons."

The first month of the rainy season is divided into three periods of ten days each:

The first ten days are known as *itrah*<sup>6</sup>, falling (with sickness),  
 " second " " " " " *intûh*, butting (with horns),  
 " third " " " " " *iftûh*, opening or beginning (of good luck).

After the rains of the first ten days the first grass comes out. This is believed all over Palestine to be very bad for the cattle. The inhabitants think that the animals get sick if they eat this grass. The disease is known by the name *dj'âm*.<sup>7</sup> The same word

<sup>1</sup> November 3, Julian calendar.

<sup>2</sup> This meaning of *ihidd* (from *hadda*) is not known in classical Arabic (not found in *Muḡat el-muḡit*).

<sup>3</sup> This verse is known to the Bedouin ('Azâzmeh of the Negeb, and 'Idwân cf. Transjordanian).

<sup>4</sup> Variants to *fî 'id Lydd uhrut u qidd* (Kalender) are *fî 'id Lydd šidd u quidd*, and *fî 'id Lydd uhrut u šidd*.

<sup>5</sup> For explanation of *môsâm* s. "Kalender".

<sup>6</sup> *tarîh*, "sick person"; *matrûh*, "sick"; *inḡarah*, "he got sick"; *eš-šams tarḡatu*, "he was sun-struck".

<sup>7</sup> This word is used in classical Arabic in the same meaning (s. *Muḡit el-muḡit*, I, 261).



is used wrongly by some people for the grass<sup>1</sup> which grows after the first rain. For this reason it is said when the rain comes late: *min baḥt el-ḥalāl u-ta'ḥīr el-fallāḥ*<sup>2</sup>, "It is good luck for the cattle and delay (in his work) for the peasant." By *intūḥ* they mean that the seeds will push through the ground better than in the first period, for the rain of this period is generally stronger than that of the preceding. The expression *imtūḥ*,<sup>3</sup> used by Bauer, is wrong and should be *intūḥ*. As far as I could find this expression is not used for *ṣatwat 'el-masāṭiḥ* but denotes what has been mentioned. If during the third period (*iftūḥ*) the rainfall is as good as it was in the two other periods, the year promises to be good. Of course any of these three periods may fail to bring rain.

The best rain is supposed to be that which falls when *Tureiyā* (Pleiades) and Libra are in a north-south line.

*wasm et-tureiyā a'djab min a'djab*  
*fil-barr māl u-fil-baḥr dahab.*<sup>4</sup>

"The season of the Pleiades is a wonder of wonders,  
(it brings) on land wealth and on the sea gold."

Accordingly, this season is everywhere called<sup>5</sup> the season of riches (*wasm et-trēyāwī wasm el-māl*).

It has been noted that when Suhêl (Canopus) rises the cold is so severe that special care must be taken to protect the animals: *till' shêl awî*<sup>6</sup> *l-ḥêl*,<sup>7</sup> "Canopus has arisen, shelter the horses."

The weather grows constantly colder and the cold reaches its climax about the last part of *el-adḡrad*, thus we are taught

*fil-mîlâdeh bizîd el-bard ezyâdeh,*  
"At Christmas the cold increases greatly."

But soon afterwards it begins to grow warmer:

<sup>1</sup> This is known in classical Arabic as *waṣr*, M. el-M. II, 2074.

<sup>2</sup> Heard from the 'Idwân.

<sup>3</sup> Z. D. P. V. XXXVIII, 55.

<sup>4</sup> 'Azâzmeh and 'Idwân tribes.

<sup>5</sup> Also mentioned by Bauer.

<sup>6</sup> I have also heard instead of *awî ṣidd* and *ghattî*.

<sup>7</sup> Mr. Stephan has called my attention to the song: *yâ imm el-manâdil*, where a part of a verse runs as follows:

*yâ nâym itghattî tîl'u l-marwâzîni*  
"O, sleeper cover yourself; Libra has arisen."

*fil-gh̄tās biyughtus nuṣṣ el-bard.*<sup>1</sup>

“At Epiphany half of the cold dives (disappears).”

Therefore the rule:

*bēn el-gh̄tās wil-milādeh lā tsāfer yā hādī*<sup>2</sup>

“Between Epiphany and Christmas don’t journey O, quiet man!”

The rain is generally so heavy in the *marb’ānīyeh* that one is advised:

“Between January and February do not sleep in your neighbour’s house”

*(bēn kānūn u-šbāt ‘ind djārah lā tbāt).*

March (*adār*) is the “stallion” of the year (*fahl is-saneh adarhā*), since all agricultural work depends on the quantity of rain which falls during this month:

*adār faḥalḥā*<sup>3</sup>      *adār maḥalḥā*<sup>4</sup>

“March made it fertile (i. e. was the stallion),

March made it sterile.”

It is too late at this time of the year to plough or sow any winter grain:

*fī nisān ḡubb il-’iddeh u-il-faddān*

“In April hide the farm tools and the plough.”

People consider the 23<sup>rd</sup> of April (St. George’s feast)<sup>5</sup> to be the boundary between the winter and the summer.<sup>6</sup>

On the other hand it is now the best time to work in the orchards.

*in kān biddak il-ḡēd ištghil*<sup>7</sup> *fī djum’it il-bēd*

“If you want the fruits of midsummer work in the week of the eggs.”<sup>8</sup>

Gradually it grows hotter and most of the grass begins to dry up:

*fī sāhr il-ḥamīs kullu ḥudratin tabis*<sup>9</sup>

“In April every green (plant) begins to dry up.”

<sup>1</sup> This rule is not exact.

