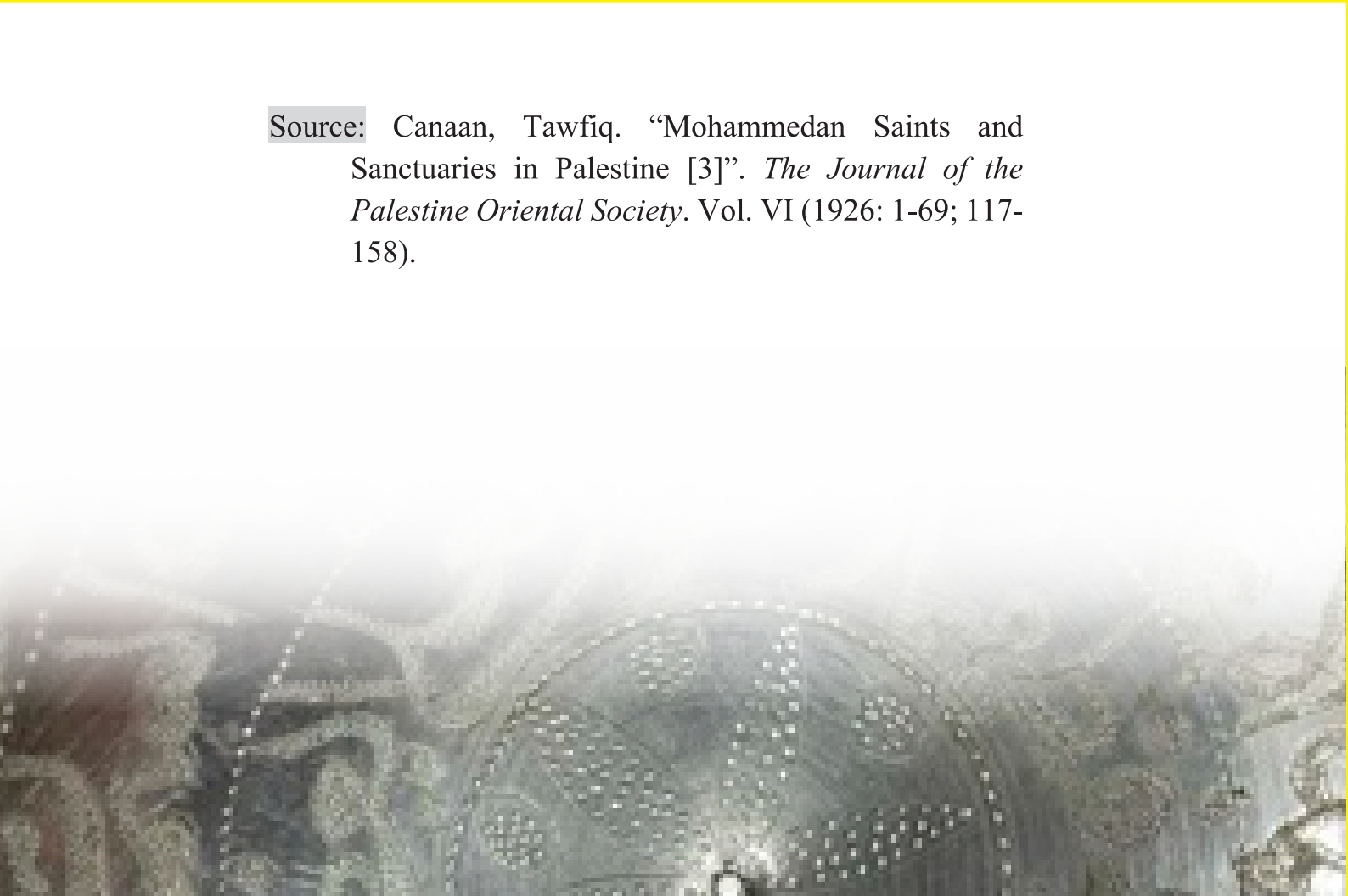


# مجموعه توفيق كنعان

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## MOHAMMEDAN SAINTS AND SANCTUARIES IN PALESTINE

T. CANAAN  
(JERUSALEM)

### B. RITES AND PRACTISES

(Continued)

#### 5. OATHS

It is a widespread custom to call on God or a saint to witness and attest one's affirmation, or to assert one's innocence. This assurance is given by means of an oath in the name of a holy man, generally in his shrine, or in the name of God and in a shrine of some *welî*. Simple oaths in which the name of God alone is used, and which may be uttered on any occasion, are innumerable and will not be discussed. Simple oaths are so common that they are a part of the daily life of a peasant.<sup>1</sup> If he is telling a story or an

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<sup>1</sup> I will mention some of the most important simple *aqṣām* (pl. of *qasam*) which are much used in the daily life of the peasant. They belong to one of the following two categories:

a) The name or an adjective of God, that of a *welî* or a sanctuary are connected with the oath,

b) The *yamîn* mentions some natural phenomena.

The following examples will illustrate both kinds:

Ad a)

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| والله ومحمد رسول الله                     | By God and Mohammed, God's apostle  |
| والله وما أعز من الله                     | By God, and there is no one more powerful than God                              |
| وحياة هالعود والرب المعبود<br>والنبي داود | By the life of this branch (stick) and the worshipped God and the Prophet David |
| والصليب الحي                              | By the living cross   |
| وحق القبلة المحمديّة                      | By the truth of the Mohammedan direction of prayer                              |

adventure and finds it necessary to emphasize a point, because some one may doubt his statement, he says *u-ḥaqq el-Ḥadr el-Aḥḍar innî ruḥit udjîit*, "By the truth (of the existence) of St. George I went and came (back)." Or, "By the truth and honor of the Prophet

وحق هالكنيسة والساكين  
فيها By the truth of this church and those (i. e. saints)  
abiding in it

وباب هالشرق معبد النصرى By the door of this East (i. e. by the direction  
of the sunrise) which is the prayer direction  
of the Christians (the direction of burying  
Christian dead).

والكعبة By the Ka'beh

والمهد الشريف By the honourable church of the Nativity

والمصحف By the Qorân

ولحية النبي By the beard of the Prophet

Ad b)

وحق عويئة هالشمس المغربة  
لطاعة ربها By the truth of this sun's disk (lit. small eye)  
which is going down in the west in obedience  
to her Lord

وحياة هالشارب By the life (here: existence) of this moustache

وحياة المائي المطهرة الحي والميت By the existence of the water which purifies the  
living and the dead

وحياة المائي الجارية والسموات  
العالية By the existence of the flowing water and the  
high heavens

وحياة هالشجرة اللي بتشرب  
من عرقها وتستبج ربها By the existence of this tree which drinks with  
its root, and which praises its Lord

وحياة هالبساط الأخضر اللي  
طلع من الارض خرسا طرشا By the existence of this green carpet which  
grew dumb and deaf (i. e. quietly) from the  
earth

وحق من يعلم كم ورقة في  
هالشجرة وكم شعرة في  
هالحيوان By the truth of the One who knows how many  
leaves there are on this tree, and how many  
hairs on this animal. (The person while uttering  
this oath points to a tree and to an animal)

Some of these formulas were taken from the written notes of my father.

Moses I . . ."<sup>1</sup> These oaths are made in any place and need not be restricted to a sanctuary. It is customary to use the name of a local or an important outside *welî*. All oaths made in a *môsam* of a saint, or in the neighbourhood of a sanctuary are performed in the name of the respective *welî* or prophet.

More important are oaths made in the shrine itself. The causes for such an act are either major or minor ones. When a man is accused of having stolen something, but no direct proofs can be brought, he is asked by the accuser to go to a *welî* and swear his innocence. The accused, followed by the accuser, enters the shrine. The former lifts up his hands and says: "By God, the Great (Almighty)<sup>2</sup> One who has no greater Power above Him, I have not stolen, nor even seen this she-mule, nor do I know who has taken her."<sup>3</sup> The accuser must content himself with the oath and is regarded as having lost the case. The accuser may not trouble himself and the accused to go in such a case to a sanctuary. The accused may be allowed to turn his face in the direction of the appointed *welî* and swears to his innocence with uplifted hands.

The principle *el-yamîn 'alâ niyet el-mihallif*, "the oath is (to be fulfilled) according to the intention (resolution) of the one who requires the oath (from the other)", has two meanings. First that the accuser has the right to appoint the sanctuary, the time and sometimes the part of the sanctuary on which the accused must place his hand while swearing (the tomb, the *mihrâb*, the *Qorân*, etc.). In the second place the oath given by the accused is explained in the sense intended by the accuser. Wording which may express the truth only externally, but be essentially untrue, is a false oath. For example A is accused by B of having stolen his mare from the closed stable where it was fastened. A was actually the thief, having stolen the mare in company with C, B's servant. C opened the stable, untied the mare and led it outside the premises of B where A was awaiting him. A then galloped off with it, and after selling the mare gave C his share. B suspects A and asks him to swear.

<sup>1</sup> *Udjâh en-nabî Mûsâ . . .*

<sup>2</sup> This is sometimes repeated three times.

<sup>3</sup> والله العظيم واللي ما اعظم منه عظيم اني هالبيغلة لا سرقتها ولا اخذتها ولا بعلم مين اخذها.

The latter says: "By God, the Almighty, I never entered the premises, unlocked the stable, untied the mare or took it away." His oath is literally true, and B is obliged to accept it, but since he tried to cheat through the wording of the oath, God and the saint will punish him most severely. When the accused is ritually clean he enters the shrine, or if not he stands outside the door of the sanctuary, facing the interior, and performs his oath. In the case of a holy cave one stands on the door. Many Bedouin of Transjordanian step over the tomb of the *welî* (*yufšug*) and then swear. They think that the saint, who is already irritated by the contemptuous act of stepping over his tomb, will act the faster in punishing the accused if he has given a false oath.

If the accused is guilty, but does not dare to acknowledge his fault openly, and is at the same time afraid of perjury, he may get out of his difficulty in the following way, told me by Şofiyâ of Ṭurmus'aiyâ. The accused wears his garment turned inside out, fastening in it seven needles and carrying three silver bracelets in his pocket. All this is done secretly. With this protection he believes that no harm will befall him, even if he swears a false oath. He intends by such an act to acknowledge secretly to the man of God that he has committed the fault, but promises him to return the stolen things secretly or by some intermediary.

When an accuser loses his case by a false oath of the accused, he tries to provoke the anger of the saint, believing that he can thus hasten the punishment of his guilty opponent. There are different modes of provocation. He may hold with both hands the two ends of a mat of the sanctuary and swaying it up and down, thus shaking its dust on the accused, say: "O my Lord, O Sêf ed-Dîn, get me my right from this lying scoundrel." Sometimes the mats of the shrine are turned over with the words: "I turn the mats of el-Hauwâş over on you, O scoundrel."<sup>1</sup> The mats remain upside down until a passer-by or the *qaiym* turns them back. Generally, however, they are not touched, until the person who in this way besought the saint for justice turns them over again himself. This is done when the relatives of the person who made a false oath beg for it. Turning the mats upside down is supposed to

<sup>1</sup> *Qalabt 'alêk huş el-Hauwâş yâ sâlim.*

transfer the anger of the saint to the guilty person. These two acts, which are known as *qalb el-huṣur* may be performed not only when a person has perjured himself, but also whenever a person is unjustly oppressed. All believe that these acts will stimulate the saint to react at once in favor of the oppressed person.<sup>1</sup> In some parts the oppressed person goes to the sanctuary, and lying on the floor covers himself with a mat, or he places the sweepings of the shrine on the tomb. Both these acts are believed to irritate the saint, who will at once protect the one who has been maltreated.<sup>2</sup>

When an innocent person is accused and is thus forced to swear he feels himself injured by the suspicion directed at him, and tries in one of the following ways to make the saint avenge him. He throws a small handful (half or a quarter of a full hand) of *qṣārah*<sup>3</sup> on his opponent and says: *Yamīnak yiqḥib 'alēk*, "(the result of) the oath (which you have forced me to make) shall return upon you." The accuser answers<sup>4</sup> "it will return on the liar."<sup>5</sup> Others take stones or earth and throw them on the grave or on the *maqām*, thus arousing the spirit of the holy man to keep his *maqām* holy and clear of false accusations.<sup>6</sup>

Exceedingly rare is the custom of going to a sanctuary and binding on the headstone (*mṣībeh*) a piece of cloth belonging to the oppressed person with the words *tūr yā Madjdūb fī fulān illī ḡalamnī*, "Attack So and So, who has oppressed me, O M." This custom is practiced, as far as I know, only by women of Dêr Ghassāneh.<sup>7</sup>

A last resort to show one's innocence and demand revenge from God is to turn a *maṣḥaf* (Qorān) upside down, saying to the accuser: *hāy qalbēt maṣḥaf 'alēk*, "Behold a Qorān is turned on you."

While the simple oaths (*ymān 'urdah*) for small crimes which we have treated may be made at any *welī*, more solemn ones (*ymān*

<sup>1</sup> Dêr Ghassāneh.

<sup>2</sup> Both these customs I heard from people of Abū Ghōḥ.

<sup>3</sup> *Qṣārah* is the plaster coating of the walls of the rooms.

<sup>4</sup> Arab. *yiqḥib alā l-kāḍib*.

<sup>5</sup> The accuser and accused, who came the same way, return separately by different roads.

<sup>6</sup> If the accused is a descendant of a saint and is innocent, he tries to irritate the saint by putting filth on the tomb or by shouting that the saint is asleep, powerless or indifferent (cf. 1 Kings 18 27).

<sup>7</sup> Heard from O. el-Barghūṭi.

*mughallaḥ*) for major crimes like murder,<sup>1</sup> rape<sup>2</sup> and *hadjseh*<sup>3</sup> have to be performed in the shrine of an important saint. Manṣūr of Liftā assured me that a *welī ḥiṣr* (or *nizq*), "a nervous, irritable *welī*" should be chosen, since he will punish a liar at once.<sup>4</sup> In such important cases it is not the accuser, but the judge who orders that such an oath be made in case no absolute proofs can be brought of the defendant's guilt. The judge—if he is unable to go himself—sends representatives to report the result. The oath of the accused must be seconded by a notable and sanctioned by three others.<sup>5</sup>

We have seen that all oaths, taken in a sanctuary, are made in the name of God and not in that of a prophet. The name of the latter may be mentioned in some cases after that of God, but no important oath is ever made in the name of a saint alone. Fridays and Mondays are generally chosen for an important oath. The latter day is selected because it is said that the Prophet was born on a Monday.

The material given in the foregoing section shows the great honour and fear of the saints. Few indeed dare to make a false oath in a shrine, for the vengeance of the saints is most severe. This revenge may show itself in him, his family, his property, or his animals. Story after story is told to illustrate this point. In some cases—as with *el-welī* Šhâb ed-Din of Şaffâ—the man of God marks the houses of those who make a false oath. Early in the morning they may find the corpse of some animal in front of the door. If no such a thing is found, everybody knows that the oath was a true one.

## 6. VOWS

The practice of incurring voluntary obligations to a deity on fulfilment of certain conditions, such as deliverance from disease, death, or danger, success in enterprises, bestowal of an heir, and the like, is of extremely ancient date and common in all systems of religion. There are many references in the Bible dealing with vows,

<sup>1</sup> Ar. *damm*.

<sup>2</sup> Ar. *'arḍ*.

<sup>3</sup> Ar. *hadjseh* is the entrance of a respectable house by a stranger, either for robbery or for adultery.

<sup>4</sup> All those I asked corroborated this statement.

<sup>5</sup> See also O. el-Barghûṭi's paper, *JPOS* II, 51.

which fact shows us how widespread this practice was. The prophet Mohammed gave some rules concerning it in the Qorân, as well as in the Ḥadīṭ. Vows as they are performed at present have kept most of their ancient features.<sup>1</sup> This custom is still found among the peasants as well as among the town-dwellers, among Mohammedans and Christians, rich and poor. All believe in its necessity, its efficacy and its sure blessing. Every difficulty or misfortune in the daily life of the Oriental brings him nearer to his God and to the saints. And holding that these holy men are nearer God than himself, and nearer him than God is, he believes that they are able to help him. He tries to get their protection, favour and help; and believes that he will be more successful if the saints are rewarded by him. Therefore he promises one or more saints an offering, to be given in his or their names and in their honour.

Opportunities for making vows are innumerable: in sickness, in the case of the journey of a friend, when bad news about an absent member of the family is received, when a woman is barren, during a bad agricultural year, in the face of impending danger, repeated loss of children, difficult labour, infectious disease of cattle, etc. Among all these causes sickness is the most important and most vows are paid in connection with it. Many saints are called upon for help. The father, mother, wife, brothers, sisters, children, other relations or even friends of the sick make the vows. Usually each of them calls on a different saint, thus ensuring the help of all the most important saints. In case the condition of the sick man allows, he himself will promise an offering. The value of the offering varies more or less according to the importance of the sick person in the family. The father, husband or the only son are generally the most privileged in this respect. The wife, daughters, or old women of the family come last. I witnessed the following occurrence which illustrates the above excellently, as described in *Aberglaube*, p. 70. Abû Amin el-Bêtûnî, the eldest member of his *hamûleh*<sup>2</sup> fell sick with pneumonia. He had such a severe relapse that the course of the disease was greatly prolonged. When one day his condition got

<sup>1</sup> Kahle, *PJB* VIII, pp. 148 ff.; Canaan, *Aberglaube*, pp. 70 ff.; Jaussen, Douffé, Curtiss, *passim*.

<sup>2</sup> *Hamûleh* is the "family" in the wide sense, almost "clan," while the narrower meaning is expressed by 'êleh.



very critical and I explained the matter to his brothers and relatives, one of his brothers vowed that he would give thirty francs<sup>1</sup> worth of candles to the sanctuary of Abraham (Hebron), to the Mosque of Omar (Jerusalem), and to Moses. At the same time he begged the Almighty God to heal his brother and to inflict the disease instead upon his own young son, who was eight months old.<sup>2</sup> He was even ready to lose his child, if the Almighty would save his brother.<sup>3</sup> A second brother vowed a *ḍbīḥah* for the *welī* Zêtûn (Bêtûniâ), and a second sheep as a *ṣatḥah* (picnic) for his friends and relatives. The wife promised Nebî Şamwyl a sheep, while the sick man himself promised to offer a sheep and a "basket" of rice<sup>4</sup> to Abraham. The other relatives made smaller vows. According to Palestinian Arabic belief God is the Almighty One, who stands higher than all saints. If He chooses He is able to do every thing, possible and impossible. This is the Qorânic teaching. But the saints are preferred. They are easier of access and stand nearer to men—as they all were once human beings. At the same time they know human needs, ailments and weaknesses very well. Therefore the belief in them and the fear of them has spread so widely among the Palestinians that gradually they have taken the place of God. People look at them as minor deities, nor do I doubt that in many places superstition has elevated them to a rank equal to that of God. This is the reason why nearly all vows are made to saints and not to God. The number of saints to whom vows are brought is innumerable. Generally the local *welīs* are preferred, but very often others are thought of, either because they are prophets and thus favourites of the Almighty, or because they have gradually gained through their miracles the complete confidence of the peasants. Even in one and the same village, where there are several *awliyâ*, one of them enjoys the greatest popularity, since he is believed to

<sup>1</sup> Twenty francs or one pound are called *nêrah* or *lêrah*. The difference between a French, an English, an Egyptian or a Turkish pound is expressed by adding the name of the nation, *fransawîyeh*, *inglîzîyeh*.

<sup>2</sup> The baby fell sick a few days later.—The mother said *bâb es-samâ kân maftûh*, "the gate of heaven was open," i. e., when the father expressed his wish God heard it at once. This idiom is always used when a desire is quickly fulfilled.

<sup>3</sup> Such a desire is not called a *nidr*, but a *da'ueh* (a curse).

<sup>4</sup> *Quffet ruzz* = 100 kg (33 rotl).

be more powerful than the others. This is why, inspecting several shrines of the same locality, we observe that some are cleaner, better kept and richer than others. Besides the great prophets, like Moses, Abraham, David, Christ, Rûbin (Reuben), Samuel, Şâleh, etc., who are more highly thought of than the rest, there are some *welîs* like the Badriyeh, Salmân el-Fârsî, el-Qaṭrâwânî,<sup>1</sup> etc., who enjoy a wide reputation.

Some saints do not like to see a woman entering their sanctuaries even to fulfil a vow made in their name. This is especially true of Mâr Sâbâ. Some women of the Greek Church therefore never make offerings to him, since he will not allow any of them to enter his sanctuary. The following story will illustrate this belief.<sup>2</sup> A Russian lady, who had offered him a golden lamp, wished to bring it herself. She wore male clothes, entered the church of the convent unrecognized and placed the lamp in front of his picture. Some unseen power threw the lamp away and spilled the oil. Every time the lamp was replaced, it was thrown still further away. The astonished *raïys* (head of the convent), who observed all what was happening, searched for the reason, and as soon as he found out that the offerer was a distinguished woman, he begged her to leave the convent, assuring her that Mâr Sâbâ does not accept any offerings from women, but even prohibits females from entering the convent.<sup>3</sup>

Vows are not only made to sanctuaries where a *maqâm* and a tomb are found, but every other shrine combination which we have studied enjoys this privilege. Naturally what is vowed to these shrines—stones, caves, trees, springs, etc.—is as a rule much inferior to what is offered to the *anbiyâ*. Offerings to supposed holy stones, trees, waters, etc., are another connecting link with primitive religions.

<sup>1</sup> El-Qaṭrâwânî is situated on the top of a mountain, amidst a small group of oak trees, which grow between the remains of a ruin, with several cisterns. The shrine is composed of one room with two domes. The shrine is composed of one room with two domes. The tomb is supposed to be in a cave below the building. A heap of *šîd* (see below) was placed in the N. E. corner of the room. To the west of the sanctuary one finds the tomb of his servant.

<sup>2</sup> Related to me by Imm Eliâs of Jerusalem.

<sup>3</sup> Therefore the women of the Greek Orthodox congregation work on his feast day, saying that since he does not like them they will not honour him, *'umruh la t'ayud*.

Vows may even be made to living persons. Generally these privileged men belong to one of the following classes:

1. The descendants of a holy man. A thorough examination of the present *awliyâ* shows that some of them are recent and that their descendants are still living. Cases in point are *hadj* 'Obeid,<sup>1</sup> 'Abdallâh<sup>2</sup> and *irdjâl* Şufah.<sup>3</sup> To the living sons of the *awliyâ* simple things are promised (*tunbâk*,<sup>4</sup> *djâdjih*,<sup>5</sup> *tôb*,<sup>6</sup> etc.).

2. *Şêhs* of a *ţariqah* or who are considered as especially pious, as *es-şêh* Abû Ĥalâwî.

3. Servants of a shrine or a priest. Vows of this class are especially made by Christians. The following case illustrates this type. A man of Djifnâ whose son was sick vowed: "O St. George, if my child gets well I shall offer curtains<sup>7</sup> (lit. cloths) for your church and a vestment for the priest."<sup>8</sup>

4. To mentally abnormal men. In 'Ēn 'Arik there used to live an insane<sup>9</sup> man who was silent most of the time and walked only backwards. Not only the inhabitants of this village but also those of the surrounding places considered him a *welî*. They thought that by his behaviour one could foretell the future of the village. If he shouted during the night, rain fell, and if he ran aimlessly to and

<sup>1</sup> In 'Ēn Kârim. The *maqâm*, which is at the same time a *djâmi'* with a *mêdaneh*, is inside the village. Adjacent to the shrine there is a fruit garden. Anybody who takes a cutting from these trees and plants it, finds that it will not grow.

<sup>2</sup> West of *es-şêh* Ghêţ (near Dêr Ghassâneh). His *maqâm* was originally a cave which was changed into a small room with cloisters in front. The tomb of his wife (*es-Slâhîyeh*) is beside his. His family all belong to Dâr Mustafâ Şaniûr (O. S. Barghûţî).

<sup>3</sup> The *maqâm* is situated on the top of a hill to the west of Dêr Ghassâneh, and contains three tombs for the male (*el-Madjdûb*, *Ibrâhîm* and 'Alî) and two female (daughters of *el-Madjdûb*) descendants. Outside the *maqâm* there are four other tombs, one for *es-şêhah* Şâlĥah and the other for her maid *Hanûr*. I owe this information to O. S. Barghûţî.

<sup>4</sup> Tobacco used in the *argîleh*.

<sup>5</sup> A hen.

<sup>6</sup> A cloth.

<sup>7</sup> The "curtain" is a thin (if possible a silky) cloth which is hung over the pictures.

<sup>8</sup> It is the official suit carried by the priest in the church.

<sup>9</sup> Eight years ago he was living; I do not know whether he is still alive.

fro they knew that *ḥaiyâleh*<sup>1</sup> "gendarmerie" were approaching the village to collect the taxes. Women used to vow him a hen in case one of their family was sick. A few hairs of this saint's head were always taken when the hen was presented, and with these hairs the patient was fumigated.<sup>2</sup>

Sometimes vows are made to objects or places which are not connected with a known saint. As soon as a spontaneous, miraculous sign is supposed to have been observed by someone, the place is regarded as inhabited by some supernatural power, probably pious men of unknown origin (*ṣullâlî*) to whom vows may then be made. The following example is a good illustration of this. To the left of the carriage road<sup>3</sup> leading from Jerusalem to Kolôniâ and opposite the last house of Liftâ (situated some distance from the main village and directly below the carriage road) there is a cave in which some peasants of Liftâ<sup>4</sup> used to live during the summer months. During its stay in this cave the family lost one member after the other. Once the father of the family noticed a mysterious light in the cave, which made clear to him that this place was inhabited by some superhuman power who had punished him for having defiled its habitation. At once he moved from the spot and vowed to offer a sheep and to light an oil lamp once a week.<sup>5</sup>

There is another set of vows which have no connection with the types described hitherto, in which offerings are made to objects which are not associated with any holy man, holy place or sacred object. The best illustration is the following custom: Sterile women who go to the *môsam* of el-Ḥusên, near Ascalon, take a bath in the sea and promise: "If I become pregnant, O sea, I shall kill a sheep in your honour."<sup>6</sup> In the *môsam* of the next year a woman who had received the blessing of motherhood kills the sheep on the shore, in

<sup>1</sup> People were very much frightened when gendarmerie came to a village, since the soldiers gathered the taxes heartlessly, imposing many unnecessary expenses upon the villagers.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. *Aberglaube*, p. 72, n. 5.

<sup>3</sup> The place is called el-Ḥômeh.

<sup>4</sup> The same family which lives now in the house opposite the cave.

<sup>5</sup> The same may be said about *eš-šêlî* Ḥusên (near ed-Dâhriyeh) where one night a light was observed under the *sidr* tree. At once the tree was regarded as growing in the site of a *welî* and a small *maqâm* was built.

<sup>6</sup> *In ḥbîlî yâ bahr la-adbahlak ḥarûf.*

such a way that the blood flows into the sea, and throwing the *saqat*<sup>1</sup> of the sheep into the sea she exclaims:<sup>2</sup> "Take your vow, O sea."<sup>3</sup> Although such customs are really very rare, they carry us back to past ages when the sea was honoured and worshipped as a divinity.

A connecting link between the two last antagonistic groups, i. e., between objects and places which have no religious tinge at all, and those which are directly connected with saints, are places where, according to local belief, dervish music or prayers have been heard, a greenish light seen, or burning incense smelled. The discoverer of such a place makes the first vow. A good illustration of this belief is given by the story of Djum'ah (above pp. 59f).

In closing this section we may draw attention to the two following points:

1. In many cases vows are made to God without mentioning any saint.<sup>4</sup> "If my child gets well, O God, I shall slay a sheep for you." In such a case the sheep may be slain in any place and the meat be given to the poor. Vows to God are becoming less and less frequent.

2. Most of the Mohammedans I asked, assured me that it is an irreligious act to make a vow in the name of a saint. Every thing comes from the Almighty and must be offered therefore in his name. *Illî biynder lâ-walî min dîn dîkr allâh şârat dbîhtu ftîseh*, "Whoever makes a vow to a *welî* without mentioning God, his sheep becomes a carcass." A dead beast is, of course, not accepted either by God or by a saint, and should not be eaten by men.<sup>5</sup> The only correct formulas are of the following type: *in tâb ibnî yâ allâh ilak yâ Hâuwâş . . .*, "If my child gets well, O God, you will have, O Hâuwâş . . ." This principle is followed more rigidly by the Bedouin than by the peasants, as is well illustrated in the formula recited when a *dbîhah* is killed by a Bedouin. He says: *minnak u ilak yâ*

<sup>1</sup> *Saqat* means the head, intestines, extremities, lungs and other internal organs. It will be described more fully later on.

<sup>2</sup> *Hôd niðrak yâ bahr.*

<sup>3</sup> Cf. *Aberglaube*, pp. 75, 76.

<sup>4</sup> *In tâb ibnî yâ allâh la-adbaðlak harûf.*

<sup>5</sup> Qorân.

*allâh, adjr u tawâb*<sup>1</sup> *la-saiydnâ Mûsâ allâh akbar*, "It is from Thee and to Thee, O God; reward and recompense for our lord Moses; God is great."<sup>2</sup> This is a religious rule, but popular religion is in many ways hostile to the religion of the Qorân and the Bible.

The formulas used in making a vow are different. Usually the word *nidr*, "vow," is used: *nidrun 'alaiy yâ nabî Mûsâ in tâb ibnî la-aqaddimlak harûf*, "A vow (is) upon me, O prophet Moses; if my son gets well I shall offer you a sheep." The word *nidr* may be omitted: "O my lady Badriyeh, I owe you a jar of oil, if my son returns healthy from America." A third form is: *in tâb ahûy la-ađwîlak šamâh tûluh yâ Hađr el-Ađdar*, "If my brother is cured I will light you, O Hađr el-Ađdar, a candle of his length."<sup>3</sup>

All these vows are known officially as *ndûr muqaiyadeh*,<sup>4</sup> "bound vows," i. e., vows bound by a condition, which must be executed. There are vows belonging to another class, namely, *nudûr mułtaqah*, "free (general) vows," in which no condition binds the fulfilment of the vow: *ilak 'alaiy yâ rasûl allah an ašûm šahrên*, "I impose upon myself for thy sake, O Apostle of God, the obligation of fasting two months." In some parts of Palestine special expressions are used when vowing an animal; they will be described below. A beautiful formula is expressed in the following verse, which is recited by a mother visiting St. George's church with her two children, and asking him to keep them alive:

*Yâ Hađr el-Ađdar 'alêk el-yôm têrenî  
wahad imreiyš u wahad imkahhal el'êni  
nidrun 'alaiya in 'âšû hal-itnêni  
la-ađbah đabâih u aqaddim lal-Hađr dênî.*<sup>5</sup>

O Hađr Ever Green, two birds come to you;  
The one with feathers (i. e., well-grown), the other with darkened  
eyes (i. e., still very young).

<sup>1</sup> These two words well express a very important fact in *đabâyh*, namely, that they are made for the benefit of the saint to whom they are offered.

<sup>2</sup> Heard from a Bedouin of the 'Idwân tribe.

<sup>3</sup> At times a very indefinite promise is made: *ilak 'alaiy yâ mâr Mihâ'yl in mišî ibnî illî biyğla' min nafsi*, "I vow to you, O St. M., if my son walks, what I will give you."

<sup>4</sup> Ibn Rušd, *Bidâyatü l-Mudjtahid ua Nihâyatü l-Muqtašid*, vol. I, pp. 341, etc.

<sup>5</sup> Bêt Djâlâ.

I take as a vow upon myself, if these two remain alive,  
I shall offer sacrifices and pay my dues to Ḥaḍr.<sup>1</sup>

Another verse of this sort used also by Christians is:

*Yâ 'Aḍrâ Mariam ḥarîr e' Šâm zunnârik  
nidrun 'alaiya in adjû l-ghuyâb la-ah-tâdjik.<sup>2</sup>*

O Virgin Mary, the silk of Damascus (I will give as) your belt;  
I vow that if those absent come back, I shall need you (i. e., I shall fulfil my promise).

At times the person who is in great difficulty goes to a sanctuary, prays with devotion, begs for help, makes a vow and writes it on the wall of the shrine. In this way he binds himself doubly, while the *welâ* is reminded continually by the writing. In the *maqâm* of *eš-šeh* 'Ôkâseh I found the following writing, which is an excellent illustration of this custom: "I intrust to this place my testimony, that there is no God but Allâh and Mohammed is God's apostle. O my lord 'Ôkâseh, if Aḥmad the son of Ḥadîdjeh the son of Zakârîâ goes out of the jail wit' God's help and your help, I will bring to you, O my lord 'Ô. three oqîyeh (ca. 750 gm.) of oil, and I shall come to visit you. Pray to your God (to hear my prayer), O my lord 'O . . ."

In offering the promised vow one of the following expressions may be used: *adjâk nidrak yâ . . .*, "Your vow has come to you, O . . .;" *ḥôḍ dbî/tak yâ . . .*, "take your sacrifice, O . . .;" *ḥarîy šamî tak yâ . . .*, "Here is your candle, O . . ."

Vows may be made at any time. In some parts the night is chosen (Benî Zêd).<sup>3</sup> Thus a woman, whose child is dangerously ill, and who is therefore in great anxiety, chooses the night, if possible

<sup>1</sup> Another verse which is more a prayer than a vow is:

*yâ allâh yâ saiyd  
wil-walad uḥciyd  
tinšil lnâ waladnâ*

*zaiy mâ našalt el-Ḥaḍrâ min yad el-kuffâr.*

O God, O Lord,  
The boy is the only son;  
Deliver us our son,

As you delivered el-Ḥaḍrâ from the hands of the infidels.

<sup>2</sup> Bêt Djâlâ.

<sup>3</sup> This belief is sometimes also found in other parts of Palestine.

shortly after midnight. She goes out of the house to speak directly with her God. Uncovering her chest,<sup>1</sup> and lifting up her arms she makes a vow. Sometimes she goes entirely naked<sup>2</sup> and implores the Almighty or some saint for help, promising him an offering. It is believed that at such a time—when all human beings are at rest<sup>3</sup>—the angels fill the atmosphere and hear human wishes better than in the day time.<sup>4</sup> They carry them to heaven at once and bring them to the desired saint.<sup>5</sup>

Whoever makes a vow must keep it: *kullu nidrin fard*, "every vow is an obligation." Both Bible<sup>6</sup> and Qorân<sup>7</sup> give special rules for the fulfilment. The sooner a promise is carried out the better. The saints sometimes remind a man who has not kept his promise. A peasant promised *es-sêh* Ibrâhîm<sup>8</sup> an offering. As a long period passed without an attempt on the part of the man to carry out his obligation, the saint appeared to him in a dream and warned: "Pay your vow at once; if you are unable to do all that you have promised, bring part of it." Generally the *awliâ* are not so gracious, but are greatly irritated by such conduct and will punish the culprit severely. A woman vowed to give *es-sêh* Husên<sup>9</sup> an offering and did not keep her word. The angry *welî* threw a *bannây*<sup>10</sup> on her and she had a miscarriage. Some think that saints try to remind a man who has not fulfilled his promise in a gentle, but sometimes also in a severe way. Thus when the clothes of a person are caught in

<sup>1</sup> A sign of humiliation.

<sup>2</sup> The strongest sign of humiliation.

<sup>3</sup> Even nature and some spirits are thought to sleep during the night; therefore a person should never drink from standing water without first saying: *itnabbahî yâ moi y mâ wîrdîk illâ l-'atšân*, "Wake up, O water, only the thirsty one has approached you to drink."

<sup>4</sup> It is said that the noise of human beings disturbs the angels, therefore the night-prayer is the one best heard.

<sup>5</sup> Some days are always preferred to others for prayers, vows, etc. Among them are *lêlatu l-Qadr*, *lêlat 'Arâfât*, *l. 'Asûrah*, etc. (*es-sêh* 'Abd el-Madjid 'Alî, *At-Tuhfatu l-Marâziyah fil-Ahbâr el-Maqdisiyah*, p. 50).

<sup>6</sup> Num. 8 12-16, 30 5; Deut. 25 22; Ps. 22 26, 50 14, 66 13, 116 14 and 18.

<sup>7</sup> Sûrah V, 1; IX, 76.

<sup>8</sup> This *welî* is the brother of *es-sêh* Šu'êb. Both have their shrines near Bêt Djibrîn. Ibrâhîm is situated in a ruin bearing his name. Quite near to him is Hîrbet Santa Hännâ.

<sup>9</sup> In 'Ën 'Arik, the spring near his shrine bears his name.

<sup>10</sup> A large unhewn stone (lit. an unhewn stone which can be used in building).



thistles or if he gets sick, he may be asked by his friends,<sup>1</sup> "Have you bound yourself by a promise, which you have not yet fulfilled?"<sup>2</sup>

It is often possible—in case a man is unable to fulfil his promise exactly—to change some part of it or to substitute another for it. If for example, somebody vows a sheep, it is of course preferable to sacrifice it at the saint's shrine, but if he is unable to go himself he may send money to the *qaiym* or to a friend, who will buy the animal and offer it in his name. The sheep may even be slain in the village in the name of the prophet.

Or in case a woman promises to walk barefoot to a sanctuary and tries to do it but is unable to continue the journey for some physical reason, she may be released of her promise by doing something else, or by offering a sum of money in the name of the saint, giving it to the poor or depositing it at the shrine. The prophet Mohammed is reported to have said:<sup>3</sup> "Whoever promises to walk to a place and cannot do it, is not permitted to fulfil his vow."<sup>4</sup>

Whenever a person can not fulfil his vows, he goes to a *šēḥ* and asks for advice; he is generally told how to change his vow and what to offer as a substitute. It is a wide-spread belief among people of Palestine that, while every *nidr* may be replaced by another, a vow of fasting a certain number of days or weeks (besides Ramaḍān) can not be changed. This vow can not be "bought"<sup>5</sup> in any way. According to the regulations of the Old Testament every vow could be changed to payment of money except a sacrificial animal.<sup>6</sup>

It very often happens that during the fulfilment of a promise one binds himself to continual offerings. A father promised the prophet Moses once that if his only son, who was badly sick, should get well

<sup>1</sup> An accident is believed to be a particularly strong reminder.

<sup>2</sup> Every one who is reminded in one of the above mentioned ways will at once say: *lāzim nidrak yṣalak yā . . .*, "Your vow, O . . . will surely reach you."

<sup>3</sup> The Mohammedan theologians have discussed the subject of vows very minutely in their books. I shall mention only the following question which may happen often in the daily life. Is a person allowed to bind himself to abstain from allowed things (*mubāḥāt*)? Yes, is the answer, except that the matrimonial duties should never be neglected.

<sup>4</sup> *Man naḍara an yamṣi limahallin walan yastaḥi an yaqūma bihī falā yadjūzu an yukmila nidruhu maṣyan.*

<sup>5</sup> Often the expression "bought," *ištara*, is used; *ištara nidruh ibmīt qirī*, "he bought his vow with 100 piastres," i. e., he offered this sum instead of his vow.

<sup>6</sup> See Zeller, *Biblisches Wörterbuch* I, 453.

he would give him a sheep. While the father—after the recovery of the child—was offering the sheep at the shrine of the prophet, he exclaimed,<sup>1</sup> "Here is your vow, O Interlocutor of God, and if you keep my son well I vow you a sheep every year." Not only Mohammedans but also Christians may bind themselves in such a way.

Most of the vows are not expensive, but some are really costly. A man of Abû Dîs who fell sick during his stay in America and became badly ill, vowed:<sup>2</sup> "If I return to my family in perfect health, O God, I shall build a minaret for the mosque of my village." He got well and as soon as he returned to his country he built the minaret in question.<sup>3</sup> Another more expensive promise was that of a *šeh* of the family el-Imâm (Jerusalem).<sup>4</sup> During his last sickness he promised: „If I get well, O Prophet of God (Mohammed), I will build a *djâmi* with a minaret. But in case I die I beg you, O my relatives, to clothe forty orphans in my name."

The things which may be vowed are so numerous that it appears impracticable to give them in one list. They may be divided according to the sort of vows into 1. material offerings,<sup>5</sup> and 2. work promised. But a better classification is the following, which arranges them according to their purposes:

1. Things which serve directly for the upkeep of the *maqâm*
  - a) Offerings which serve to preserve and to beautify the sanctuary
  - b) Material for repairs
  - c) Personal work
2. Vows of food made in the name of a saint and offered (mostly) in his shrine. The shrine derives no direct benefit from the offering, but the poor receive a part in most cases
  - a) Animal sacrifices
  - b) *Qurbân, walimeh lil-lâh*
  - c) Meatless food

<sup>1</sup> *Hayi niđrak yâ Kalîm Allâh u ilak 'alaîy kull saneh ħarûf in ħallêtîk ibnî ħaiyb.*

<sup>2</sup> *In irdjî't bis-salâmeh la-'yâkî yâ Allâh la-abnî mēdaneh ladjâmi' baladî.*

<sup>3</sup> The story was told me by his cousin.

<sup>4</sup> See *Aberglaube*, p. 74.

<sup>5</sup> It should be noted that although most of the things found in a shrine are donations having their origin in vows, there are still other things which were the property of the *šeh* himself. The rosary and the spear belong to this category.

3. Offerings given to needy persons in the name of the *welî*
  - a) Poor, sick, rarely for hospitals
  - b) Orphans and widows
  - c) Prisoners
4. Religious vows
5. Bodily chastisements and vows to be fulfilled on the body of the vower or the person vowed for
6. Vows having no connection at all with any holy person or shrine, and not made for the poor
7. Offerings for the dead

#### I. Things which serve for the upkeep of the *maqâm*

Things vowed and offered to a saint which serve directly for the upkeep, decoration or repair of the shrine, make by far the greatest number of all vows. Most of the offerings which belong to this group are so simple and cheap that even the poorest peasant is able to offer something. This is the reason for their popularity.

##### a) Offerings which are used to maintain and to beautify the shrine

The two most important elements of this category—oil and incense—enjoy now, as among the ancient Orientals, a special favour. Olive oil is vowed and offered more than anything else. Peasants and townsmen, Christians and Mohammedans, rich and poor vow oil, and it may be offered to any sort of sanctuary. The olive tree—*šadjaret en-nûr*,<sup>1</sup> “the tree of light,” as it is called in the Qorân—is regarded as holy. It shows its supernatural power by its animation. The best example of this is the *zêtûnet en-nabî*<sup>2</sup> with the Mohammedans, and the following belief among Christians. The olive trees kneel down in the night of the feast of the Holy Cross, because it is thought that the heavens open on this very night.<sup>3</sup> A peasant of Bethlehem told me the following story. One night he lost his mule. He looked through the dark night in vain for his animal, but as he was searching in an olive grove, he observed that the ground was

<sup>1</sup> Some data relating to this subject have already been noted.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. *Aberglaube*, p. 87.

<sup>3</sup> Mohammedans believe that heaven opens once every year in *lêlatu l-Qadr*.

covered with branches of trees. He did not trust his own eyes, and as he could not find any explanation, he tore off a piece of his garment and fastened it to a branch, marking the place at the same time in order to find it early the next day and to investigate this mystery in broad day-light. Returning home he related the occurrence to his relatives. Nobody could account for this fact. An old man, sitting in the corner, shook his head plously and reminded all that this night was the night of the feast of the Holy Cross,<sup>1</sup> in which all the trees kneel reverently down before their master. The peasant went next day to the scene of his nightly adventure and saw all the trees standing erect while the piece of cloth, which he had fastened on a branch, floated high up in the air on the top of the tree.<sup>2</sup>

The Qorân<sup>3</sup> and the Bible mention oil and the olive tree very often. According to *Sûrah XCV*, 1, God swears<sup>4</sup> by this tree and therefore it is called *es-šadžarah el-mubârakeh*, "the blessed tree." It was given to Adam and Eve after their expulsion from Paradise, and it was the first plant which appeared after the flood.<sup>5</sup> The Arabs say that Adam had a very bad skin trouble. He begged the Almighty for help, and God sent the angel Gabriel with an olive sprig. The angel ordered Adam: "take this sprig, plant it and prepare from its fruit an oil which will cure all diseases except poisoning."<sup>6</sup> The peasants of Palestine swear sometimes by the olive tree saying: *wihyât šadjret en-nâr*, "By the life of the Tree of Light."<sup>7</sup> Oil is still used to light private houses, as well as churches, mosques and sanctuaries. It still enjoys the same popularity in popular medicine, religious ceremony and magic procedure, as it used to in the ancient Orient.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>1</sup> According to local superstition some plants (*âd mës*) have a better prophylactic and curative action if cut on a special day. The 27th of Ramađân enjoys this renown.

<sup>2</sup> On the Ascension day of the Virgin the trees are also supposed to kneel down.

<sup>3</sup> *Sûrah XVI*, 11; *XXIV*, 35; *LXXX*, 29; *XCV*, 1; *VI*, 99 and 141.

<sup>4</sup> *Sûrah XCV*, 1; *XXIV*, 35.

<sup>5</sup> *Faḥr er Râzi VI*, 174; *Gen.* 8 11.

<sup>6</sup> *Dâiratu l-Ma'ârif*, IX, 338.

<sup>7</sup> Another form is *u-ḥaqq man dâr ez-zêt fiz-zêtûn*, "By that One (God) who put the oil in the olives."

<sup>8</sup> Oil is used in the Bible very often to express power, joy, light, life and wisdom.