<sup>2</sup> Another similar saying is: *bēn el-gh̄tās u-’id er-rūm lā tsāfir yā madjnūn*, “Between Epiphany and the Greek feast (Christmas) don’t journey, O fool.”

<sup>3</sup> Some use *faḥalḥā* (from *faḥala*, to make prosperous).

<sup>4</sup> Heard from the ‘Idwān.

<sup>5</sup> Betūniā.

<sup>6</sup> The feast of Lydd (also that of St. George) is the boundary of the winter and the summer.

<sup>7</sup> According to others *uḥruṭ*, plough.

<sup>8</sup> See explanation given above.

<sup>9</sup> Dēr Ghassā-neh.

The following verse refers to the time of the budding of the leaves of the fruit trees:

*rālī is-šiām l-imbārak u-adja hadd is-sa'nīneh*  
*aurāq ir-rummān u-il-hōh u-it-tīneh*<sup>1</sup>

"Blessed Lent has gone, and Palm Sunday has come—  
peaches, pomegranates, and fig trees begin to leaf."

The first cereals which ripen are the horse-beans, and many believe they can foretell the excellence of the crops by the quality of the *fūl*:

*hud fālḥā min (i) fwālḥā*<sup>2</sup>

"Take its (the year's) omen from its horse-beans."

In August the grapes are ripe:

*fī āb udḥul il-karm walā thāb*

"In August enter the vineyard and don't be afraid."

At the same time the olives develop, little by little:

*fī 'īd il-'adrā imm in-nūr*  
*byṣubb iz-zēt fi-z-zētūn.*

"On the feast of the Virgin, the mother of light,  
Oil pours into the olives."

No sooner are the grapes over, than the vineyards are deserted:

*habbar it-tīn u-garqa' urēqoh*  
*rauwaḥ in-nātūr iyraqqī' ihlēqoh.*

"The figs are over and their leaves have rustled down,  
The watchman goes home to mend his rugs."

The summer approaches its close slowly and one must not be misled by the hot days of the last third of September, since "the summer of the pomegranates laughs at the naked" (those who go still in light summer clothes); *sefiyyit ir-rummān btīdḥak 'alā l-'arlan.*

Finally we may give some rules or sayings connected with the non-agricultural life of the peasants:

*fī kānūn lā tbi' bēḍak yā maḍjnūn*

"Don't sell, fool, your eggs in Kānūn<sup>3</sup> (as eggs are then rare and expensive)."

<sup>1</sup> From the Song of Lazarus.

<sup>2</sup> Another proverb has *(i)tfālḥā* (babies) instead of *(i)fwālḥā*.

<sup>3</sup> December and January.

As soon as spring begins and the flowers blossom the cold decreases markedly and animal life gets more vigorous. The following saying puts this truth in the mouth of the hens:

*ṭil' il-ḥannūn u-mā bydnā*  
*yā 'ēbnā, yā 'azāritnā minnṣāḥibnā.*

"The flowers have come out, and we have not yet laid eggs,  
What a shame, what a rebuke (we deserve) from our owner!"

Christian women order their new summer and festival clothes at the end of spring:

*ḥadd in-nuṣṣ faṣṣil u quṣṣ*<sup>1</sup>

"In the middle Sunday of Lent fashion and cut out (a dress)."<sup>2</sup>  
It is too late to postpone this work much:

*illī mā btilbis 'al-'anṣarah bytmūt (i)mhaṣṣarah.*

"She who does not dress on Whitsuntide dies of pique (vexation of spirit)."

Another saying, current amongst Christians as well as among non-Christians, is:

*ṣāf' iṣ-ṣēf yā nadamyt illī (i)nkasā*

"The summer is in its full power, oh regret of those who have bought the necessary clothes, (for the winter is over, and he is not going to use them)."

"The summer carpet is wide", (*bsāt iṣ-ṣēf uwsī'*) is an expression alluding to outdoor life in this period of the year. Vineyards and orchards are full of life, work is done and meals are eaten in them.

When chickens hatch in the latter part of the summer they will develop very badly, as they cannot support the cold, which is rapidly drawing near:

*ṣūṣ taṣārīn byākul u binīn*

"The chicken of October and November eats and weakens."

*ṣūṣ it-tīn byḍall (i)ynīn*

"The chicken of the fig time continues to weaken."

<sup>1</sup> Another variant is:

*ḥadd en-nuṣṣ illī mā qaṣṣiṣ iquṣṣ*

"On middle Sunday, every one who has not yet cut out a dress must do it."

<sup>2</sup> The two words *faṣṣil* and *quṣṣ* have, when used in dress-making, nearly the same meaning. *qaṣṣēt badleh*, "I have bought (cut) the stuff for a suit"; *faṣṣal badleh*, "he cut out a suit."

As the days get shorter and the nights longer, evening parties, which were not so popular in summer, come into their rights again:

*ba'd 'id is-sayydeh wën is-sahhîrah idj-djaideh*

“Where are the good watchers (those who stay awake for parties) after the Feast of the Lady (St. Mary).”

[I take this opportunity to correct some statements in my article “The Division of the Year in Palestine” (Vol. II 3).

- a) (*i*) *l-ajrad* (p. 161) stands for December and not for January.
- b) *jum'it ir-raġâyib* (p. 165) falls on the Friday following *jum'it il-(i)'lawayim* and is not another name for it.
- c) *jum'it in-nabât* coincides with *jum'it il-yumnâdâ(t)* and not with *jum'it il-(i)'lawayim* or *jum'it ir-raġâyib* (p. 165).

St. H. Stephan.]