This oil—which is always *zēt zētūn*<sup>1</sup> (olive oil) and never *sīridj* (sesame oil)—is used for the small oil lamps, which will be described below. According to the ability of the person vowing, a *djarrah*,<sup>2</sup> half a *djarrah*, a *ratl*, or a *qazāzeh* (also called a *qannīneh*, a bottle of 800—1000 ccm.) are promised. Very often the quantity is not specified and many *fellāhīn* offer only a partly filled bottle. In villages far from cities an *ibrīq* (jug) of oil is given instead of a *qannīneh*. The vessels in which the oil<sup>3</sup> is taken are left in the sanctuary. This is the reason why we find dozens of such bottles or jugs scattered about a typical shrine. Good examples of this practice are *qubbet el-Arb'in*, *eš-šēh 'Anbar*, *el-'Azêrât*, *es-Sidri*, etc. In *el-Badrīyeh* (*Šarāfât*) there are two large jars quite full of oil.<sup>4</sup> Empty bottles, broken jars and jugs are not removed from the shrine, and thus we meet with a lot of potsherds scattered in the place. In large *maqâms* the one who vows gives the oil to the *haddâm* of the shrine and tells him plainly that it belongs to the saint, and that it should be used exclusively in the shrine. *Qimt en-nidr min raqbatī uḥattētuh fi raqбатаk*, "I have removed the vow from my neck (i. e. I remove all obligations from myself) and place it on your neck (and impose it on you)." Everybody believes that if such an offering is not used in the shrine of the saint, the *welī* will punish the servant of the shrine and not the one who pays the vow. Expressions like the above are especially common among Christians who have vowed an offering to a prophet or *welī* whose shrine is in Mohammedan hands: *Nebī Mūsâ*, *Nebī Dâhūd*, *Ibrâhīm el-Ḥalīl*,<sup>5</sup> etc.

<sup>1</sup> Also called *zēt ḥilâ*. Petroleum is *zēt kâz*, and not *zēt murr*, as Kahle states in *PJB* VIII, 139.

<sup>2</sup> A *djarrah* contains from 5-7 *ratl*, according to the different districts of Palestine.

<sup>3</sup> The following story will illustrate the belief that olive oil strengthens the body more than melted butter (*samneh*). A wife had a son of her own and a step son. Both were shepherds. Every day before they drove the animals into the fields she gave her own son—who was always preferred—bread and *samneh*, while the other received nothing but bread dipped in oil. After finishing their meals both used to wipe their hands by rubbing them on their sticks. The stick of the son was soon hollowed out by weevils, while that of his step-brother became gradually harder and stronger. (Taken from the written notes of my father, Rev. B. Canaan.)

<sup>4</sup> Not all the oil found in a shrine comes from offerings. In large *maqâms* some of it comes from the *waqf* of the *welī* or from the department of religious endowments (*dâirat el-auqâf*).

<sup>5</sup> Heard from a woman of *Ṭaiybeh* and from *Imm Elyâs*.

Two customs must still be mentioned in this connection. Very often a person takes a vow to offer a quantity of oil every year to a *welî*, "I will give you, O *šêh* Salmân el-Fârsî a *raṭl* of olive oil every year if you cure my son." Although this custom may be followed with any offering, it is more common with oil. Many peasants take some oil with them as a present every time they go to visit the shrine, even if they are not bound by a vow. In such cases half a bottle only is presented. It is believed that this act pleases the saint, who favours the giver. When I visited 'Êsâwiyeh I asked the *šêh*<sup>1</sup> Moḥammed 'Alî to send somebody to guide me to *šêh* 'Anbar. The young lad brought a bottle half filled with oil and placed it in the *maqâm*. On my question whether he or one of his relatives had made a vow to offer oil, he answered: "No, but every time we come to the neighbourhood of the *welî*, we bring some oil with us."

Most of those who offer oil take with them a match box (*'ibit kabrît* or *kaḥḥâteh*) and leave it there. Thus opportunity is given to every visitor to light the oil lamps. A great number of full and empty boxes are found in the *taqât* of some shrines.

It is expected that every one fulfils his promise exactly, since the saint takes every vow at its exact wording. Thus a larger offering than was mentioned in a vow may not be accepted by the *welî*. A very poor widow, whose only child was badly ill promised, in her excited state and without knowing what she was uttering: *yâ Haḥr ed-Djerîd in tâb ibnî la-aqaddimlak zêt fi qîšret bêḏah*, "O St. George, if my son gets well, I shall offer you oil in an egg-shell." As soon as her child recovered, she hastened with a pitcher of oil to fulfil her vow. She filled the oil lamp which hung in front of St. Georges picture, but an unseen power tilted the lamp and the oil was spilled. The same thing happened every time the lamp was filled. The priest who observed this unexplicable happening asked the woman, "What was your promise?" And when she told him, he answered very earnestly: "The saint accepts only what is due him, and not a grain<sup>2</sup> more."<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Šêh* here does not mean *welî* but "old man."

<sup>2</sup> In Arabic they use the word *qamḥah*, "grain of wheat" also in this sense.

<sup>3</sup> Related by Abû Elyâs, Jerusalem.

The oil presented is used only to light the oil lamps. Indications regarding the use of oil taken from the lamps of sanctuaries will be given later. Since olive oil is not so abundant in Transjordan, melted butter (*samneh*)<sup>1</sup> takes its place in vows and for lighting lamps in shrines. Candles (*šami*, pl. of *šam'ah*) and kerosene oil (*kâz* or *zêt kâz*) are also vowed. In the case of candles not only the number but very often the quality and the length are specified.<sup>2</sup> "O Nebî Mûsâ if I find my boy in good health, I will light you a candle of wax of his length."<sup>3</sup> *Šami nahl*<sup>4</sup> are finer than tallow candles and are more fitting as offerings. The length of candles is specified only in cases where children are sick. When no specification is made the following expression is used, *yâ . . . la-aḏwîlak šam'ah*, "O . . ., I shall light you a candle." Sometimes the weight of the candles is specified. In el-Badriyeh heaps of such candles may be seen,<sup>5</sup> mostly offered by Christians of Bêt Djâlâ and Bethlehem.<sup>6</sup> I have rarely found candles in less important sanctuaries.

In the case of the church of St. Mary near Gethsemane the vow may specify the number of candles and the way the vow must be fulfilled: "O my lady Mary, if my son Elyâs walks, I shall light your staircase on both sides."<sup>7</sup> For every step two candles are lighted. A few minutes later the priest puts the light out, gathers the candles and keeps them in the sanctuary for further use.<sup>8</sup> A vow of this sort must be paid on the first day of Mary's feast. A still more comprehensive vow is the following: "If my son Ibrâhîm walks I shall light a candle in every shrine which he enters."

The most common lamps used in shrines are small, crudely prepared pottery lamps, which resemble ancient Canaanite lamps in many respects. These *surdj* (pl. of *srâdj*) may be specified in vows.

<sup>1</sup> As the Bedouin do not have much oil, we find that animal sacrifices are very abundant. Often an animal sacrifice takes the place of oil.

<sup>2</sup> *Yâ Nabî Mûsâ in lağet ibnî tayyb la aḏwîlak šam'ah min nahl u tûluh.*

<sup>3</sup> Promised by a father who receives during his absence news of the illness of his child.

<sup>4</sup> The expression means properly "beeswax."

<sup>5</sup> Some of them I saw hanging from the ceiling and others lay on the so-called tombs of her children.

<sup>6</sup> Christians trust greatly to the help of this female *welî*.

<sup>7</sup> *Yâ sittî Maryam in mišî ibnî Elyâs la aḏwî darradjik 'alâ ed-djihîten.*

<sup>8</sup> Heard from Imm Elyâs (Jerusalem).

They are placed in one of the cupboards of the tomb, in a niche in the wall, on the tomb or around it (*eš-šeh* Ḥamad, Qubbet el-Arb'in), on a ledge in the wall (š. 'Anbar), on a wooden bracket fastened on the wall<sup>1</sup> (Sultân Ibrâhîm el-'Adhamî, el-Badriyeh), in a cave (Aḥmad el-Ḥwês), under a tree (š. 'Abdallâh), in a stony enclosure (š. Frêdj<sup>2</sup>) or in an open place (el-'Umarî<sup>3</sup>).

Sometimes we find tins crudely shaped, by bending their sides upwards, into a lamp-like vessel, which serves to hold the oil.<sup>4</sup> A lamp of this inferior type is not presented, but made at the spot for the lack of a pottery lamp.<sup>5</sup>

The wick<sup>6</sup> is made in two ways: 1. a piece of cotton thread, or even a thin strip, of cloth is well dipped into the oil, one end protruding above the surface of the liquid; 2. a thin stick of wood about twice as long as a match is well wrapped in cotton. The upper end of the cotton is allowed to project over the wood. After dipping the whole in oil it is placed perpendicularly in the lamp and lighted.

Some people vow a glass lamp with or without an outside silver casing. A *qandîl min fidḍah*, "silver lamp," may be suspended by a silver chain in front of the saint's picture,<sup>7</sup> above the tomb<sup>8</sup> or in front of the *mîhrâb*. Rich people vow brass or silver candlesticks, or even an expensive lustre for candles or glass lamps.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>1</sup> These holders may be a little more complicated, so that they look like a small, elongated, narrow box without the top and front side. The top may at times be present.

<sup>2</sup> Bêt Ḥanînâ.

<sup>3</sup> Jericho.

<sup>4</sup> In some places empty sardine or other tins were used as lamps.

<sup>5</sup> In *en-nabî* Dâniân I found an old pan used as an oil lamp. I want to correct at this place the statement made on page 62 about the situation of this sanctuary. It lies to the SW of el-Ḥaḍer, and not between this village and Artâs. It is situated on a high mountain, commanding a magnificent view. The shrine is surrounded by a ruin and the simple niche is built in the midst of the oak trees.

<sup>6</sup> *Ftîleh*.

<sup>7</sup> Mohammedans never have human or animal pictures in their mosques or shrines.

<sup>8</sup> In churches they are very often met with. In Mohammedan shrines they are rarely found except in important sanctuaries.

<sup>9</sup> I have not found pottery lamps in churches. For illustrations of pottery lamps see McCown, *Annual of the American School*, vol. II—III, p. 28.



Incense (*baḥḥūr*) is very often vowed: "O šēḥ Šabbāḥ if my boy comes out of jail, I shall burn incense for you." Much more often the phrase *ad'aq<sup>1</sup> baḥḥūr fi maqāmek*, "I shall burn incense in your shrine," is used. This incense may be burned in the shrine at once or it may be given to the *ḥaddām* or priest. In unimportant shrines the *baḥḥūr* is burned in an old dish, a piece of tin or on a potsherd. These objects remain afterwards in the shrine. Such is the case in all the shrines of Jericho, eš-šēḥ Ḥusên, Qubbet el-Arb'in, ed-Dawārî, etc. Sometimes the quantity of incense is specified in the *nidr*. Incense may be offered in all sorts of shrines.<sup>2</sup>

Burning incense is a very old custom, found in all religions and connected with many ceremonies.<sup>3</sup> It is not only done in shrines, but also in places inhabited by demons. In the first case it is thought one pleases the holy men by this act, while in the second instance it drives away the evil spirits. It is supposed that what pleases holy men and God is disliked by devils, demons and evil spirits. For this reason it is employed by sorcerers to expel evil spirits from supposed demoniacs.

Other votive objects belonging to this category are: mats (*ḥašîreh*, pl. *ḥuṣur*), carpets (*siddjâdeh—siddjâd*), brooms<sup>4</sup> (*mukunseh—makânes*), jars (*djarrah—djrâr*, *hišseh—hišaš*), pails (*ṣatl—stûleh*), tins (*tanakeh—tanak<sup>5</sup>*), ropes (*ḥabił—ḥbâl*)<sup>6</sup>, water skins<sup>7</sup> (*qirbeh—qirab*, small ones are called *si'in—s'ûneh*), wood (*ḥaṭab*), etc. With the exception of the carpets all objects are vowed to all sorts of shrines, especially the simple ones. Carpets and *ḥudjûr* (pl. of *ḥudjrah*)—long woollen

<sup>1</sup> *Da'aqa* in the sense of "burn" is not found in Belot, Wahrmond, Kassâb and Hammâm or in *Muḥîṭ el-Muḥîṭ*.

<sup>2</sup> If a menstruating women goes down to 'Ēn eš-Šēḥ Ḥusên (in Kolôniâ, also called 'Ēn ed-Djôz) she has to purify the place at once by burning incense. If she fails to do it, the servant of the *welî* (an 'abd) will appear and inflict some disease upon her.

<sup>3</sup> In the Old Testament burning incense was one of the official religious rites, Ex. 30 7, 8, Lev. 16 12, etc.

<sup>4</sup> There are two kinds of brooms, the usual one with a broad sweeping surface and the round, short one, which ends in a small brush.

<sup>5</sup> For storing or drawing water; sometimes specified as *tanaket kâz*, as they were originally used for petroleum.

<sup>6</sup> For drawing water.

<sup>7</sup> For the transport and storage of water.

carpets woven by women—are presented to the more important sanctuaries.

Decorative objects are sometimes also vowed and fastened to the wall of the *maqâm* or to the tomb. Qorân verses, *kaff qamih*, or jewels are met with. Besides verses of the holy book sometimes the genealogical tree of the Prophet, and representations of the Ka'beh and the sanctuary of Medinah are found. A *kaff qamih* is made of ears of grain with long stems woven in such a way as to have ears on three sides—the two lateral and the lower—while the upper is earless. This "hand" of corn is generally offered as a sign of thanks for a good harvest. In Bêt Djâlâ every owner of a vineyard<sup>1</sup> used to bring on 'id *et-tadjallî* (Transfiguration Feast<sup>2</sup>) a small basket of grapes (*sallit*<sup>3</sup> 'inab) to the church. After sanctifying the grapes, the priest used to distribute some of the fruits among those present.<sup>4</sup> The last two customs<sup>5</sup> were mentioned because they point to vestiges<sup>6</sup> of thanksgiving offerings.<sup>7</sup>

Jewels, or rather ornaments like the *znâq* (necklace), *halaq* (ear-rings), *šakleh* (broach), *hâtim* (ring), *asâwir* (bracelets), *šatweh* (head-dress of Bethlehem, Bêt Djâlâ and Bêt Sâhûr women) and *šaffeh* (the head-dress of the women of Ramallâh and the surrounding villages) are also vowed. They are either hung on the *stârah* of the tomb (el-Badriyeh), around or on the *qûneh* (picture) of a Christian saint, or are sold and the proceeds spent for the benefit of the *maqâm*. As soon as a Christian woman of Bêt Djâlâ<sup>8</sup> makes such a vow she hangs the promised jewel on the picture of the saint. In case the person for whom the *nidr* was made dies, the objects are taken back, but if he recovers they remain the property of the

<sup>1</sup> Of the Greek Orthodox Church.

<sup>2</sup> August 6th, Jul. Calender (19th Greg.).

<sup>3</sup> A small basket is called *qirṭalleh*.

<sup>4</sup> Taken from the notes of my father.

<sup>5</sup> Many of the peasants of the villages around Nazareth put aside, as soon as they finish harvesting, some barley and wheat for *eš-šeh* Šhâb ed-Dîn. This will be sold and with the money a picnic is given in the name and the honour of the *welî*.

<sup>6</sup> The peasants of Bêt Djâlâ send some oil, after pressing their olives, to the church of Mâr Inqûlâ as a sign of thanks.

<sup>7</sup> See also Curtiss, chapter XVII.

<sup>8</sup> Of the Greek Orthodox Church.

shrine.<sup>1</sup> Most of these ornaments, especially the *znâq*, the *ṣaṭweh* and the *ṣaffeh* are costly pieces and are offered by women who think that by depriving themselves of such valuable things, they will make sure of the saint's favour and sympathy. A description of the *ṣaṭweh* is important to show the value of such a head-dress. It is cylindrical, solid and covered on the outside with red, sometimes green cloth. The top of it has a rigid projection covered with the same cloth. The front is lined with several rows of gold and silver coins, while the back has only silver ones. The *ṣaṭweh* is fastened on the head by a band running below the chin. From both ears of the *ṣaṭweh* the *znâq* hangs down.<sup>2</sup>

Vows which are paid only to the tomb are: *stârah* (or *ghatâ*), a covering, and '*aqâl* or *laffeh* (head-dress). The *stârah*<sup>3</sup> is a large piece of cloth covering the whole cenotaph. In less important shrines it is made of a single coloured cloth, while in the important ones a thick, woollen cloth of good quality (*djûh*<sup>4</sup>) is presented. The red and the green colours predominate; white and yellow are less favoured. Sometimes the cloth is bordered or even embroidered with Qorânic verses. Very often a combination of these colours is found in the same *stârah*. This is made by sewing strips of cloth of different colours on the main cover. Not infrequently one tomb is covered with several *stârât*, the upper one being the last vowed (nebî Mûsâ, Badriyeh, etc.).<sup>5</sup>

Occasionally a *bëraq* (banner) is vowed, generally beautifully embroidered. The name of the saint, those of the four *aqṭâb* (see below) and a verse of the Qorân are generally embroidered on it.<sup>6</sup>

The colour of the turban ('*aqâl*) and that of the *laffeh*<sup>7</sup> (the dervish head-dress) must correspond to the order to which the *ṣeḥ*

<sup>1</sup> From the written notes of my father.

<sup>2</sup> *Aberglaube*, p. 74, n. 6.

<sup>3</sup> Among *welîs* who possess a *stârah* are Salmân el-Fârsî, 'Anbar, Abd es-Salâm, Badr, sittnâ el-Ḥaḍrâ, el-Bedriyeh, el-Ḥalîlî, etc.

<sup>4</sup> In *Ṣârâfât* I heard the expression *hirmzeh* for the cloth of the *stârah*.

<sup>5</sup> The *stârah* does not always lie directly on the cenotaph, sometimes it is supported by a wooden frame which encloses the tomb (Beyram Şawiş, el-Badriyeh).

<sup>6</sup> Such presents may be seen in the shrines of Lût, Mûsâ, Dâhûd, etc.

<sup>7</sup> The headdress of some villages around Jerusalem is also a *laffeh*, which differs slightly from the one described in the text.

belonged.<sup>1</sup> The *stârah* and the head-dress are vowed only to saints whose tombs are inside a building and never to tombs located in the open. In the case of some Bedouin saints, however, a head-dress is found on an exposed tomb. Seyidnâ el-Ḥusên, S. E. of ed-Djôrah (near Ascalon), has no tomb, but inside the *maqâm* a fragment of a pillar shows the place where the head of el-Ḥusên was buried. The top of the pillar bears a green *laffeh* and below it there is a red cloth.<sup>2</sup>

Some peasants (especially Christians) vow one or several trees to a saint. The fruit of the trees belong to the holy man. If the trees are cut down the wood goes to the shrine, but the holy man loses all further rights to the place of land, since the trees and not the ground were vowed. The latter returns to the former owner or to his descendants. Of course a piece of land with its trees or even a house may also be donated to a shrine. Such property remains *waqf*, "religious property."<sup>3</sup>

Vowing to decorate a shrine is the connecting link between votive offerings and vows to perform work. The commonest material is *ḥinnâ* but we find also *nîleh* and *sirâqûn*, which have already been described. Common expressions are: *anâ dâḥîl 'alêkî yâ sittî eš-Šâmiyeh in arzaqtîni şabî la-adbalîk ḥarûf wa-aḥannîkî*, "I beg for help, O my lady Š . . ., if you grant me a boy I will slay you a sheep and dye you with *ḥinnâ*." In the case of the two other colours the word *azawwiq* (embellish) is used. Such vows are made exclusively by women.<sup>4</sup>

#### b) Vowing material for the repair of the *maqâm*

Vows promising material for the repair of the *maqâm* or its complete reconstruction are also very common. If such vows did not exist, a great number of sanctuaries would be in a condition of ruin, and the site of some would have been lost completely. The

<sup>1</sup> Eš-šêḥ Rîḥân, eš. Aḥmad eṭ-Tôri, eš. 'Anbar, eš. 'Abd es-Salâm, etc.

<sup>2</sup> The large *maqâm* is on the top of a hill about 20—30 minutes from the sea. There are no tombs or caves in its neighbourhood. Two mulberry trees and a vineyard are his property.

<sup>3</sup> This is the reason why some churches have extensive properties.

<sup>4</sup> Even the stones of a holy *ḥuwêtiyeh*—as in the case of *eš-šêḥ* Sa'îd in Iḏnâ—may be painted with *ḥinnâ*.

following are the most important materials which may be vowed: *ḥājārah* (pl. *ḥādjār*, hewn stones), *dabš* or *djabš* (unhewn, irregular stones), *'uqqād* (stones for vaulting), *šīd* (lime), *nḥāteh* (fine broken stones left over from stone-cutting operations), water for making the *madjbūliyyeh*,<sup>1</sup> *ḥadīd* (iron) and *el-bāb* (the wooden or sometimes iron door). Generally several persons while assembled in the *madāfeh* agree that each one will bring something. The *šēh* of the village, discussing the condition of the shrine, makes the first promise. One after the other follows saying *anā 'alaiyî . . .*, "I will offer . . ." Such a statement is already a vow and it must be fulfilled exactly.

Even when the *welî* is not in a ruined condition, many vow lime which is deposited in the immediate neighbourhood of the shrine or even inside it. Such vows are made, in the first place, by persons who are burning lime. In this way they hope to get the assistance of the *welî* for a successful completion of the job.<sup>2</sup> A visitor to Mohammedan *welis* will often find in them heaps of lime<sup>3</sup> generally covered with a coating of earth (*eš-šēh* 'Anbar, *es-sultān* Ibrāhīm, *eš-šēh* Ḥamad, Aḥmad el-Karakī, etc.).

Another occasion when vows of this sort are made is, when a rich peasant builds a house and promises some building material for the same reason: *in ḥallašt ibnāit bēti bis-salāmeḥ la-armīlak yā . . . talāt ḥmāl*<sup>4</sup> *šīd*, "If I finish my house in good health, I will bring you, O . . . three loads of lime." Such vows are also made by Palestinians who become badly ill while absent in a foreign country, as we have seen in the case of the man of Abū Dis. Sometimes a *welî* with no shrine, or whose sanctuary is defective, appears in a vision to someone in the village and orders him to erect or to repair the *maqām*. This man will then tell his vision to his fellow villagers and soon the necessary material is gathered.

<sup>1</sup> A mixture of lime (one-third) and earth (two-thirds) for mortar.

<sup>2</sup> In 'Awartah many of those who burn lime will offer to el-'Azērāt one *fardeh* of *šīd*. One *fardeh* = 30–50 kg. In this village I heard the word *kubbār* for a small *lattōn*.

<sup>3</sup> The lime may be deposited outside the shrine, in a cave near-by, in the shrine itself, or on its roof.

<sup>4</sup> The loads may be specified: *ḥiml ājamal*, *ḥ. baḡl*, or *ḥ. ḥmār*, i. e. "a camel's load, mule's l., donkey's l."

## c) Personal work

No sooner is the material ready than the people of the village—men and women, grown-ups and children—offer their help for the work. This one gives two days' work, the other vows to hew some of the stone, a third promises to carry the water, etc., and in a short time the work is done. Even the rich and the old count it a special honour and blessing to help erect such a building. Combined help by all the inhabitants of the village is offered when the ceiling is built (*el-'aqd*). All move very busily in finishing the shrine. But only in exceptional cases does a sanctuary need complete erection; generally it needs only to be repaired: The roof is defective, the *q̄sarah* has fallen, the door has been burnt, the tomb has lost its white-wash, etc. In such circumstances one generally takes a vow to make some repair. In *ḥallaṣṭillî el-lattôn min il-ḥarâb yâ sidî yâ šêḥ* 'Abd es-Salâm la-armîlak ḥimlên šid u la-aṭruš qabrak. "If you save our lime-kiln from destruction, O my lord, O *šêḥ* 'A . . ., I will bring you two loads of lime and will whitewash the tomb and the shrine." This vow was taken by Mohammed of 'Anâtâ, who had built a lime-kiln with some relatives. He had already been heating it for four *f̄šûleh*<sup>1</sup> (pl. of *faṣl*, season, here half a day), when suddenly part of the kiln began to collapse. The owner, afraid of losing all his work made the above vow, whereupon the holy man appeared in the midst of the flame and began to extinguish the fire. They repaired the lime-kiln, lit the fire anew and the work was saved. Some shrines thus repaired are: A stone casing was built for the entrance of *eš-šêḥ es-Sidri*; 'Anbar received an iron door; for *eš. Šuwân* a tomb was built; the *djâmi* in Abû Dîs received a minaret; the tombs of *ed-Dawâ'ri* were whitewashed; adjacent to *es-Sultân Ibrâhîm's* mosque (*Bêt Ḥanînâ*) a hall was erected, etc.

Besides these expensive vows we meet with others much simpler and less expensive. A woman may bind herself to sweep a sanctuary several days, weeks or even more. In the last case the shrine is

<sup>1</sup> *Faṣl* has the following meanings:

*faṣl es-saneḥ*, "a season of the year";

*faṣl maiyeh*, "twelve hours of water." This is used when the water of a spring is divided among many gardens;

*faṣl* of a day stands for the twelve day and twelve night hours. Thus a day has two *f̄šûleh*.

swept once weekly. Another person may promise to light the lamps for some time. This is done every Thursday evening. Still another will bind himself to fill the *sabil* with water. Some offer to work three days (or more) in the *wagf* (sanctuary property) of the saint. Many women of Bêt-Djâlâ vow to help in harvesting the olives of Mâr Elyâs, others to plough the vineyards of el-Ḥaḍr.

## II. Food vows

They are generally offered in a shrine. The shrine has no direct benefit from this offering, but the poor receive part in most cases. This class may be divided into:

- a) Animal sacrifices (*ḍbiḥah*, pl. *ḍabâyi!*)
- b) *Qurbân* (offering to God), or *walîmel lîl-lâh* (banquet for God)
- c) Meatless food

All these three categories were very well known in the ancient Orient, and in describing each class we shall refer to the corresponding Hebrew practice.

### a) Animal sacrifices

By *ḍbiḥah* a sacrifice of some animal is always understood. *Ḍabiḥah* is the feminine of *ḍabiḥ* and means "whatever is slain as an offering," and really stands—as was already noted by Jaussen<sup>2</sup>—for a female animal. At present the word has lost its specific character and is used for any animal. From the same root (*ḍabaha*) we have *maḍbah*<sup>3</sup> "altar," originally the place where the sacrificial animal was killed. It is curious that the word *smât*<sup>4</sup> is used in some parts of Palestine exclusively for a *ḍbiḥah* (Benî Zêd,<sup>5</sup> Benî Mâlik<sup>6</sup>), while in other parts—as for example in Jerusalem and the surrounding villages—this same word is used for a *ṭabḥah*, and not

<sup>1</sup> *Muḥîṭ el-Muḥîṭ* I, 708.

<sup>2</sup> Page 338.

<sup>3</sup> Means also the neck.

<sup>4</sup> *Smât* means according to *Muḥîṭ el-Muḥîṭ* (I, 994) a table or a large round tray on which food is presented. I do not doubt that the present meaning of "food offering" originated from the idea of offering a table with food (a *walîmel*) for the *velî*.

<sup>5</sup> With Dêr Ghassâneh as the main village and former capital.

<sup>6</sup> With Abû Ghôṣ as the centre.

for an animal sacrifice. Whenever the word *smâṭ*<sup>1</sup> is used in this section (of animal sacrifices) it means a *ḍbiḥah*, and the formulas used originate in Dêr Ghassâneh or Abû Ghôš.

I do not intend to give in this study all the different sorts of *dabâiyh* known in Palestine. Jaussen has given in his book, *Coutumes des Arabes*, a list of 29 sorts practised in Moab.<sup>2</sup>

*Dabâiyh* may be divided into three groups, and it is a mistake to mix one of these with the other:

1. Sacrifices connected directly with some religious idea
2. Those connected with the *ḍjinn*
3. Those connected with family circumstances, such as invitations, family feasts, etc.

Only such animal offerings as belong to the first group will be described here. Some of those belonging to the second category will be mentioned only for completeness. Occasions which belong to the third category are: the installation of a *muḥtâr*,<sup>3</sup> the arrival of an honoured guest,<sup>4</sup> family events such as circumcision, betrothal, marriage, the dedication of a house. Important agreements are often not completed, until sealed with a sacrifice.<sup>5</sup> But the most fruitful occasion for making sacrifices is the discharging of a vow.<sup>6</sup> These sacrifices belong to the first group.

The custom of vowing an animal is not at all new. All religions of the ancient Orient practiced it. Kinds of animals which may be used for this purpose are a young camel (*ḍjamaḥ ḍjazûr*), a young she-camel (*nâqah ḍjazûr*), a yearling ox (*tôr ḥôlî*<sup>7</sup>), a cow, a sheep (*ḥarûf*<sup>8</sup>), a young goat (*sâḥl*<sup>9</sup>), or a goat (*ḍjîdî*).

In different parts of Palestine different animals are preferred: thus the Bedouin often vow a camel, while the *fellahîn* prefer a

<sup>1</sup> According to *Muḥit*, Belot, Kassâb and Hammâm, *smâṭ* means also "the table cloth on which the meal is offered."

<sup>2</sup> Pp. 337-363.

<sup>3</sup> 1 Sam. 11 15.

<sup>4</sup> Gen. 18 1-9.

<sup>5</sup> Gen. 31 54.

<sup>6</sup> Jacob (Gen. 28 20-22), Jephthah (Jud. 11 30-40).

<sup>7</sup> From *ḥôlî*, "one year," but very often older animals are vowed.

<sup>8</sup> The ewe is called *na'djeh*, the ram *kabš*; both may be offered.

<sup>9</sup> The female is called *'anzeh*, the male *tês*; both may be offered. At times it is specified whether one or the other is to be sacrificed.



sheep.<sup>1</sup> No unclean animal (pig) will ever be vowed. A vowed animal must possess special characteristics which will be described later. Very often it happens that only a part of an animal is offered. This is only the case when the sacrifice vow is a camel, ox or a cow. Half, a third or a fourth of a cow may be vowed. In such a case half, a third or a fourth of the price of the cow is given to the sanctuary. This money is given as soon as the cow is sold. Abū Ṭālib, a man of Bêt Ḥaninā, told me, that not only should one-half of the price of the animal be given, but as long as it is not sold half the work, half the milk and half of all calves which the cow gets after the vow is made (and before it is sold) belong to the *welī*. From the moment, Abū Ṭālib explained, that the vow is spoken half the cow and thus one-half its work and products belong to the owner and the other half to the man of God. At present only half the price of the animal is given and all other rights of the saint are withdrawn. Abū Ṭālib continued: *ed-djami' byāklū ḥaqq el-awliā*, i. e., not everything that belongs to a *welī*, and that should be given to him, is actually given. Very conscientious persons expressly vow, therefore, only half the price of an animal: *in adjānī ḥabar šifāh<sup>2</sup> yā nabiy allāh yā Muḥammad la-aštri ibnuṣṣ ṭaman et-ṭōr kisweh<sup>3</sup> lal-fuḡarā*, "if I receive the news of his recovery I shall buy, O Prophet of God, O Mohammed, for half of the price of the ox, clothes for the poor."<sup>4</sup>

A Christian of Ṭaiybeh informed me that it is customary in the vicinity of his village, when the calves of a cow die, one after the other, to vow a part of the next one born to el-Ḥaḍr. "Accept my vow, O Green Ḥaḍr; a quarter of what she (the cow) brings, is yours."

By far the most common animal vowed is a sheep.<sup>5</sup> Always when the animal is not specified, i. e., when only the words *ḍbiḥah* or

<sup>1</sup> Sheep are called *bayāḍ* (white), while goats are known also by the name of *samār* (black). The meat of *bayāḍ* is much preferred to that of goats.

<sup>2</sup> The *h* is to be pronounced.

<sup>3</sup> See below.

<sup>4</sup> Such a vow is made when an absent relative is ill.

<sup>5</sup> The sheep is the first domestic animal mentioned in the Bible.

*smât* (in Benî Zêd and Benî Mâlik) are used, a sheep<sup>1</sup> is meant to be offered.

An absolutely healthy and faultless animal has to be offered. No lame, blind or sick one should be promised.<sup>2</sup> An animal which has accidentally broken a limb or has been wounded by a gun-shot is not suitable for the fulfilment of a vow.<sup>3</sup> The Old Testament gives the same regulations.<sup>4</sup> The word *ḏbiḥah* bears the sense of "slaughtering." Therefore one which has lost some of its blood in any other way than by being butchered does not fulfil the real purpose of the vow.

Animal sacrifices are drawn in many cases from one's own herd. Stolen animals are not accepted by any *welî*. I can not verify for Palestine Doutté's observation in North Africa,<sup>5</sup> namely that a *ḏbiḥah* must be a male animal.

The expressions used in taking a vow for a *ḏbiḥah* are very numerous. I shall only mention the most important ones: *Smâṭak yâ Hawwâs in râq ibnî*, "Your animal offering, O H. (will be sent to you) if my son recovers;"<sup>6</sup> *nîḏrun 'alaiy yâ nabî Mûsâ in ridjî' ḏjôzi bis-salâmeh la-aqaddîmlak ḏbiḥah*, "I take upon myself a vow, O prophet Moses, if my husband returns safely, I shall offer you an animal;"<sup>7</sup> *in adjânî ṣabî yâ Halîl Allâh la-aḏbaḥlak kull saneh ḥarûf*, "if I get a boy, O Friend of God (Abraham) I shall sacrifice to you a sheep yearly."<sup>8</sup>

All the above expressions contain the assumption that the animal which is being promised will be slain. But it is not at all necessary

<sup>1</sup> The sheep was pre-eminently the animal for sacrifice, though mostly rams were appointed to be offered up, first because their meat is thought better than that of ewes, and also because it was more important to spare the ewes for breeding purposes. The milk of the ewes was (in Biblical times, and is still) a most important article of diet; thus Moses in his song speaks of

"Butter of the herd and milk of the flock,

With fat of lambs and ram-lambs, sons of Bashan," Deut. 32 14

(James Neil).

<sup>2</sup> Doutté, p. 464.

<sup>3</sup> See also Jaussen, p. 338.

<sup>4</sup> Mal. I 14.

<sup>5</sup> Page 464: "elle doit être de sex male."

<sup>6</sup> In this formula as well as in the following the animal is not specified, and generally a sheep is offered.

<sup>7</sup> While the last formula is used in Benî Zêd and Benî Mâlik, this one may be heard everywhere.

<sup>8</sup> Contrary to the last two formulas this one specifies the animal.

to slaughter the animal; some promise to send a living animal to the sanctuary: *yâ mâr Djîrius ilak 'alaiy in tâb ibnî harûf wâqif*, "O St. George, if my child recovers I owe you a sound sheep (i. e. a living one)." After such a vow the sheep will be sent to the convent of St. George in el-Ḥader, and the *raiys* (director of the convent) has the right to do with it as he pleases.

Animal sacrifices are made mostly on important occasions: disease or absence of a member of the family; great impending danger; when a man has no male children; when a disease attacks a flock of sheep. The expression used in the last case is: *in rafa't el-wabâ<sup>1</sup> min ghanamî<sup>2</sup> ikbîrhâ smâtak yâ Rfâ'î*, "if you take the disease from my flock, the biggest of them is your offering, O R." In the case of *eš-šêḥ* 'Anbar<sup>3</sup> a flock attacked by an epidemic is all brought to visit the *maqâm*,<sup>4</sup> whose door is kept open. While the sheep pass the *welî*, the first one which tries to enter the shrine is vowed to the *šêḥ*. It is said, *ihârha*, "he has chosen it." In this case, as well as when the sheep is pointed out, the top of the ear is cut with the words *šarâḥt dânuh*,<sup>5</sup> "I have cut his ear." Such a sheep remains with the others and is well cared for until it is sacrificed, *biyqâ 'alâ ismuh*, "it remains on his name" (that of the *welî* to whom it belongs). Sometimes a man promises the firstborn sheep<sup>6</sup> of his flock<sup>7</sup> to a saint, hoping that this man of God will bless the flock and keep it safe. Others vow one of the first twins. In both these cases, as well as when a lamb is brought for the fulfilment of the vow, the young animals are well fed and cared for, until they grow up and the time of their sacrifice comes. They are called *rbîbeh*,<sup>8</sup> an expression which is also used for any well-fed sheep

<sup>1</sup> This word means also "plague, epidemic."

<sup>2</sup> *Ghanam* stands for a flock irrespective of whether they are sheep or goats.

<sup>3</sup> 'Anbar's shrine is situated on the SE. saddle of the eastward continuation of the Mount of Olives, not far from 'Ēsâwiyeh. It is a *maqâm* of *šêḥ* 'Anbar's tomb in the main shrine and that of his wife in the small northern room. It is said that 'Anbar was the slave of an Egyptian master. The miraculous story of the journey of 'Anbar will be mentioned later.

<sup>4</sup> *Bizawrâhâ*.

<sup>5</sup> *Qataš* is also used.

<sup>6</sup> See Curtiss.

<sup>7</sup> According to the law of Moses it was forbidden to vow the firstborn of any beast, which was already devoted to God (Lev. 27 26).

<sup>8</sup> Kahle, *PJB* VIII, 156.

brought up under specially favorable conditions. In case an animal dies of a disease, some people replace it by another, while others believe that as the Almighty God permitted such a loss, the *welî* has no right to another one, and they feel released. In case an animal which has been vowed gets sick, it may be sold and with its price another (but younger animal) may be bought. Others slay it and distribute the meat among the poor.

It is forbidden to change an animal once dedicated to a *welî*. The man of God will surely—thus the peasants believe—not accept such a sacrifice and will punish the doer.

It is not at all necessary to breed every animal vowed for the *ḍbiḥah*; it may be bought at the sanctuary or in the market. In some shrines there is a large market at the time of the *mōsam*, giving everyone opportunity to buy any number of animals he wishes.<sup>1</sup> It even may happen that the person who has bound himself by a vow can not go to the sanctuary, thus being unable to fulfil his promise in person. He then entrusts the fulfilment of his obligation to some friend, by giving him the animal or money to buy one. Sometimes, but not often, a sum may be sent to the *qaiym* of the holy place, in order to buy a sheep which he slays in the name of the donor.

We will see later why it is very important, even obligatory that every one should be present in person or be represented by a delegated friend or relative while his *ḍbiḥah* is sacrificed. Offering an animal for somebody else without an authority takes away the desired connection between the person and his holy intercessor.<sup>2</sup>

Generally the one who has made the vow and he for whom it was taken, with some relatives and friends, go to the sanctuary to fulfil it. In case the *nīder* was made for a woman who becomes impure by menstruation at the time of the fulfilment, she does not accompany the procession and can not attend the sacrifice. Young children and babies may not join such a feast as a rule, especially when the *welî* is far away.

A *ḍbiḥah* is usually slaughtered in the *maqām* of the saint to whom it was promised, but this is not a binding rule. A *ḍbiḥah* for

<sup>1</sup> Nebî Músá, Rûbin, Šáleḥ, etc.

<sup>2</sup> See also Douттé, p. 466.

Ibrâhîm el-Ḥalîl (in Hebron) may be offered in Jerusalem, and one for en-nabî Dâhûd (Jerusalem) in Nâblus. In such a case *btindbil* 'alâ ismuh, "it is slain in his name (i. e., that of the saint)." This may happen when nobody can go to the shrine in question. A Bedouin of the tribe el-'Idwân told me that most of the sacrifices made for Moses are killed in their camp (Transjordan) and not at the shrine. But it is considered more correct to offer the animal in the sanctuary, for a visit to such a place is in itself a *barakeh*, "blessing."

When a sheep is taken to a shrine it is sometimes decorated with flowers and coloured ribbons. A small round mirror (*mrây*) sometimes is suspended from its forehead and the horns are dyed with *hinnâ*. In the *môsam* of Nebî Mûsâ one finds many sheep whose foreheads, backs and tails are dyed with *siraqûn* and *madhab*.<sup>1</sup>

Anyone who knows how to slaughter a sheep may do it. Generally it is done by the people who take the offering. In exceptional cases it is done by the *haddâm* of the shrine. In important places of pilgrimage with well-known *mawâsim* there are butchers, who usually slaughter the *ḏbiḥah*, receiving a quarter or half a *madjidi* for their work. But nobody is obliged to hand over his sheep to such a person. Women never perform this act. Dóutté's<sup>2</sup> observation that a *muqaddim* (offerer) slays the *ḏbiḥah* in most shrines has its parallel only once in Palestine, the Maghrebine *zâwieh* of Abû Madian.<sup>3</sup>

In a large *maqâm*, like Nebî Mûsâ,<sup>4</sup> there is a special place for slaughtering.<sup>5</sup> In smaller ones with a kitchen the animal is slain in or in front of this room (en-Nabî Şâleḥ, in the village of en-Nabî Şâleḥ). There are sanctuaries, which have no real kitchen but have adjacent to the wall of the *maqâm* an open enclosure or *rwâq* which serves as a kitchen and where the *ḏabâyh* are slain and the food is cooked (er-Rfâ'i, Rdjâl Şafeh). Not infrequently especially in Transjordan the animals are slain on the roof of the *maqâm*, so that some of the blood runs over the front wall. In all other shrines the

<sup>1</sup> This word comes from *mâ* (water) and *ḏahab* (gold) and means "gold leaf tinsel."

<sup>2</sup> Page 462.

<sup>3</sup> Kahle, *PJB* VIII, 155.

<sup>4</sup> It lies one or two minutes from the shrine and near a cistern.

<sup>5</sup> Kahle, l. c., and Curtiss, chapter XXV.

animal may be killed in any place which is in the direct neighbourhood of the *maqām*: under a tree, on a large flat rock, in front of the shrine itself. If the place of slaughtering is designated in the *nīder*, then such a condition must be fulfilled: e. g., *smātak yā Ḥaurwās adbaḥu 'alā 'atbatak*, "your sheep-offering, O Ḥ . . ., I shall slay on the threshold of your door." The animal is more often killed on the threshold of the door of the courtyard than on that of the door of the shrine. *Dbīhtak yā Ḥātim adbaḥhā 'alā tabūtak*, "Your *dbīḥah*, O Ḥ., I shall slay on your coffin." In the last case the animal is slain inside the shrine, beside the tomb and not on it. Great care is taken that neither the floor nor the tomb be polluted with blood. A pail (*lakan*) is so placed that all the blood flows into it.<sup>1</sup> Like Kahle<sup>2</sup> I have not seen nor heard of any case where animals are slain in such a way that their blood flows into the water of a holy spring or into a holy cave, as Curtiss<sup>3</sup> mentions.

No pregnant animal—if this condition happens to be known—is ever slain. But such an animal may be vowed, and it, as well as its offspring, belongs afterwards to the saint. One waits until after delivery. In case such an animal is (without knowledge of the condition) offered, the foetus is thrown away.<sup>4</sup>

The animal is thrown on the ground with its head turned eastward and the face southward. It is not without interest to note that dead persons and sacrificed animals are laid so that the face looks towards Mecca<sup>5</sup> (in Palestine southward). The difference between them is that the former lies on his right side with the head to the west, while the latter is laid on the left side with the head pointing eastward. The one who kills the animal says: *bism allāh—allāh akbar*, "in the name of God, God is great;"<sup>6</sup> or *bism illī qaddar 'alēki ed-dabḥ—allāh akbar*, "in the name of the One who decreed your sacrifice—God is great." In Bir Sabi' I heard the following expression: *bism allāh—allāh akbar ḥall 'alēki ed-dabḥ rabbī innahā minḥ wa ilēk fidā*, "In the name of God—God is great—, you (the

<sup>1</sup> I owe this information to the kindness of O. S. Barghūṭi.

<sup>2</sup> *PJB* VIII, 155.

<sup>3</sup> Chapters XXII and XXV.

<sup>4</sup> Only the very poor (according to a woman of et-Ṭaiybeh) eat the foetus.

<sup>5</sup> Christians lay their dead on the back from west to east, the head on the east side and looking to the east.

<sup>6</sup> *PJB* VIII, 157.

sheep) are lawfully slain. My Lord, it is from you and is a ransom for you." The name of the *welî* to whom the animal was vowed may be added to that of God. Thus I heard the people of Jericho say, "In the name of God and that of *es-šeh* Šalâh." The ordinary formula of the *fâtihah*, which is used in all other cases, *bism allâh er-rahmân er-rahîm*, "in the name of the most merciful God,"<sup>1</sup> is never used in slaughtering, as the adjective "most merciful," is contradictory to the act of killing. Some even think that an animal which was killed with these words should not be eaten. Although the following practice does not come directly under the subject of vows, it possesses an illustrative value in this connection. A frightened man (*mardjûf* or *mahdûd*<sup>2</sup>) must undergo special treatment to counteract the evil results of "fright." One of the many ways to attain this end is to eat the neck (*raqabeh*) of a sheep, which is cooked with *šaddit* (or *hawâyidj*) *et-tarbeh*.<sup>3</sup> In killing such an animal the following formula is pronounced: *bism allâh u bism rawwâh er-radjfeh*, "in the name of God and in the name of the One who removes the fright."<sup>4</sup> When a person is attacked with night-blindness, which is known by the name of *hidbâd*,<sup>5</sup> he will

<sup>1</sup> Sale's translation.

<sup>2</sup> From *haddâh* which is another name for *el-hôfeh* (also *radjfeh*). See Canaan, *Tâsit er-radjfeh*, JPOS III, p. 130. In *Aberglaube*, p. 35, other less usual names are mentioned.

<sup>3</sup> A yellow powder made of several strong spices.

<sup>4</sup> A very famous prophylactic measure against *el-haddâh* in the following, which I shall describe in a story. My friend and neighbour Ibrâhîm Djirius was very much irritated and frightened by bad news which had been received. A relative of his fearing that this *hôtefeh* might result badly, cooked a black hen with various spices. She kept the vessel well covered, so that the vapour could not escape. When she thought that the hen was well-cooked, she threw herself on the ground in a room adjacent to his and began to cry and lament in a most heart-rending way. In alarm he got up, went to her and asked for the reason of her distress. She wept louder, "my son, my dear son, why didst thou die—my joy, my fortune has an end—my son, my dear son." My friend became still more anxious about her trouble. When she thought that his alarm was sufficient to counteract the first one she told him the truth and forced him to put his face over the opened vessel, so that the vapour clouded his face. He had to eat the whole hen alone (Canaan, *Aberglaube*, pp. 68, 69). A white hen is used when the fright took place during the day, a black one if during the night.

<sup>5</sup> In *Muhit*, p. 2163, and Hava 811 this word means only "weakness of the sight."

only be cured if he eats the *zawâyid*.<sup>1</sup> The lungs<sup>2</sup> have to be prepared without salt. In killing such an animal, *bism allâh u ism il-hidbâd*, "in the name of God and the name of *el-hidbâd*," must be pronounced, else the cure will have no effect.<sup>3</sup>

Not only in slaying a *niḍr dbîhah* is the name of God invoked, but whenever the Mohammedans kill an animal for food they always say *bism allâh*. If this is neglected they think it unlawful to eat of such an animal. This is done because it is ordered in the Holy Book, Sûrah V, verse 4:<sup>4</sup> "Ye are forbidden to eat that which dieth of itself, and blood and swine's flesh and that on which the name of any besides God has been invoked."<sup>5</sup> This was ordered because the idolatrous Arabs were accustomed in killing any animal for food to consecrate it to their idols by saying: "In the name of Allât or al-'Uzzâ."

Doutté's<sup>6</sup> observation in the Maghrib that a special knife is used in killing a sacrifice, is unknown in Palestine. The Tarâbîn Bedouin will not kill an animal with a knife whose sheath has three nails. With the words *bism allâh allâh akbar* the one who kills the animal says *itqabbal yâ . . . niḍr . . .*, "Accept, O . . ., the vow of . . ." Those who have fulfilled the vow feel freed from their obligation. This is well expressed in what is said while the animal is being slain: *wafênâ smâṭak yâ šēḥ Yûsif*, "We have paid your sheep, O šēḥ Y . . .;" *haiy niḍrak yâ nabî Rûbîn*, "Here is your vow, O Prophet R."

In some places we find the following custom which shows the relation of the person (in this case a child) for whom the *dbîhah* was slain and the sacrifice offered. If the child is very young he is carried three times (rarely four times) around the animal. The circling is called *ṭwâf: bitauwfû l-walad ḥol el-harûf*, "the child is carried around the sheep." When the child is somewhat older he

<sup>1</sup> See below.

<sup>2</sup> In the Arabic text the word *mu'lâq* is used. This has the literary meaning of "vital organs (Hava 48): spleen, liver, heart and lungs." In the dialect it stands for the lungs (and many include also the liver).

<sup>3</sup> This custom I have found described in the written notes of my father.

<sup>4</sup> See also Sûrah II, 168; VI, 146: XVI, 115.

<sup>5</sup> The translations are taken from Sale.

<sup>6</sup> Page 463.

<sup>7</sup> Sinai Peninsula.



rides on the sheep. This latter custom is not nearly so wide-spread as the other one. Both these two customs are practiced when the child can not accompany the procession of offering the *nidr* at the shrine, and always before the animal is slain. When the child is able to go to the *maqâm* and attend the ceremony he steps over the *harûf* after it is slain, or over the flowing blood.<sup>1</sup> According to others he walks first three times around the sheep and then steps over the blood. While he encircles the animal the *fâtihah* is read three times. Even Christians of some villages practice this custom (of stepping over the blood) when a sheep is offered to Ḥaḍr el-Aḥḍar.<sup>2</sup> This crossing over the blood is called *faṣāqa*. In Ṭaiybeh the sheep is drawn three times around the sanctuary of St. George, and in every round the Lord's Prayer is recited once.

This custom of stepping over a vowed sheep or over its blood is practised also with *ḍbiḥit el-fadwâ* and rarely with that of *ed-dhîyeh*. A few words about these two last sacrifices are necessary to illustrate the difference between them and that of a vow sacrifice. The best animal for *ed-dhîyeh* is a sheep, although the poor may offer a goat. Bedouin prefer a camel or an ox, as in the case of a vow. A man of er-Râm assured me that *ed-dhîyeh* must be a cow (*râs baqar*) three years of age (*tlêteh*)<sup>3</sup> or more. A poor man may offer seven goats instead of a cow.<sup>4</sup> This belief seems to be local, since I could not verify it in other villages. The sheep is laid on its left side with the head turned to the east and the face to the south.<sup>5</sup> The man who slays it turns his face toward Mecca.<sup>6</sup> The person for whom it is offered says: *allâhumma itqabbalha minni*, "O God, accept it from me." Such an animal is slain on the Qurbân Beyram feast.<sup>7</sup> On this day rich people may slay for each member of their family one sheep, which must be well-developed, faultless and which

<sup>1</sup> In Nabî Mûsâ (according to Abû Otmân); in Ibrâhîm el-Ḥaḥîl (Abû Ṭâlib).

<sup>2</sup> According to Milâdi of Bir Zêt.

<sup>3</sup> *Tlêteh* comes from *ḥalâteh*, "three."

<sup>4</sup> This man assured me that no sheep can be offered for *ed-dhîyeh*, which belief is wrong.

<sup>5</sup> Exactly as is done with the sheep of a vow.

<sup>6</sup> The immolation of the victims in the Hebrew cult took place on the north side of the altar. Lev. 1 11, 6 25.

<sup>7</sup> 10th of Moharram.

has passed the age of one year.<sup>1</sup> Every member of the family then steps over the blood of his sacrifice, which counts in his favor on the day of judgement.<sup>2</sup> The poor offer one animal for the whole family. Some women<sup>3</sup> attribute miraculous curative action to the blood of such a sacrifice. If a woman washes herself with the blood of a *dbihah* mixed with water she will get children.<sup>4</sup> One third of the *dbihah* is eaten by the offerer and by his family, one third is given to the relatives, and the last third is distributed among the poor.<sup>5</sup> Some—but not many—will not accept this division. Thus the *šéh* of 'Imwās assured me that the above statement is not correct and that nobody should eat of his own *dbihah*. As many inhabitants of one village offer a sheep each, one will share the meat of the sacrifice offered by another and distribute all his own sheep.

The Palestinians believe that a sacrificial sheep will appear in the day of judgement well-dressed, well decorated and with penciled eyes (*imkahhaleh*) and will carry the person for whom it was offered over the *surât* to Paradise. Therefore the common saying *dahayânâ matayânâ*,<sup>6</sup> "our sacrificial animals are our riding beasts."

In slaughtering the victim of *ed-dhîyeh* the utmost care is taken not to break any bones, so that the animal may appear whole and faultless on judgement day, for it is thought that these sheep render to their offerer the great service on the last day of joining his good deeds in the balance, and thus outweighing his faults and sins.<sup>7</sup>

*Dbihet el-fadwâ* is a "sheep of ransom" offered on special occasions. When plague attacks part of the country its inhabitants, as well as those of the surrounding area, may make use of such

<sup>1</sup> The animal must be absolutely faultless, i. e., not blind, half blind, lame or weak. Even the bleating must be loud and clear. Some, but not many, prohibit even the sacrifice of an animal which has been branded (*inkawat*, or *makwîyeh*) as a curative measure. This method of treatment is very wide-spread in the Orient.

<sup>2</sup> Heard in Liftâ.

<sup>3</sup> Imm Moḥammad of 'Imwās.

<sup>4</sup> If the blood is taken from a sheep sacrificed on 'Arâfât it will be more effective.

<sup>5</sup> A *hadîṭ* allows eating from one's own *dbihet ed-dhîyeh*.

<sup>6</sup> Curtiss, chapter XIX.

<sup>7</sup> Heard in Bêt Ḥanînâ and verified elsewhere.

offerings. The people of the infected part expect that God will accept these offerings and free them from the scourge. The others hope that the *ḍbiḥah* will prevent the spread of the disease to their country. A *fadwâ* may also be made for a single person.<sup>1</sup> M., the only male child of a family well-known to me, came back from a long journey. His parents slew a sheep in front of the house and the son had to step over the flowing blood before he entered the house.<sup>2</sup>

Even when a flock of sheep is attacked by a mortal plague, one of the sheep—generally the best—is offered as ransom for the whole flock. All sheep of the infected flock are marked with the blood of the killed one.<sup>3</sup> Sometimes the following expression is used while killing a *fadwâ*: *fidâ* (or *fadwâ*) '*an el-'iâl wil-mâl*, "ransom for the family and the property."

The meat of this *ḍbiḥah* is generally all distributed to the poor. What Jaussen states about the Negeb is true also in some localities in Palestine, namely that *ḍḥīyeh* and *fadwâ* are used at times to denote one and the same thing.

In continuing our examination of the *nidr ḍabâyh* we notice that the blood of the sacrifice flows on the ground. In some shrines where a special place inside the main enclosure surrounding the *maqâm* is designated for slaughtering, the blood is led through a special channel to the outside. The blood may be used to decorate the shrine. Large *maqâms* like *en-nabi Mûsâ* are exempt. The *šâšīyeh* (the lintel of the door) and the *šdâghât* (the jambs of the door) are first of all smeared with blood. Generally the impression of the hand is made. The Christians of Ṭaiybeh smear the '*atabah*'<sup>4</sup> of the Ḥaḍr sanctuary with blood, making the figure of the cross. They take some blood in a *kêkarah*—a small earthen vessel—and sprinkle the lintel and the jambs of the door.<sup>5</sup> The same custom prevailed in early Biblical times when Aaron's sons sprinkled the blood of the offering "upon the altar round about."<sup>6</sup> Instead of blood the

<sup>1</sup> Such a *ḍbiḥah* is also known as '*iqqah*.

<sup>2</sup> Curtiss, l. c.

<sup>3</sup> Compare the story told in Ex. XII.

<sup>4</sup> '*atabah* means in reality the threshold of the door, but is falsely used as *šâšīyeh*.

<sup>5</sup> The Arabic expression is *bilatthû*.

<sup>6</sup> Lev. 16, 32.

Christians of Ṭaiybeh very often whitewash<sup>1</sup> the stones with a preparation of lime,<sup>2</sup> soon after the animal is slain. The white colour is thought to bring good luck. Most of the door frames of newly built houses are smeared with the blood of sheep killed while the vaulting is going on.<sup>3</sup> The same is true with *ḍbiḥit el-fidā*.

The forehead of the child, less often that of an adult for whose sake the *nidr* was made, are also smeared<sup>4</sup> with the blood of the *ḍbiḥah*.<sup>5</sup> Also the Christians of Ṭaiybeh and Bir Zêt have the same custom. The sign of the cross is made on the forehead of the child. In Bir Sabi' the camels<sup>6</sup> are smeared with the blood of a *ḍbiḥah*, as a sign that the vow has been fulfilled.<sup>7</sup>

The *qaiym* receives his part of the animal. This consists generally of the skin and the *saqaṭ* (called also *et-trâf*,<sup>8</sup> and in some places *zawâyd*). By this expression the peasant understands the extremities, the head, the abdominal organs (with the exception of the large omentum<sup>9</sup>) and the *maḍbah*.<sup>10</sup> The *maḍbah* is that part of the neck where the knife cuts the throat.<sup>11</sup> This piece is cut off and given to the *qaiym*. Generally he also receives a good piece of meat besides, and joins the party at the meal. What has been said of the *qaiym* is true of the *ṣiyâḥ* who are connected with the shrine.<sup>12</sup> Curtiss' statement that one-fourth of the animal is given to the *qaiym* is only true occasionally for Palestine. This custom is again an old one and is illustrated in the story of the children of Eli.<sup>13</sup> In places like Nabî Mûsâ the butcher (*lahlâm*) receives either the

<sup>1</sup> *Biyûruṣû*.

<sup>2</sup> Very often this is done with a stick on the end of which a tassel of cloth ribbons is fastened.

<sup>3</sup> This sheep is killed in the name of *saiyidnâ* Ibrâhîm el-Ḥalîl.

<sup>4</sup> So in Nabî Mûsâ and Ibrâhîm el-Ḥalîl.

<sup>5</sup> Jaussen finds the same custom in Transjordan (p. 316).

<sup>6</sup> *Ibl* (pl. with no singular).

<sup>7</sup> *PJB* VIII, 159 ff.

<sup>8</sup> *Saqaṭ* and *trâf* really do not mean the same. The second expression stands for the extremities only, while the first includes some of the internal organs, as well as the extremities.

<sup>9</sup> Some include with the large omentum the intestines directly connected with it

<sup>10</sup> From *ḍabaḥa*, "to kill an animal with a knife."

<sup>11</sup> The *saqaṭ* differs in different places. Among the Benî Zêd the *maḍbah* is counted to it, in Jerusalem the lungs but not the *maḍbah*.

<sup>12</sup> As for example in al-Anbiâ, el-Ḥadrâ, etc.

<sup>13</sup> 1 Sam. 2 12-16.

skin or a quarter of a *medjidi*,<sup>1</sup> less often half a *medjidi*. The other parts of the animal are cooked and eaten. Such a holy *ḏbiḥah* should not be prepared as a *zarb*.<sup>2</sup> Very often rice is also cooked and served with the meat. Bread and the other materials necessary for the preparation of the meal are brought by the party. All present take part in the meal, and often many bystanders join the party, for as soon as people are seen going with one or more sheep to a sanctuary everybody knows that a *nidr* will be fulfilled. In large *mawāsīm* a part of the raw meat (*lahm aḥḍar* or *lahm naiy*) is divided among those present. Often vowed animals are given as a whole to the kitchen of Nabi Mūsā or some other saint, where it is cooked with the other food and is distributed to the visitors. Such an act is thought to bring additional blessing.

The preparation of the food takes place in the kitchen, if there is one, otherwise near the *maqām* in a place protected from the winds. Often the food is cooked under a tree. The copper pots (*tanādīr*, pl. of *tanḍjarah*) or the copper troughs (*dsūt*, pl. of *dist*) with the food are placed on the *mawāqīd* (pl. of *mōqadeh*, hearth, fire place). These are either well-built stone hearths or improvised ones. The latter are constructed by placing two elongated stones of the same height parallel to each other, with a space of 30—60 cm. between them, where the fire is made. Many shrines possess a number of copper pots, which are always used in such occasions. In *welīs* where there are none the people who come to offer their *nidr* bring them along. The wood is taken from the property of the *welī*, or is brought with the visitors. In cooking a *nidr* all the dry wood which has fallen from the holy trees may be used, but no twigs may be cut, even if they are dead. This fallen brushwood is never used on any other occasion.

All join in eating the sacred meal. Every one says the *fāṭīḥah* for the soul of the *welī* for whom the offering has been brought. It is considered that all present are guests of the *welī*, for the *ḏbiḥah*

<sup>1</sup> One Turkish *medjidi* = 20 piasters *ṣāgh* (and 23 piasters *ṣurk*), normally one-fifth of a Turkish pound.

<sup>2</sup> *Zarb* is a roasted sheep, where the whole (when the animal is young) or a part of a sheep is placed in a small freshly-prepared, cave like oven. This oven is heated very strongly, the meat is salted and placed in it after which the oven is hermetically closed.

is his, and the food is cooked in his honour. Therefore everybody who attends the sacrifice, or happens to pass this way at this occasion is welcome to partake of the sacrificial meal. The *welî* receives the most important part of the victim—the soul, which lodges in the blood,<sup>1</sup> as we shall see later on. The same practice was known in the Old Testament.<sup>2</sup> A sacrificial meal followed the sacrifice. The flesh of the victim was eaten at the sanctuary by the sacrificer, and his family (1 Sam. 1 3-7) or by representatives of the community (1 Sam. 9 22-25). The underlying idea was “that of sharing a common meal with the deity.”<sup>3</sup> The worshippers were the guests (Zeph. 1 7) of God at His sanctuary.”<sup>4</sup> Happily they rise from the feast and joining in games they pass the time in enjoyment. Contented with their act they leave the shrine, sure that the *welî* has blessed them for the fulfilment of their obligation.

These sacrifices followed by feasts are known in the Bible (1 Sam. 20 4, etc.). We know from 1 Kings 3 3 and other passages<sup>5</sup> that these sacrifices took place in the high places. In the search for his father's asses Saul came to Samuel and was taken by the Prophet to a sacrificial meal.

Before we leave the subject of *ḍbâylî* we may mention some irregular or anomalous customs practiced in some parts of Palestine. Very rarely it happens that the sheep which has been slaughtered in or near a sanctuary is carried back to the village, and cooked in the house of the vower. Sometimes the condition or the situation of the shrine prevent offering the sheep in or near it. In such a case the animal may be sold and the proceeds are either given as such to the *maqâm*, or some jewelry is bought with them and this is offered to the shrine and hung on the picture of the saint. *Dabâylî* vowed to St. Mary on Calvary are not offered as such. The sheep is sold, jewelry is bought with the money, and is offered to the *qûneh*.

Some vows of this group form the connecting link with the meatless food vows. *El-msarwaleh* is a dish made of milk and rice,

<sup>1</sup> 1 Sam. 14 32-34.

<sup>2</sup> W. Smith, Dictionary of the Bible, vol. II, p. 1079.

<sup>3</sup> See also 1 Cor. 10 20-21.

<sup>4</sup> Hastings and Selbie, *Dictionary of the Bible*, 1914, p. 812. Doutté, p. 472.

<sup>5</sup> Amos 5 21-23, etc.

mixed with another of meat and rice. Such an offering—like all meatless ones—is cooked in the house and then carried to the shrine, where it is partly distributed and partly eaten.

Among the Bedouin and some peasants the cooking done in connection with a *mōlad* vow (see afterwards) is more important than the *mōlad* itself. This festival may be with or without meat.

There are still a number of subsidiary practices connected with sacrifices to be considered. Since they touch the fundamental principles of making vows, we may be able by studying them to explain the conception connecting the sacrificial animal with the person for whom it is vowed. I shall first give two examples, which, although they do not belong to the above-described animal sacrifices, nevertheless illustrate vividly the idea underlying them.

When a dead person is carried from the place where he died to his own village, the Bedouin and the peasants load him on a camel. The peasants have the superstition that the camel may die from the *kabseh*<sup>1</sup> exercised by the dead. In order to safeguard against such a heavy loss, they slay a cock on the camel's back, before the corpse is loaded. The blood of the cock, which flows over the camel's body, is thought to remove the impending danger. Thus the cock in giving his life has saved that of the more precious camel.

Another illustration demonstrates the same idea from another point of view. When a child is attacked with convulsions, it is believed that a specially malignant *djinn* has attacked him, and that the evil spirit will probably not depart without having taken the child's life. In order to save the precious life of the child the demon must be satisfied with some other life. Therefore the head of a pigeon is introduced as deeply as possible into the rectum of the patient, and it is held there until the animal dies. A life is given

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<sup>1</sup> It is not difficult to explain how the *kabseh* acts in this case. A dead body is always surrounded by the evil spirits which caused his death, and is therefore unclean. These spirits prefer to leave this environment and inhabit some living object. In doing so they may cause the same bad effects to their new host. The same explanation is true of the *kabseh* which may act on a sick person, if another sick person is carried into the room. The evil spirits causing the illness of the second (and most diseases are caused by demons) may leave their host and attack the first person, thus increasing his disorder. For other examples see *Aberglaube*, pp. 37, 39.

to save another, and the *djinn* is satisfied by the offering it has received, and leaves the child.

These two examples show three points clearly:

1. To save the life of an important being, that of another less important one must be sacrificed.
2. The sacrifice is made to please that supernatural power which is thought to be the cause of the danger, or which has in its hands the power of preventing it.
3. The animal sacrificed must come somehow into direct external contact with the being for whom or for which it has given its life.

A close examination of the practices connected with vowing and sacrificing animals, as we have followed them, shows that the same ideas underly them, with some modification.

Ad 1. The Palestinian thinks that everything, especially disease, affliction and misfortune comes "from *allâh*" (*min allâh*). He has permitted their occurrence, exactly as He allowed Satan to tempt Job and afflict him with all sorts of visitations.<sup>1</sup> Therefore whenever the peasant is attacked with afflictions, he tries to escape them by directing the wrath of the superior power against some other being. An animal is offered in his place, to redeem the human being with its life. Thus the peasant still walks in the paths of his ancestors, believing that "life shall go for life"<sup>2</sup> and that "blood maketh atonement,"<sup>3</sup> and that the life of an animal is accepted by the Divine Power instead of that of the offender, who himself deserves death.<sup>4</sup> This is the only explanation for the wide-spread custom of sacrificial vows; and while other vows are not so strictly executed, a promise of an animal offering is much more seriously treated. This idea of redemption is well founded in all Semitic religions.

Ad 2. The Almighty God is difficult of access. This is another fundamental idea in Palestinian folk religion.<sup>5</sup> This is why the Palestinian prefers to call on saints and *welîs* for help. They were once human beings and thus understand human difficulties and temptations. A *welî* is always ready to assist, more so, if one shows

<sup>1</sup> Job 1 6-12.

<sup>2</sup> Deut. 19 21.

<sup>3</sup> Lev. 17 11.

<sup>4</sup> Compare the sin offerings of the Mosaic law.

<sup>5</sup> Exod. 19, etc.



his humility in some way. Just as no one would approach a deity without a gift in his hands, or a promise of one, so a peasant would not ask a *welî* for help, without at the same time vowing a sacrifice.<sup>1</sup> This conception already prevailed in Biblical times: "None shall appear before me empty."<sup>2</sup> The object of a sacrifice, reduced to its simplest terms, is threefold: to secure and retain the favour of the saint; to remove his displeasure; and thirdly to express gratitude for benefits received. Although these things may be said about any offering, nothing pleases these holy men as much as an animal sacrifice: firstly, because so many of the poor can be fed in their name and on their tables; secondly, because every one who partakes of the feast says a prayer in the name of the *welî*. These two acts are placed by the Almighty to the account of the *welî*.

Ad 3. The study of the connections between the animal to be offered and the person for whom it was offered are very interesting. For the purpose of analysis the following resumé of the customs described above may be given:—

A young child—for whom the *niḏr* was made—is carried three times around the animal. When the child is older he rides on the sheep.<sup>3</sup>

He may step over the sacrifice or over the flowing blood.

The forehead of the person is sometimes smeared with the blood of the *ḏbiḥah*.

The flock or herd is touched with the blood of the animal killed for their safety.

All these actions show clearly that the sacrifice must have a direct contact with the person for whom it is offered. Therefore the person for whom an animal is slain to safeguard his life is marked with the blood of the victim. The shrine of the saint to whom the animal has been promised, is smeared or sprinkled in many cases with the blood of the *ḏbiḥah*.<sup>4</sup> This is done to assure the man of God that his *niḏr* has been fulfilled, for the mere dedication of the animal during the act of slaying with the words

<sup>1</sup> Gen. 4 3f.

<sup>2</sup> Exod. 34 30.

<sup>3</sup> In the Old Testament the sacrificer had to put one hand, in later periods both hands, upon the head of the victim (1 Sam. 21 4).

<sup>4</sup> Exactly as in Lev. 1 5, 17 11, etc.

"Take your promise, O . . ." does not suffice. One asks why blood plays such an important rôle in these religious rites? An investigation of this question discloses that blood plays a very interesting and complicated part in Palestinian superstition. Since I believe that the study of these practises will bring us to a clearer conception of the underlying ideas, I shall describe some of them.

Blood is believed by the Palestinian to be the abode of the "soul." The same idea existed in the earliest periods of Biblical history: "For the blood is the life."<sup>1</sup> Therefore wherever human blood is shed or lost, a part of human life and soul is lost. This makes blood a highly respected, but at the same time a highly dangerous thing. The following superstitious customs will throw light on this idea:

1. When two children desire to enter into fraternal relation to each other (*yithâwû*), i. e., become intimate friends, each pricks one of his fingers with a needle and sucks a little of the blood of the other. Thus each takes some of the soul of his friend and they enter into blood relation to each other.

2. In every place where a person is killed (and only when his blood is shed) the soul appears at night-time as a *rasad*<sup>2</sup> and cries out the last words spoken by the dead;<sup>3</sup> cf. Gen. 4 10, "The voice of thy brother's blood crieth to me from the earth."

3. In case a wife is not much beloved by her husband she tries to inflame his affection by giving him a few drops of her blood, mixed with some other liquid, to drink.<sup>4</sup> She is sure that the part of the soul drunk with the blood by her husband knits him more strongly to her.

4. Supernatural powers hover over every place and person where blood is found. They may even be injurious. This is the cause of the fear of the menstrual blood cherished by the inhabitants of Palestine.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Deut. 12 13.

<sup>2</sup> Also called *mfâwil*.

<sup>3</sup> *Aberglaube*, p. 17.

<sup>4</sup> Blood always used to be the sign of a covenant, Exod. 12 7, 13.

<sup>5</sup> This is not the place to dwell on this phase of superstition, which is discussed fully in *Aberglaube*.

In offering an animal we are offering a life, a soul for another one—the human life. The meat of the *dbihah* is not the important part of the sacrifice. It serves only to satisfy the human visitors. The gods (saints practically = lower deities) do not eat and drink; they are only satisfied by the sacrifice of the soul.<sup>1</sup> A Christian woman of Djifnah in describing a *dbihah* said *lil-Haḍr fēdet ed-dam u lan-nās ed-dbihah*, "For Ḥaḍr the pouring of the blood (i. e., the soul) and for the people the sacrificial animal." Blood plays an important rôle as the symbol of life. This shedding of blood is the essential part of an animal sacrifice.<sup>2</sup> No animal which has been previously killed will be accepted by any *welî* as a sacrifice. The blood must be shed in his shrine, or at least in his name. It is the atoning act.

b) *Qurbân* or *walîmeh lillâh*

A *qurbân* also involves the *dbihah*. This sort of vow belongs partly to this category and partly to a later one. It may be described fully here, as it has to do with animal offerings. The vow is made in these cases to God only, and not to any saint or *welî*. Thus it is clear that a *qurbân* is a real sacrifice in the name of the Almighty, in case of sickness. As soon as the sick man recovers, the animal must give its life for the man who is saved. The animal belongs entirely to God. But God does not need any food, therefore it is distributed entirely among the poor, the vower receiving nothing of it—contrary to the practice in the case of all animal offerings described up to now. Such an animal may be slain in any place and its meat is distributed *ahḍar*,<sup>3</sup> "in a raw (uncooked) condition," or it may be cooked and then given to the poor. From this custom the name *walîmeh lillâh* is derived.

*Qurbân* (from *qaruba*, *qarraba*) denotes everything offered to God which brings the offerer nearer to the Deity.<sup>4</sup> *Walîmeh lillâh*, "a feast for God," well expresses the idea set forth in another place and shows that the sacrifice is in reality nothing but a feast given to the needy in the name of God.

<sup>1</sup> 1 Sam. 14 32-34; Deut. 12 16; Lev. 7 10ff., 7 27.

<sup>2</sup> N. Söderblom, *Das Wesen des Götterglaubens*, p. 81; Curtiss; Kahle.

<sup>3</sup> Also called *naḥ*.

<sup>4</sup> *Muḥit el-Muḥit* II, 1681.

In many cases when such a vow is made, the mother or the father take an open knife (*mūs*, *hūṣah*)<sup>1</sup> and sticks it in the door or in the outer wall of the sickroom. While doing so the following words are uttered: *qurbān la widḥ allāh in ṭāb ibnī*, "A sacrifice for God's face, i. e., God's sake, if my child gets well." Such a knife may remain in its place until the sheep is killed.<sup>2</sup>

Much like the above custom is vowing a candle for God: "If my child speaks, I will light a candle for you, O God."<sup>3</sup> According to Christian belief such a candle must be lighted in the open air and not in a shrine. Imm Elyās of Jerusalem took such a vow and lighted the candle on the roof. She passed the night guarding it, so that it should not be stolen. As the candle was not all burned, it had to be lighted on the second night. According to Mohammedan custom, a light of this kind may be brought to the nearest *welī* and burned there in the name of God.<sup>4</sup>

Before leaving this subject of animal sacrifices we may note a *ḍbiḥah* custom which has nothing to do with vows. In case a saint has been irritated by some mortal, he may punish the evil-doer and perhaps all the inhabitants of the village in a very severe way. A sheep is generally offered to reconcile the saint. I have already told the story of *eṣ-ṣēḥ* Ṣāleḥ, who inhabits Ḥirbet Nūtā, and which illustrates this point excellently.

### c) Meatless food

In Jerusalem and the immediate neighbourhood these vows are called *smāt*, while in Beni Zêd and Beni Mâlik the word *smāt* is used only for a *ḍbiḥah*, as we have seen. I have been unable to find for this word the explanation given by Jaussen, and which he has deduced from the use of the expression in Transjordan.<sup>5</sup> Everywhere vows of this sort are also known by the name *ṭabḥah*, an expression not very much used. Most of the inhabitants of Jerusalem and the adjacent Christian villages understand by *smāt*<sup>6</sup> only a special dish, namely

<sup>1</sup> Also *kazlak*, *sikkīneh*.

<sup>2</sup> A custom prevalent in Beni Zêd.

<sup>3</sup> This type of vow is made when the child grows up without being able to speak.

<sup>4</sup> According to a man of Bettir (Beni Ḥasan).

<sup>5</sup> Page 365.

<sup>6</sup> *Aberglaube*, p. 75.

*rqâq u 'adas*. Others include some other food to be mentioned below. The *smât* is cooked at home and is distributed among the poor. Generally a large quantity is prepared. Full plates are sent to the houses of the needy. A Mohammedan woman of Jerusalem informed me that sometimes a *lakan*<sup>1</sup> full of *raštah* is placed at the main gate (Bâb el-Qaṭṭânin) of the Ḥaram area, so that the worshippers who finish their midday prayer<sup>2</sup> and leave the mosque by this gate may help themselves.<sup>3</sup> The person who has brought the food stands beside it and says to the people *iqrû l-fâtihah lin-nabi Ibrâhîm—hâdâ min nidruh*,<sup>4</sup> "Pray the *fâtihah* for the prophet Abraham; this is from a vow made for him." A Christian from Rafidiâ (near Nâblus) told me that he remembered the time when this custom was practiced by the Christians of that village. The food used to be placed on Sunday in front of the church and whoever came out took a spoonful of the food. The priest had to begin the procession. It is believed that in this way many prayers are said in the name of the saint.

Other foods which come under this heading are: *'ašideh* = lentils cooked with coarsely ground wheat, *mġaddarah* = lentils with rice, and *baḥtîyeh* = another name for *ruzz u ḥalīb*, i. e., rice with milk. These three dishes are far less common than *rqâq u 'adas* mentioned first. This is preferred because the peasants believe that it was the food of the Patriarch Abraham.<sup>5</sup>

Many Christians<sup>6</sup> promise *ghirbnîyeh*.<sup>7</sup> This is bread made in large, round loaves from very fine sifted<sup>8</sup> flour. The loaves are signed with a seal (*rašmeh*). Five such loaves—which are called *udjâh*<sup>9</sup>—are always made and given to the priest, who says some

<sup>1</sup> A brass basin.

<sup>2</sup> Generally this is done on Friday.

<sup>3</sup> Several spoons are placed in the basin.

<sup>4</sup> The last *h* of *nidruh* is to be pronounced.

<sup>5</sup> Heard from Christians of Rafidiâ.

<sup>6</sup> Especially those of Bêt Djâlâ and Bethlehem.

<sup>7</sup> *Aberglaube*, l. c.

<sup>8</sup> Many now keep on sifting until it becomes white. Formerly it had to be done seven times.

<sup>9</sup> Imm B. Ṭaldjeh of Bêt Djâlâ gave me the word *udjâh*, pl. of *widjâh* (really face) for loaves. This expression was verified by other peasants of the same village.—Cf. biblical לֶחֶם מִנִּים, "show-bread" (W. F. A.).

prayers over them and asks God's blessing for all the members of the family which has offered them. He then keeps four loaves for himself and one is taken by the offerer. The last is divided among the members of his family as a *barakeh*. Some keep a piece of this blessed bread for illness, believing that eating it will cure disease. When once such a vow is taken it has to be continued every year until the man for whom it was taken dies. Such a *ghirbnâyeḥ*<sup>1</sup> is always made one day before the feast of the saint to whom it was vowed. The priest blesses the bread after the afternoon prayer (*ṣalât el-'aṣr*). Such a vow is a material help to the priest.<sup>2</sup> Many vow bread for the poor and needy in the name of the saint. This practice I shall describe more fully in the following section.

### III. Offerings given to needy persons in the name of the saint

In the last section we have often mentioned vows fulfilled for the benefit of the poor. The *smâṭ* (*ṭabḥah*) and specially the *walîmeh lillâh* (*qurbân*) come under this heading. All vows of food promised to God must be given to the poor, even though not so specified in the wording of the vow. In all other vows it is specified; e. g., "O Nabî Şâleḥ, if you bring me safely through this matter, I shall distribute a basket of rice to the poor." Either food or cloth may be vowed. The food may be offered in a cooked or uncooked state. The "needy" may be grouped under the following headings:

1. Poor (*fuqarâ*)
2. Orphans and widows<sup>3</sup> (*aytâm u arâmîl*)
3. Prisoners (*maḥâbîs*)
4. Sick, especially the mentally disturbed (*maḍjânîn*).

The following are illustrations: "If I get up, and am able to walk I shall, O Prophet of God, clothe thirty orphans;" "O friend of God, as soon as I am released from jail, I shall give two hundred loaves of bread to the prisoners;" "O St. George, if my son returns to normal mental condition, I shall slay a sheep for the *maḍjânîn* of your shrine."

<sup>1</sup> Also called *quddâseh*.

<sup>2</sup> This custom is only followed by the Greek Orthodox church.

<sup>3</sup> Called by the collective name *maqû'în* (those who have nobody to help them).

In making a vow of *kisweh*<sup>1</sup> one must, according to most of those whom I have asked, supply all garments necessary to dress a person, i. e., shirt (*qamîs*), shoes (*şarâmî*<sup>2</sup>), bag-trousers (*(i)lbâs*<sup>3</sup>), *qumbâz*<sup>4</sup> (gown<sup>5</sup>) and a head-dress (*ţarbûş*,<sup>6</sup> or *ḥaţṭah* and *'uqâl*<sup>7</sup>). Many do not give all these, but only a shirt and a *qumbâz*, or the cloth for both. Generally the fulfilment of such a vow is postponed to one of the Mohammedan feasts, *'id el-dhîyeh* (*'id el-kbîr*) or *'id eş-şhâr* (*'id Ramadân*).

The condition of the prisoners used to be pitiful. Very often it happened that an accused or suspected person remained for months in the prison before his trial took place. Most such victims used to implore God and all the saints for help, promising to offer a sheep or bread for the other prisoners, if they should be released from their misery. Even prisoners who were already convicted used to take vows that as soon as they should be released they would offer this or that for the other inmates of the jail. Even if these vows are made in the name of a *welî* they do not reach his sanctuary.

It is advised by many in Jerusalem<sup>8</sup> that the best way to fulfil a food vow for the poor, is to give it to the *dkîyeh* kitchen where food is cooked daily and distributed to the poor. Generally the one who vows a sheep will remain in the kitchen until the meat is cooked and distributed. Bread may also be brought to the kitchen. Orphanages and hospitals are sometimes but not often remembered. Flour, rice, melted butter, beans, lentils, etc., are generally presented. The leper asylum "Jesus Hilf" receives such vows at long intervals. "My Lord, if I live to see my son (returning) in good health, I will bequeath my lower house to the *Dkîyeh*." The yearly rental of the house goes to the general income of the *dkîyeh waqf* as religious

<sup>1</sup> From *kasâ*, "to clothe."

<sup>2</sup> Also called *markâb*, *maşşâi*.

<sup>3</sup> Made mostly of white or blue cloth, with wide parts above the knees (some call it *şirwâl*).

<sup>4</sup> Also called *kibîr*.

<sup>5</sup> It is put on over the shirt and the trousers. The *qumbâz* is made of coloured linen, cotton or silk cloth. It is open in front, reaches to just above the ankles and is fastened by a *zunnâr* (belt).

<sup>6</sup> Fez.

<sup>7</sup> Bedouin head-dress.

<sup>8</sup> Heard from Abû 'Osmân (Jerusalem).

endowment. I know of a man who transferred all his property to a relative as *waqf*, making in the *waqfiyeh* the condition that a sum of money should be given to the poor by the heir in the name of the donor. It may happen that somebody has no money to vow to the poor. He then promises to devote the wages of three or more days' work to the purchase of food for the poor.<sup>1</sup>

#### IV. Religious vows

By "religious vows" I mean that a person takes upon himself the fulfilment of some religious act or obligation other than what he would naturally perform. Religious vows are practiced by Mohammedans and Christians. Very interesting is the fact that an adherent of one community assumes obligations of another.

Perhaps the most popular example of this category is the promise of reciting the story of the Prophet's nativity, *qrâyet mōlad*. "If my daughter recovers I shall recite a *mōlad*, O Prophet of God." The *mōlad* is the legendary story of the Prophet's birth and is a poem which describes not only the birth of the Prophet, but names his ancestors, all the prophets, and his own acts. A great part of the *mōlad* is devoted to praise of Mohammed. There are different *mōlads* and one of the most important is that of el-Imâm 'Abdallâh bin Moḥammad el-Manawî. According to *Wafiyât el-A'yân* by Ibn Ḥallikân, vol. I, the first one to attach a great importance to the *mōlad* was Muzzaffar ed-Dîn (Prince of Irbil). During his time, in the year 604 A. H. el-Ḥâfiz 'Omar Abû el-Ḥaṭṭâb wrote the best *mōlad* poem.

The fulfilment may be simple or more elaborate. In the first case the vower gives a sum of money (one to one and a half *medjidi* in the villages, half a pound to two pounds in the cities) to a *šeh* who must recite the *mōlad* from a minaret, in a mosque or *weli*, in the name of the giver. Among these places the minaret is the one usually chosen, and often it is specified: '*alâ el-mêdaneh el-Ḥamrâ*,<sup>2</sup> '*alâ mêdanet en-nabi Mûsâ*.<sup>3</sup> The *muaddin* of that minaret may do

<sup>1</sup> Heard from Imm Bšarah Tlêdjeh.

<sup>2</sup> Inside the city in the northeast quarter.

<sup>3</sup> A *mōlad* is not generally recited in small sanctuaries, nor from the minaret of unimportant *welis*. Ibrâhîm el-Ḥauwâs, *en-nabi Mûsâ*, *en-nabi Šâleh*, 'Alî ibn 'Elêm, *en-nabi Rûbîn*, etc., are preferred places.



the job. The *muaddin* or other *šêh* who reads the *môlad* takes several others with him, to help him in singing or reciting parts of the *môlad*. It is always done in the evening, generally that of the night of Thursday to Friday, or that of Sunday to Monday. More important is the reading of a *môlad* in the house. Many friends are invited. A large meal is prepared. After all had their supper they assemble in a large room, where the ceremony is held. One or more *šêhs* are chosen to recite this prayer, while refrains may be repeated in chorus by the audience. It takes about two to two and a half hours, during which no smoking or conversation takes place. One may enter or leave the room at any time. After the ceremony is over sweets are presented. Thus we see that the religious ceremony is preceded and followed by a festivity. When a woman has made a vow to recite the *môlad* she fulfils it by inviting her female relatives and friends and asking a *šêlah* or a *šêh qarîr*<sup>1</sup> to recite it.

In some villages one to two *ratls* of barley with three raw eggs (some bring only one) are placed in front of the *šêh* who recites the story of "Mohammed's Nativity." The eggs are eaten by the *šêh*, to keep his voice clear,<sup>2</sup> while the barley is kept by the people as a blessing and as a curative medicine in case of sickness. It is supposed that the barley receives a supernatural power through this religious ceremony. In case a child falls sick, he is fumigated with this barley.<sup>3</sup>

An old woman of Jerusalem told me that a dish of flour and a glass of water are placed before the *šêh*, who recites this prayer. As soon as he finishes, the contents of the dish are distributed among those present. It is kept as a *hîrz* for small children. They either carry it in a small bundle around the neck as a prophylactic measure against the evil spirits or they are fumigated with it in case of disease. The water is drunk by those present, believing that it cures shortness of breath.

Although this custom is purely Mohammedan it sometimes happens (but very rarely) that a Christian woman vows that she will recite

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<sup>1</sup> Blind *šêhs* are allowed to enter chambers of the harem to teach the Qorân, or to say prayers.

<sup>2</sup> I could not find any other explanation for the eggs. The *šêh* has no right to take them with him.

<sup>3</sup> I heard this custom from Manšûr of Liftâ.

a *môlad*. The wife of el-Qârî<sup>1</sup> promised: "If my child gets well, I shall recite a *môlad*." In fulfilment she held the ceremony in her house. Generally Christians prefer giving a *šeh* a sum of money and asking him to recite the *môlad* in their name.

Besides the *môlad*, fasting is very often vowed. It is a religious law that every Mohammedan shall fast in the month of Ramaḍân.<sup>2</sup> Nothing is eaten, drunk or smoked during the day-time, while at a certain hour in the late evening the first meal (*ftûr*), and a few hours after midnight a second one (*shûr*) is taken. Nobody may vow to fast in this month, since this is his duty. But fasting on other days or weeks than Ramaḍân are often vowed, generally by women. The number of days or weeks which are to be kept is specified in the vow. These fasts are kept in the same way as that of the month Ramaḍân. Radjab and Ša'bân are the preferred months for fasting, and Monday and Thursday preferred days of the week. This sort of vow cannot be bought, as others may (see above), i. e., it cannot be changed to another obligation. A person who has vowed to fast a month must keep his promise exactly, while another who has bound himself to offer a sheep, oil, etc., may give a sum of money in their place. No unclean woman is allowed to fast.

Christians may vow to fast days or weeks more than required by the church. In such cases they abstain completely from animal food, sometimes including, sometimes excluding fish. More unusual is the promise of a Christian to keep the month Ramaḍân or a part of it. Sometimes Mohammedan women bind themselves to keep the fast of St. Mary's feast (*'id el-Adrâ*) or part of it.

Often a Mohammedan mother who loses one child after another vows to baptize the next one, believing that putting him under the protection of Christ will guard him against death, since the evil spirit el-Qarîni is driven away. The Qarîni is the evil demon which attacks children and pregnant women, causing all the diseases of the first, and producing abortion in the latter.<sup>3</sup> Waṭfeh the wife of I. 'Aql (from Liftâ) lost all her sons during their infancy. While pregnant she was advised by an old neighbour to vow to have her

<sup>1</sup> Greek Orthodox Church.

<sup>2</sup> Unclean women, sick and those on a journey are excused from this rule. They must do their duty in the same year.

<sup>3</sup> See *Aberglaube*, there transcribed *karîni*.

offspring baptized by a Christian priest. She did it with the words: *yâ rabbî in razaqtñî sabî nidrun 'alay la-a'mmduh 'ind en-našârâ u la-asammîh 'alâ ism en-našârâ*, "O my Lord, if Thou grantest me a boy, I vow to have him baptized by the Christians and to give him a Christian name." She bore two sons after this vow and both were baptized. One was named Ḥannâ and the other Djirius. A *šêḥ* of Šu'fat told me that a barren woman vows: "By God, if I get a boy I shall call him Eliâs." By this expression she means that she will give him a Christian name, thus dedicating him to a Christian saint. She must therefore baptize him, since baptism puts him under Christ's protection and giving him the name of a Christian saint helps to keep him safe. Therefore only names of popular Christian saints are chosen, like Ḥannâ (John), Djirius (George), etc. St. George's name is preferred since it is a connecting link between Christians and Mohammedans. It is said that the priest conducts the ceremony of baptism as in the case of a Christian child. Only *mêrôn* is not used.

There are a few Christian women who vow to circumcise a child and to give him a Mohammedan name, like Darwiš, Ḥasan, etc. Such vows are taken in the same cases as the previously mentioned ones, i. e., when a mother loses all her male children. When such a woman makes a vow she may fix the place where the child is to be circumcised. Baptism of Mohammedan children is much more common than circumcision of Christian ones. The latter is only found among some few villagers.

Circumcision is a rule for every Mohammedan and therefore it can not be vowed. But a Moslem may bind himself to do this act at a special shrine: "I entreat you, O Prophet Moses, if you cure my child, I will circumcise him in your sanctuary." Such a vow is thought to be good for both parties. The child is protected by the saint, and the confidence shown in the man of God increases his reputation. Very often a special and additional vow is made, namely: "I will take upon me to circumcise so and so many poor children together with my own boy." This means that the vower has to pay for the expenses of the operation, and also gives each child some clothing as a present.

Some vow the service of a person in a sanctuary: "If you, O man of God, grant me a child I shall let him serve you one month

('s time)." Such a custom—although found also among the Mohammedans—is more wide-spread between the Christians. Such a vow of direct service for a certain period in a sanctuary is fulfilled by helping the *qandalast* (sexton) in his work.<sup>1</sup> In such cases Mohammedans sweep the shrine and light the lamps. This sort of vows resembles the vow of Hannah, the mother of Samuel (I Sam. 1 11 ff.). *Nadartuh la-mâr Anṭôn*, "I have vowed (offered) him to St. Antonius," means that the boy must wear the garb of that order for one year. The priest puts the garments on and in one year's time the priest must take them off. The parents offer a candle at each of these ceremonies. The convent presents the girdle-rope, the rosary (*el-masbahah*) and the cap (*et-taqīyeh*), while the parents provide for the cloth, which is cut by the priest (or in the convent). This priest prays over the dress as well as over the child. Thus the child wears priestly clothes for one year. Members of the Latin church, as well as of the Greek orthodox follow this practice. The latter ask a priest of the former for the performance of this act.

Sometimes the whole or a part of the sick person is vowed to a holy man: "O man of God, O Ḥauwâs,<sup>2</sup> if my child recovers, you will get half of him." This means that half the "price" of the person is offered. The price of a person is only discussed when he is murdered. The *diyyeh*, "blood price," must be paid by the murderers to the family of the murdered, and it amounts to 33,000 piasters. Vowing half or a quarter of a person means to pay half or a quarter of 33,000 piasters,<sup>3</sup> i. e., 16,500, *respective* 8250. This sum is given to the *qaiym* of the sanctuary with the understanding that it is for the *welî*. In case such a vow is made for a girl her price is not reckoned on the basis of the *diyyeh* but of the *mahr* (marriage-price). The wedding ceremony of the girl cannot take place, until her vow is fulfilled.<sup>4</sup> Even in the Old Testament the Nazarite could be

<sup>1</sup> Vows of this type are also known in the Old and New Testament, where persons were vowed or chosen as Nazarites for their life or for a short period. Judg. 13 6, 1 Sam. 1 11, Luke 1 15, Jer. 35 5 ff., 1 Mac. 3 49, Acts 18 18, etc.

<sup>2</sup> To this *welî* more persons are vowed than to other saints (heard from O. S. el-Barghûṭî).

<sup>3</sup> See O. Barghûṭî, "Judicial Courts among the Bedouin of Palestine," *JPOS* II, No. 1, 1922.

<sup>4</sup> I have heard of this custom only in Central Palestine. It is unknown to the villages around Jerusalem.

redeemed at a valuation according to age and sex, on a special scale.<sup>1</sup>

Finally we must mention a custom which, although not belonging directly to this group of vows, seems to me more closely associated with it than to others. The wife of F. (Greek Orthodox), whose son was badly sick, fastened a silken handkerchief on the Nabî Mûsâ flag. This was done on the first day of the feast, while the procession moved from the Mosque of Omar. While doing so she exclaimed: "If my son gets well, O prophet Moses, I shall fasten another handkerchief on the day of the return of your flag."<sup>2</sup> This example shows us again the honour paid to Mohammedan saints by non-Moslems. Such a vow is exceedingly rare. In explanation of this custom we may point to the Mohammedan custom: *in tãb ibnî la-arbuṭlak yâ Hawwâs drâ' baft râyeh bêḍah*, "If my son recovers, O H., I shall fasten for you an ell (pic) of white shirt as a white flag." To hoist a white flag for somebody means to proclaim his ability, his excellent character, his charity, etc.

#### V. Bodily chastisement and vows to be fulfilled on the body of the vower or person for whom the vow was taken

"If my child gets well, O my Lady, O St. Mary, I shall visit you (i. e., your shrine) barefoot." Walking barefoot to a sanctuary is vowed by Mohammedans and Christians. Christians of Jerusalem prefer the sanctuaries of St. Mary and Mâr Eliâs. To *sittî* Maryam Mohammedans also bind themselves by a similar vow. This visit must be performed, if at all possible, on the saint's day. Generally the women rise up very early—long before daybreak—and while all are sleeping, walk barefoot to the sanctuary, say a prayer and come back before the visitors begin their pilgrimages to the shrine. The *ḥadîṭ* says "if a man vows to walk to a place and he cannot do it, he may not fulfil his vow walking."<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Lev. 27 1-7. It ranged with males from 5 to 50 shekels, with females from 3 to 30 shekels.

<sup>2</sup> From Imm Elyûs.

<sup>3</sup> *Man naḍara an yamsî li-maḥallin walam yastafî' an yaqûma bihî falâ yadjûzu an yukmilan-nidra mašyan.*

Another vow of humiliation is the sweeping of a sanctuary with the head-dress. "I take a vow to sweep Sêf ed-Din<sup>1</sup> with my head-cloth, if my brother gets well."<sup>2</sup> To throw, or to place the head-dress on the ground is always looked at as a dishonouring action.

Very often it is vowed that the hairs of the sick child will be cut in a sanctuary. The hair is allowed to grow from the moment of the vow until the promise is fulfilled. In the case of a Christian the child is taken to the church, where the fulfilment of the vow must take place. In case the Holy Sepulchre (Qabr el-Ḥalâs<sup>3</sup>) is chosen, the act is performed behind the tomb of Christ. The priest, after saying some prayers, cuts a lock of hair from the forehead, another from the occipital region and one from each lateral side, thus marking the sign of the cross. The barber cuts the rest of the hair. In other churches the child approaches the altar<sup>4</sup> and the ceremony takes place. Some friends and relatives are invited to attend the ceremony. Returning home, all join in a feast. In the case of Mohammedans the child enters the sanctuary and the hair is cut in the *mihrâb* or near the tomb. At Nebî Mûsâ it is done outside the real shrine. In the district of Djenîn I was told that a vow to cut the hair may be performed in most of the *welîs*. This practice of shaving the head, or cutting the hair at the expiration of a votive period is a very old custom. In the Bible we have reference to it.<sup>5</sup>

In all cases the weight of the hair cut off, in gold, silver or money, is presented to the sanctuary. The money is given to the priest or to the *qaiym*.

#### VI. Vows not connected with any holy person or shrine

Such vows may be vestiges or remnants of primitive religious practices. "If my brother returns safely, I shall make you a *zarb*, which we will eat in the vineyards." This vow is made for friends. At other times it is a thank-offering to a person. Thus we meet

<sup>1</sup> In Liftâ.

<sup>2</sup> Heard from a woman of Liftâ.

<sup>3</sup> Lit. "the Tomb of Salvation."

<sup>4</sup> *El-madbah*.

<sup>5</sup> Acts 18 18, 21 24.

with many *nā'irah* of this category made for physicians, nurses, teachers, etc. Most of these vows are never fulfilled.

In connection with the subject of vows I wish to draw attention to the following idea. There are some expressions which seem to indicate quite a different idea, but which originate in the same cycle of conceptions as the vows. The Palestinian believes that the death of a child or animal, the breaking of an object or the spilling of a fluid may atone for the loss of somebody or something more important. *Inkasar eš-šarr*, "the evil is broken," is said when a glass of water, a tea cup or a coffee cup fall from a visitor's hand and breaks. *Inkabb eš-šarr*, "the evil has been poured out," is used on similar occasions.

When a horse dies, a house collapses, etc., people express their feelings by saying: *fidāk u fidā 'iyālak*, "it is a ransom for you and your family." The idea underlying these expressions is that some evil had to befall the loser, but the Almighty Providence has directed it to a less important object and thus saved a greater loss.

#### VII. Vows for the dead and the *djinn*

I cannot close the discussion of vows without calling attention to vows offered to the *djinn* and the dead. Although this category of offerings differs from that of offerings brought to the saints, it shows many points of resemblances and serves to illustrate some points of interest. It is hard to find such characteristic examples of sacrifices brought to *djinn* and dead as of those offered to saints. Nevertheless a careful investigation shows many customs which belong here. A comparison between sacrifices offered to saints and those brought to the dead and *djinn* exhibits the same idea in different stages of development. I shall describe some customs and superstitious beliefs, which suggest

##### a) Offerings to demons

*Dbihet ed-dâr* (among the peasants) which corresponds to *ḍbihet bêt eš-ša'r*<sup>1</sup> of the Bedouin is the most characteristic example of this sort. Besides *ḍbihet el-Halil*<sup>2</sup> we meet with another sort of animal

<sup>1</sup> Jaussen, p. 339.

<sup>2</sup> A sheep must be offered to Abraham whenever a house is newly built.

sacrifice, practiced by many peasants in connection with the completion of a house. Some will not even occupy a newly built dwelling until a sheep is immolated, to please the *djinn* who have already taken their abode in it. With the blood the sides of the door are painted as an external sign of the offering. Others may even slay a sheep in the foundation trenches. Whenever a Bedouin tribe changes the locality of its camp the *šēh* and others immolate a sheep to the demons of that spot with the words *dastūr yā šāhib el-maḥall*, "By your permission, O owner of the place."<sup>1</sup>

According to an old belief, which is at present dying out, some buildings—especially baths and houses erected near a spring—will not be fortunate and prosperous, unless the foundation stone has been erected upon shed blood. In the case of a Turkish bath it is even thought, that a human being—and curiously enough a Sudanese—must be offered before the first stone is laid. Some old women assured me that the head of a negro suffices, if buried below the threshold. The following expressions point to this human sacrifice: *el-ḥammām mā bidūr illā'alā 'abd*, "The bath does not work except on a negro;" *qāym 'alā 'abd*, "it is erected on a negro;" *mabnī 'alā 'abd*, "it is built on a negro."<sup>2</sup> Excavations show that these foundation sacrifices were very wide-spread in the ancient Orient. In 1 Kg. 16 34 we read: "In his days did Hiel the Bethelite build Jericho: he laid the foundation thereof in Abiram his firstborn, and set up the gates thereof in his youngest son Segub."

Whenever a house is thought to be inhabited by demons, because every family which occupies it loses one or more of its members by death, nobody else will move into it before sacrificing one or more sheep, for the house is thought to be *maskūn*, "haunted," lit., "inhabited (by evil spirits)."

The spring of Djifnâ is supposed to be inhabited by a demon which appears in the form of a charming bride. Once a woman of the village approached the spring during menstruation. This careless act provoked the anger of the *djinnîyeh* and the spring was dried up. A priest had to go to the place and burn incense, thus reconciling the *djinnîyeh*.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Jaussen, l. c.

<sup>2</sup> *Aberglaube*, p. 20.

<sup>3</sup> "Haunted Springs and Water Demons," *JPOS* I, pp. 153—170.



To this category belongs also the custom known as *tihlây*, "sugaring." Superstition holds that the *djinn* are pleased and quieted by sweets and sugar offerings.<sup>1</sup> The following example will illustrate the procedure. A mother once beat her child on the threshold (*atabeh*). This careless act resulted in a severe punishment of the child and mother, the first getting fever and the second having a slight attack of facial paralysis. These inflictions were caused by the *djinn* living in this place. To appease them the woman was advised to strew sweets on the threshold.

More complicated is the following belief. A child had fever, and the mother was told that this was caused by a fright. She took the sick boy to el-Ḥadjar el-Mansi, where she washed his hands and feet, after which she strewed sweets and returned home. The explanation of this act is as follows: The fever excited by the fright is caused by demons. Taking the child to the grave of a holy man and washing his extremities there drives the devils out by the power of the man of God. The sweets are an offering to appease the demons, who are irritated because they have to leave their prey.

In analyzing all these customs we find that the idea of offering something to the spirits is represented in every one. I have only mentioned a few examples of each sort. The underlying idea is to get the favour of the spirits through these sacrifices, to please them and to atone for mistakes which may have provoked them. According to popular belief the spirits always react favourably to such offerings. Many references in the Bible point to offerings to spirits and demons.<sup>2</sup>

#### b) Offerings to the Dead

With regard to sacrifices to the dead I shall only mention practices which bear a special connection to our subject. While the corpse is being ritually washed, the relatives distribute some money '*an rûh el-maiyet*, "for the soul of the dead." This is called *sqût eş-şalây*. In the cemetery and when the burial is over, money is again distributed, this time to the *şêhs* who have been repeating during the whole procession, *allâhu akbar*, as a prayer for the dead. In the

<sup>1</sup> See *Aberglaube*.

<sup>2</sup> Lev. 16 8, 17 7; 2 Chr. 11 16; 2 Kings 23 8. In the latter "spirits" should be read instead of "gates" (i. e., *š'irîm* instead of *š'arîm*), as has been suggested.

graveyard, bread and dried figs are given to the poor (*'an rūḥ el-maiyt*). Those who can afford it may even have a new wooden coffin (*tābūt, sahlīyeh*) made, on which the deceased is carried to his burial place. This coffin is then left to serve for poor dead, and this act of helping the poor, even after their death, is believed to bring a special *ṭawāb*, "reward," for the soul of the departed.

All who go to the house of the mourners to condole receive coffee with or without a piece of cake. After drinking the coffee, and sometimes on entering as well as on leaving, they say: *allah yerḥamu* "May God be merciful to him."<sup>1</sup> In the third night a *tahlīeh* is made. Sweets are distributed to all invited, who are chosen from the better class as well as from the poor. Afterwards *lā ilāhan illā allah* is recited by those present, all repeating this phrase over and over again until the sum of all the prayers reaches one thousand in the cities, and 75000 in some villages.<sup>2</sup> Thereupon *al-Ḥitmeḥ* (*al-Qorān*) is read and those reading it say at the end: *wahabnā ṭawābahā li-rūḥ fulān*, "We have presented its recompense (merit), i. e., that of reading the Holy Book, for the soul of N. N." The meeting ends with a meal. Every one recites the *fātiḥah* for the soul of the dead. The meal this night is also called *unisah (el-Mālḥah)*.

On the first Thursday the relatives distribute a sort of a cake fried in oil to those who happen to come to the cemetery. It is called *fakket ḥanak*.<sup>3</sup> On the second Thursday a *ḥmēsīyeh* is made in some villages. All friends go to the cemetery to visit the tomb. The relatives distribute dried figs, sweets, raisins, etc., among those present, especially to children, also *'an rūḥ el-maiyet*. As on other occasions, everyone asks the mercy of God for the soul of the departed one. At the end of the forty days another supper (*'ašā*)<sup>4</sup> is made. On *Ḥamīs el-Amwāt* the peasants send fruit to the *maḥlāfeh*, while in a city the relatives of the dead go to the cemetery and distribute sweets, dyed eggs, and very rarely cooked food among the poor as a

<sup>1</sup> Other expressions are: *salāmet rūskum, el-bāqiyeh fī 'umrak, allāh yḥallī wlādak*.

<sup>2</sup> Heard in el-Qubēbeh.

<sup>3</sup> *Fakket el-wiḥdeh* is the expression used for the first visit made on the day after the corpse is buried.

<sup>4</sup> One who does not prepare this supper for his dead father is despised by his fellow-villagers, who say: *mā ilak ḥēr fī abūk mā 'amiltiḥōs 'ašā yā kalb*.

*sadaqah* 'an *el-maiyet*. Food may be sent at any time by the peasants to the guest-house and is known by the names *es-sadaqah*, *el-fiqdch*, *er-rahmeh*, *kaffarah*. City-dwellers generally give food to the poor on every feast (New Year, Ramaḍân, 'Îd el-Kbir). While any sort of food, even fruit, may be sent on any occasion to the *maḷâfeh*, it is customary in the villages to slay a sheep on the *tahûleh*, some times on *Hamîs el-Amwât*.<sup>1</sup>

From the above we see that the peasants prefer to send the *sadaqah* to the guest-house, for all visitors, travellers and strangers stop there for rest and recreation. Every time the relatives of the dead bring food to the *maḷâfeh* they say: *hadâ an rūḷi fulân*, "this is for the soul of N. N." Every one who eats of it must say a prayer for the deceased. Thus many prayers ascend to the Almighty, imploring the salvation of the one who has died.

Some relatives of a dead person will give a sum of money to a poor person obligating the latter to journey to Mecca and perform the *hadj* for the soul of the dead. When he has finished the official ceremony there he must say: *itqabbal yâ allah ṭawâb hal-hadj 'an rūḷi fulân*, "Reckon, O God, the recompense (merit) of this pilgrimage for the soul of . . ." No *ḍbîhet el-dhîyeh* can be given in the name of the deceased.<sup>2</sup>

The Bedouin of el-Qibleh (the Peninsula of Sinai) once a year bring all their cattle to visit their cemetery. While the sheep pass the burial place, every animal entering the cemetery or remaining standing near it is thought to have been chosen by the dead and is sacrificed there. I have been told that very many sheep are slain on such an occasion, as all Bedouin, even the poor, bring their sheep to visit the dead in order that the latter may choose an offering.

There are some who engage a *šeh* to read *el-Hîtmeh*<sup>3</sup> for the benefit of the dead once or several times a year. As in the case of the *hadj*, here also he says, as soon as he finishes the reading, *wahabtu ṭawâbuhâ la-rūḷi fulân*.

There are other somewhat similar customs which may be passed over. I wish, however, to emphasize what has been mentioned

<sup>1</sup> In the villages this day is also known as *Hamîs el-Bêḍ* (Thursday of Eggs)

<sup>2</sup> Heard from several women of Jerusalem, who gave me several examples

<sup>3</sup> Some believe that Radjab, Šabân and Ramaḍân are the most suitable months for reading the Holy Book.

repeatedly, that every one who receives money or food in the name of the deceased recites a prayer and generally the *fâtihah* for his soul, and adds in every case the words *rahmet allah 'alêh* or *allah yirhamuh*.

While all the customs described above are practised by the Mohammedans, the Christians have others which are based on the same conceptions. I do not wish to describe the various masses and prayers for the dead, as they are accepted religious institutions of the different churches, but will restrict myself to folkloristic practices, mentioning only those that differ from the customs described above.

On the third, ninth and fortieth day, six months and one year after the death a *sûniyeh* and a *widjeh* are made by the family of the deceased and distributed in the cemetery. By *sûniyeh* a dish of boiled wheat with sugar, decorated with almonds, candy, etc., is meant, while a *widjeh* is a large disk-like loaf of bread of about 40—60 cm in diameter, coated with sesame seeds. The priest says some prayers and then the food is distributed to those present. Many offer these things only once or twice.<sup>2</sup>

Some Christians distribute cakes (either *ka'k ibsimim*, *biqsmât* or *rahmeh*)<sup>3</sup> on the first 'Îd el-Amwât. Members of the Greek Orthodox church may also take wine on such occasions. The priest blesses the wine and gives every one a cup. The dead person also receives his portion, for the priest pours a little wine, marking a circle with it on the tomb.

As with the Mohammedans so also with the Christians, every one who receives something implores the mercy of God for the deceased.

An analysis of these customs shows the following main points:

1. Food and other offerings are made in the name of the dead and for the benefit of the dead.
2. These offerings are accompanied by a multitude of prayers and good wishes, which are intended for the benefit of the dead.

<sup>1</sup> Some Christians give those who come to condole a cup of coffee with a hard cake. In some cases simple *ka'k ibsimim* (cakes with sesame seeds) are distributed instead of *biqsmât* (the above mentioned hard cakes).

<sup>2</sup> This custom prevails among the Greek Orthodox congregation.

<sup>3</sup> *Rahmeh* stands for round cakes made of *smîd* (semolina) butter and sesame seeds.

When we question the peasants about the purpose of these customs, we find that they reason as follows. When help (food, money, etc.) is given to the poor, strangers and children in the name of the deceased, and prayers are said for his soul, God will reckon all these acts in his favour in the day of judgement. The more a soul can rely upon such acts, the better off it is, since all of them will be added to *kaffet el-mîzân*, in which his good actions are placed, and the likelihood of outweighing his evil actions will increase. In other words, we see that these actions are sacrifices made by the living for the benefit of the dead. This thought is beautifully expressed in the sentence *lôlâ el-ahyâ la-hilkat el-amwât*, "Were it not for (the actions of) the living, the dead would have perished." This is the fundamental idea in all sacrifices to the dead, as we shall see later on.

A close examination of the goal at which these offerings and prayers aim, removes every doubt of their sacrificial character. The latter becomes still clearer if we remember the words said every time the *fâtihah* and *hitmeh* are read, namely: *itqabbal yâ allah ðawâbhâ 'an ruh fulân*, "Accept, O God, its recompense for the soul of . . ." These customs are illustrated by the fact that the Hebrew word for "pray (עָרַב)" is cognate with the Arabic root *عَتر*, which means "sacrifice (sheep)."<sup>1</sup> Prayer and sacrifice were so intermingled that every prayer was an offering, and every sacrifice a prayer.

Even the simplest phrases, *allah yirhamuh* or *rahmet allah 'alêh*, seem to have been originally *ad'iyâ*, "prayers," offered for the benefit of the dead, and not only polite expressions.<sup>2</sup>

There is another motive for this custom to which I wish to draw attention, as it has not usually been connected with sacrifices for the dead. The underlying idea of all these sacrifices, including those offered to saints, is the same. Neither saints nor other dead eat themselves, although meals are offered in their names. To their tables many are invited and when satisfied say a prayer for the

<sup>1</sup> See *Muḥîṭ el-Muḥîṭ* and Belot.

<sup>2</sup> Whenever one is on the point of beginning a journey he asks his friends: *id'â lâ*, "pray for me." They at once recite phrases like "God be with you," "God protect you," "God make you prosper," etc. All these simple expressions are considered as prayers (*du'â*).

soul of the dead, who is then their real host. Thus a person is endowed even after his death with the highest virtue in the eyes of the Oriental, namely hospitality.

In the Bible we find parallels to the custom of sacrifice for the dead, cf. Deut. 26 14, Sir. 30 18. The most interesting passage is 2 Macab. 12 43ff.: "And making a gathering, he sent twelve thousand drachmas of silver to Jerusalem for sacrifice to be offered for the sins of the dead, thinking well and religiously concerning the resurrection. For if he had not hoped that they that were slain should rise again, it would have seemed superfluous and vain to pray for the dead."<sup>1</sup>

*(To be continued.)*

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<sup>1</sup> Douay translation.

## MOHAMMEDAN SAINTS AND SANCTUARIES IN PALESTINE

T. CANAAN  
(JERUSALEM)

(Continued)

### 7. CELEBRATION OF FEASTS (*mawâsim*)

The word *môsam*<sup>1</sup> (pl. *mawâsim*) means "season, mart, fair or time of assembly of pilgrims."<sup>2</sup> In our case it is the "season of visiting a sanctuary;" thus, for example, *êmtâ môsam en-nabî Rûbîn* means "When is the season (the time) of visiting (celebrating the feast of) the Prophet Rûbîn?" Whenever one speaks of *el-môsam* in Jerusalem and the surrounding villages it is understood by all to mean *môsam en-nabî Mûsâ*.

Many sanctuaries have regular *mawâsim*. The feast is very elaborately celebrated in some and extends over several days, while in others it is very simple and lasts only one day. At such a time people flock from every direction to visit the holy place and to take part in the festival joys. At these times they also fulfill their vows, perform their religious duties, circumcise their children, etc.

A description of the Nebî Mûsâ feast<sup>3</sup> will give an excellent picture of a *môsam*. All other *mawâsim* resemble it in most of their characteristics. The Prophet Moses is highly honoured by all Mohammedans of Palestine. People come to the feast from all villages of southern Palestine and Samaria. Many also come from the north.

<sup>1</sup> Canaan, *Kalender des pal. Fell.*, ZDPV XXXVI, p. 274, note 2.

<sup>2</sup> Used originally for Mecca, *Muḥit el-Muḥit* II, 2250.

<sup>3</sup> Descriptions have been given by: Hans Spoer, *Das Nebî-Mûsâ Fest*, ZDPV XXXII, pp. 207—221; R. Hartmann, *Nebî Mûsâ*, MNDPV 1910, pp. 65—75; P. Kahle, *Gebräuche bei den moslemischen Heiligtümern in Palestina*, PJB, 165 etc.

The shrine is situated seven kilometers S. S. W. of Jericho, just south of the road leading from Jerusalem to Jericho. It is composed of an extensive complex of buildings with large gates. It may be divided into two parts: the sanctuary itself and the rooms surrounding it. The latter are separated from the first on three sides by an open space, the courtyard.<sup>1</sup> The sanctuary itself is surrounded on the north and east by porches, and covers the supposed tomb of the prophet. A quantity of rags are tied to the bars of the windows. Above the door an inscription states that 'Abdallah Pâšâ rebuilt the place in 1235 A. H. The *maqâm* itself is opened only on special occasions and during the festival days.

The greater part of the complex surrounding the shrine is composed of rooms which serve to lodge the visitors. The minaret is found in the N. W. corner of this part and is not connected directly with the sanctuary. Two mosques are attached to this complex, one of which (*djâmi' en-niswân*, the mosque of the women) has a *milrâb*, while the other, which seems to have been changed from a stable<sup>2</sup> into a prayer-room has no niche. The second story opens nearly everywhere on to a terrace which overlooks the court-yard. In the lower story two large kitchens, as well as stables, store-rooms, and wood-rooms are to be found, beside the many rooms for the pilgrims.

Although this building is erected on the top of a hill, the two other shrines (*Ḥasan er-Râ'i* and *Masâdjid sittnâ 'Âišeḥ*) command better views, being found on still higher positions. East of the whole building is a cemetery, where those are buried who die during festival days. Notables who die in Jericho are very often brought here, and the 'Idwân tribesmen of Transjordan bury some of their dead also in this cemetery. They count it a special blessing to be interred near this man of God.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The courtyard is paved with stone slabs.

<sup>2</sup> This may still be seen, since the door leading to the outside has been closed, and the places for tying the animals are still visible.

<sup>3</sup> Beside the three shrines mentioned on page 8, where children are buried in their neighbourhood, I have two other sanctuaries with the same characteristic, making five in all:

*es-šēḥ* Aḥmad at Nebi Şamwil,

*es-šēḥ* Maṅûr at Hizmah. The three already mentioned shrines are

*es-šēḥ* Nûrân near Şallâlah,

*es-šēḥ* Aḥmad es-Sarrisi at Abû Ghôš, and

*es-šēḥ* 'Abdallah at Şu'fât.



Not a single tree is to be seen anywhere near the building, but large cisterns<sup>1</sup> gather the rain-water for use in the feast days. These cisterns apparently belong to an older age than the present building. It has been supposed that they were the cisterns of the convent of St. Euthymius.<sup>2</sup>

The ridge on which the sanctuary is erected is composed of a bituminous stone, which burns easily and gives an offensive asphaltitic odor. The people think that this natural sign, which is not found in the case of any other saint, is a decisive proof of the greatness of the prophet. *Nāruh min ḥdjāruh*,<sup>3</sup> "his fire is (comes) from his stones," has become proverbial. I have never heard the sayings, given by Spoer,<sup>4</sup> about this bituminous stone, which looks white outside (like the angel of light<sup>5</sup>) and inside black (like the angel of death<sup>6</sup>).

The feast itself begins on the Friday preceding Good Friday of the Greek Orthodox Church<sup>7</sup> and ends on Maundy Thursday. This Friday is called *djum'et en-nazleh*, "the Friday of Descent," while the Friday preceding it is known as *djum'et el-mnādāt*, the "Friday of Calling," since it is on this day officially made known that the *mōsam* of the Prophet begins on the next Friday. Thursday evening and the night of Thursday to Friday is named *lēlatu l-waqfeh*,<sup>8</sup> "the Night of Standing," in other words, the night preceding the feast. Every one who intends to take part in the feast prepares for the coming days. Different friends or families come together and talk over their plans. This time resembles in some respects the preparation for Passover on the part of the Jews. The night of the

<sup>1</sup> As much depends on the amount of water these cisterns hold at the time of the feast, the people believe that they are often filled in a miraculous way. We are told that when the rainfall during the winter is scanty and the cisterns are not filled with water, it always happens that the prophet Moses sends a heavy downpour of rain, which falls only over his sacred area, shortly before the beginning of the feast.

<sup>2</sup> ZDPV XXXII, 218.

<sup>3</sup> Kable, PJB VIII, 174.

<sup>4</sup> ZDPV XXXII, 212.

<sup>5</sup> Moses is meant here.

<sup>6</sup> 'Uzrā'yl.

<sup>7</sup> Not on Good Friday as stated by Spoer.

<sup>8</sup> This expression is used for the evening before every feast day.

next Wednesday to Thursday is called *lêlat eš-šêl*, since most of the pilgrims arrange to leave.

Before describing the beginning of the festival processions we must call attention to the fact that six Fridays of this period are considered as more or less important, since they are connected with special celebrations and privileges. The Nebi Mûsâ feast forms the nucleus. The following is the list<sup>1</sup> as known in the environs of Jerusalem. Some Fridays bear other names in other places:

Order of Fridays	Compared with the Greek Easter	Names of Fridays in Jerusalem and environs	Names among the peasants and Bedouin
First	14 days before Good Friday	<i>djum'et el-mnâdât</i>	<i>hamîs</i> , or <i>dj. en-nabât</i>
Second	8 days before Good Friday	<i>dj. en-nazleh</i> , <i>dj. el-bêraq</i> , or <i>dj. es-siddârî</i> <sup>2</sup>	<i>hamîs el-amwât</i> , or <i>dj. el-bêd</i>
	Maundy Thursday	<i>hamîs eṭ-ṭal'ah</i> , or <i>yôm eš-šêl</i>	
Third	Good Friday	<i>dj. el-'elêmât</i>	<i>dj. el-maghri</i> , or <i>dj. el-ḥayawânât</i>
Fourth	8 days after Good Friday	<i>dj. er-raghâyb</i> , <i>dj. el-ḥalâwî</i> . <sup>3</sup> or <i>ed dj. eṭ-ṭawîlî</i>	
Fifth	14 days after Good Friday	<i>dj. el-ghurabâ</i>	
Sixth	21 days after Good Friday	<i>dj. el-ḥazânâ</i>	

<sup>1</sup> Somewhat modified from Canaan, *Folklore of the Seasons*, JPOS III, p. 23.

<sup>2</sup> Some say *sindârî*.

<sup>3</sup> The Christians of Bethlehem, Bêt Djâlâ and Bêt Şâhûr call Dec. 24 *yôm el-ḥalâwî*, and flock on this day to Bethlehem to attend the official procession of the Patriarch, using the opportunity to buy sweets. This custom is dying out (from the written notes of my father).

The procession begins by bringing the Nebî Musâ banner from the place where it is kept all the year through, called ed-Dâr el-Kbîreh, belonging to the Husêni family, and situated west of the Haram area in the street connecting Bâb el-Habs with the Hân ez-Zêt street. The notables as well as many officials assemble here. The banner is handed over to the Muftî on a plate. After reciting a prayer he unfolds the banner and it is fastened on its stick. The banner is made of green velvet, embroidered along the border with golden threads, and measures 200×140 cm. A piece of black silk is sewn at the centre of each side bearing inscriptions,<sup>1</sup> to be described below. This black cloth is also artistically embroidered on its edges. The flag is fastened to a long staff, called *zâneh*, ending above in a golden crescent (*hlâl*).

The procession—which in the time of the Turks used to be accompanied by a military band and a guard of honour—moves slowly to the Mosque of Omar, entering by the gate Bâb el-Habs (also known as Bâb 'Alâ ed-Dîn el-Bußeirî). After the midday prayer is over the procession leaves the mosque area by the same gate, and not by Bâb Huṭṭâ, as stated by Spoer.<sup>2</sup> It is true that a great part of the multitude which attends the ceremony in the mosque leaves by other gates. The Grand Muftî, the banner-bearer and the other servants of the prophet go ahead. As soon as they are out of the holy area they mount horses and move slowly through the prolongation of the Via Dolorosa, leaving the city by St. Stephen's gate (Bâb Sitti Maryam). The spectators fill the street, the balconies and windows, the cemetery, and the gardens on both sides of the way. Due to the great number of umbrellas which are carried by the members of the procession and the spectators, this day has been called *'id eš-šamâsi*, "the feast of the umbrellas." The *šabâb* (young men), assemble in parties, and each one plays, dances and sings on its way. In the crowd many flags are carried, coming from different *awliâ* of the city and the surrounding villages. Every flag has its adherents. Thus we see the flags of *eš-šêḥ 'Âṭif*<sup>3</sup>, *eš-šêḥ Qazzâz*<sup>4</sup>,

<sup>1</sup> The writing is also worked in gold thread.

<sup>2</sup> ZDPV XXXII, 214.

<sup>3</sup> The *qaiym* of *eš-šêḥ* Djarrâḥ.

<sup>4</sup> This and the preceding come from Jerusalem.

'Alī eš-Šarīf', from Nabī Samwʿl, etc.' The banner of en-nabī Dâhûd and that of the Mosque of 'Omar are always seen in this procession. They accompany that of the prophet Moses, until the procession reaches Râs el-'Amûd. Slowly the procession advances and after two or three hours reaches Râs el-'Amûd, where the Mayor of Jerusalem and the other members of the Municipality welcome it. The Municipality invites many guests for this occasion. After refreshments are served the banner is carefully folded and the dignitaries continue their journey in automobiles or carriages. Part of the crowd follows slowly, but the greater part return to Jerusalem.

Every day of the feast the number of the visitors increases. They come generally in the following order<sup>2</sup>:

Arrival	Group	Departure
Thursday	Coffee-house keepers and some merchants	Friday after eight days
Friday	The servants of the Prophet Moses and some merchants	Thursday
Saturday	The 'Idwân tribe	Monday or Tuesday
Sunday	The different flags of Jerusalem ('Âtif, Qazzâz, etc.)	Thursday
Monday	The Hebronites, the banner of the <i>ṣabâb</i> of Jerusalem and that of Nâblus	Wednesday
Tuesday	The Bedouin of ed-Diûk	Wednesday
Wednesday	The inhabitants of Jericho	Wednesday

A man who comes for one day is called *sabbâhî*, while one who spends only one night in the sanctuary is known by the name *baiyâtî*. The former comes in the morning and returns home in the afternoon, while the latter arrives generally in the afternoon, spends the night and leaves during the next day.

The Hebronites leave Hebron Saturday and encamp in the Baq'ah, just south-west of Jerusalem. The next day they enter Jerusalem by the Jaffa Gate in a long procession, singing, dancing and playing *sêf u turs*. A multitude of spectators assemble to witness the event.

<sup>1</sup> The *qaiym* of el-Ḥadrâ (Nâblus).

<sup>2</sup> This order was given me by several persons, who go every year to the sanctuary, since they are servants of the Prophet.

Through the old city they continue their march until they enter el-Haram by Bâb el-Maḥkameh. They pass the night in the mosque area and early the next day leave for the shrine. It is customary that before such a procession reaches a village they send a *radjdjâd* to the village to announce their coming. At once as many of the inhabitants as are able go out to meet the procession, taking along their banner and *'iddeh*. Often, the newcomers are invited to take some food.

All *saiyârât* leave Jerusalem for Nebî Mûsâ with great pomp and monotonous music; the procession is headed by the banner. As soon as they pass Gethsemane they furl the banner and march slowly and quietly. As soon as they are in sight of the shrine of the Prophet they rearrange their group, unfurl the banner and begin the formal procession again. First they raise small heaps of stones as *qanâtir*<sup>1</sup>, and recite the *fâtihah*. The dervish who heads the procession sends one of his followers to announce their coming to the other dervishes who are already in Nebî Mûsâ. This messenger is called *nađjdjâb*. His master binds a *mandîl* around his neck to be untied only by the *šeh* who welcomes him at the sanctuary. This *nađjdjâb* runs directly to the *maqâm*, all the time beating his *naqqârah* (a sort of a small drum). As soon as he reaches the building all the dervishes, to whatever *ṭarîqah* they may belong, go out to welcome him, and the oldest dervish unties the *mandîl* from his neck, reciting the *fâtihah* at the same time. This *šeh* orders all *saiyârât* and *'idad* to welcome the new-comers.

First the *mazâr* of er-Râ'î is visited and then the crowd proceeds to the Nebî. As soon as the outer court is reached, the procession advances very slowly, while their enthusiasm increases. All the way to er-Râ'î and to the Nebî gun shots are fired in order to increase the enthusiasm and to proclaim their coming. This custom is no longer allowed.

Processions are generally arranged in the following way: The banner-bearer goes ahead, followed by the musicians. Then follow some young men of the party, encircling their leader and dancing according to the tempo given by him. Every dance is accompanied by singing. The leader recites a strophe and the others repeat it.

<sup>1</sup> We find such heaps of stones set up by way of witness in patriarchal days: Gen. 31 44-48; Joshua 4 1-3 and 9-11.

He swings a sword, a stick or a handkerchief in the air and dances with them, thus giving the tempo. Sometimes all or part of the musicians are seen in the circle. While singing and dancing the party clap their hands in a rhythmical way. This clapping of the hands may be met with in all seasons of great mirth and rejoicing<sup>1</sup> and both performers and audience never seem to weary of this simple, but universal amusement.<sup>2</sup> They proceed slowly until they reach the *maqâm*. Some of the women spectators welcome the party with *zaghârît*, or short songs ending with a shrill tongue-rattling.

It is very interesting to note that the above description of this procession resembles in many a way the joyful processions described in the Bible. Singing, dancing and clapping of the hands, the use of musical instruments and the participation of all classes are the same to day as they were thousands of years ago; cf. 2 Sam. 6 5 ff., 2 Kings 11 12, etc. The description in Ezek. 25 6 and 7 resembles very much the *saḥḍjeh* dance to be described later: "Thou hast clapped thine hands, and stamped with the feet, and rejoiced in heart."<sup>3</sup>

The most important sorts of dances are the *saḥḍjeh* and the *dabkeh*. A *dabkeh* may consist of the following varieties: *ṭaiyârah*, *šamâlîyeh*, *'ardjah*, *ftûḥîyeh*, *qarrâdîyeh*, *sab'âwîyeh* and *maḥlûteh*. Clapping the hands and stamping the feet may accompany any one of these dances. In many cases, either instead of a dance, or following the dancing group, another party plays the *sêf u turs*. Each of two persons who occupy the centre of the group is armed with a sword and a small shield. While their friends clap their hands and sing around them, these two pretend to attack one another, advancing, retreating, kneeling on one leg, standing up, bending to the right or to the left, swinging the sword in different directions all the time. From time to time they strike their sword on their own shield or on that of their opponent. Sword strokes are delivered rhythmically so that the sound follows a regular measure. Some of the songs used in this play as well as in dancing will be given below.

<sup>1</sup> In wedding processions, welcoming a friend home from a foreign country, at the release of young men from their military service, etc., such rejoicing takes place.

<sup>2</sup> James Neil, *Palestine Life*, p. 133.

<sup>3</sup> Clapping of the hands is also used in scorn, contempt, mourning and grief.

The musical instruments which are used are the following:

<i>ṭabl</i>	drum
<i>kās (kāsāt)</i>	kettle-drum
<i>mizhar</i>	kind of lute
<i>šabbābeh</i>	flute
<i>arghūl</i>	
<i>nāyeh</i>	long flute
<i>zumṡārah</i>	fife
<i>miḏḡwiz</i>	fife with two tubes
<i>dirbakkeh</i>	kind of drum
<i>nōbeh</i>	very large drum

The rhythm played by the *ṭabl* and *kāsāt* has nearly always a meaning: Some examples are:

<i>allāh</i>	<i>allāh</i>	<i>allāh</i>	<i>ḡaiy</i>		—		—
<i>dā-ym</i>	<i>dā-ym</i>			—	—		
<i>qai-yūm</i>	<i>qai-yūm</i>			—	—		

In the case of *allāh* alone the *ṭabl* are allowed to vibrate, while one is turned slowly on the other, and the last syllable is given by a strong beat. The banners are of green, white or red cloth, with Qoranic verses, the name of the saint to whom they belong, or names of God inscribed on them. The inscription is made by sewing cloth bands of different colours on the flag itself.

Some of the writings on banners are:

1. لا اله الا الله محمد رسول الله

There is no God but Allah; Mohammed is God's apostle.

2. On the banner of Nebi Mūsā:

a) on one side: the above mentioned Mohammedan creed

b) on the other side:

و كلم الله موسى تكليما ١٣٠٩

God spake with Moses discoursing with him 1309

3. The banner of Bêt Sūrik:

باسم الله الرحمن الرحيم  
نصر من الله وقتح مبين  
مددك يا سيدي احمد البدوي

In the name of the most merciful God!  
Assistance from God and a sure victory!  
Your help, O my lord Aḥmad el-Badawī!

4. On the banner of eš-šēh Djâbir en-Na'na':

لي سادة من عزهم      اقدامهم فوق الحياة  
ان لم اكن منهم فلي      في حبهم عز وجاه

I have masters whose power  
(and) whose bravery are supernatural.  
Although I am not one of them,  
(I derive from) their love power and dignity.

5. On a second banner of the same šēḥ:

لا اله الا الله  
بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم لا اله الا الله محمد رسول الله  
سيدي احمد الرفاعي ولي الله  
قد نشر الله سره العزيز

There is no God but Allāh.  
In the name of the most merciful God, there is no God but  
Allāh and Mohammed is God's Apostle.  
Our Lord Aḥmad er-Rifā'i is the Friend of God.  
God has proclaimed his wonderful Mystery.

6. Seen at Nebî Rûbin festivals:

ابو بكر      عمر  
لا اله الا الله ومحمد  
رسول الله  
علي      عثمان  
Abû Bakr      'Omar  
There is no God but Allāh, and Mohammed  
is God's Apostle.  
'Ali      'Otmân

7. Banner of eš-šēḥ Aḥmad el Fāleḥ:

ابو طلحة      سعد  
جدده الفقير احمد  
الغالخ خليفة الحضرة  
الأحمدية  
زبير      سعيد



Abū Ṭalḥah

Sa'd

It was renewed by the poor (for  
God's help) Aḥmad el-Fāliḥ the  
successor of Mohammed's excellency

Zubeir

Sa'id

8. Another banner of the same *šēḥ*:

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم  
وقل الحمد لله الذي لم يتخذ ولدا ولم  
يكن له شريكا في الملك ولم يكن له ولي

In the name of the most merciful God!

And say, Praise be unto God, who hath not begotten any  
child; who hath no partner in the kingdom, nor hath  
any to protect him (Sūrah 17, last verse).

## 9. Seen in Rûbin (1924):

عمر أبو بكر  
بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم  
لا اله الا الله ومحمد رسول الله  
واذا عزمت توكلت على الله  
سيدنا الخضر عليه السلام  
علي عثمان

Abū Bakr

'Omar

In the name of the most merciful God!

There is no God but Allāh:

If I resolve (to do something) I trust on God.

Our Lord el-Ḥadr, peace be upon him.

'Oṭmān

'Ali

The staff (*ez-zāneh*), on which the banner is fastened, often has on its upper end a metal piece which is worked in one of the forms shown in the accompanying plate. A study of the different forms—which are generally called *hlāl* (crescent)—indictes the following grouping:

1. The representation of a weapon (spear). Nos. 1, 2 and 3.
2. The representation of the hand (Nos. 6, 7). Number 8 may also be counted to this group, while number 15 shows the holy number seven.
3. Different forms representing the development of the moon. Nos. 4, 5, 9, 10, 16, 17, 18, 20. No. 21 has the inscription لا اله الا الله و محمد رسول الله in the moon. Nos. 11, 12, 13, 14, which look like a sphere or a circle, may be classified under this head, although they may also be explained as the representation of the terrestrial globe.

These signs are common in popular superstition, we meet with them in magic formulas and popular medicine.<sup>1</sup>

Some of the villages having an *'iddeh*, which is generally brought to visit the Nebî, are: Bêt Iksâ, En-Nabî Şamwyl, Biddû, Bêt 'Anân Bêt Duqquh, Bêt Sûrik, Abû Ghôš, el-'Ësâwiyeh, Silwân, ed-Diûk, Jericho, etc. I was told that the Bedouin tribes el-'Idwân, el-Ka'âbneh, etc., do not bring an *'iddeh* or a flag with them.

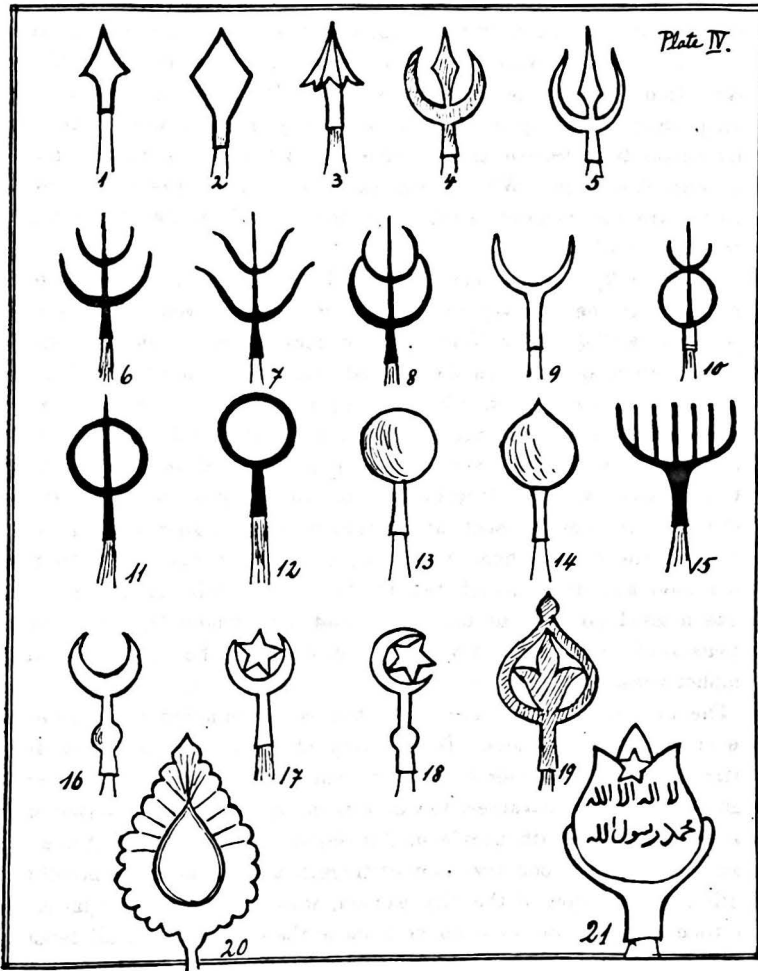
The servants of the Prophet, *huddâm en-Nabî*, i. e., those who have the different positions in this place, are: The Huseinî, Yûnis, Qlêbô and the Bazbazeh families. These families are not, as Curtiss says, "priestly."<sup>2</sup> They have absolutely no religious tinge. Each of the first two has a kitchen (*matbah*) in which an enormous quantity of food is cooked and distributed to the visitors twice daily. The banner bearers are members of the Qlêbô, while the *muaddîn* comes from the Bazbazah family. The last have also the right to light the *maqâm*. The muftî of Jerusalem must lead the procession. All of these "servants" are proud of the honour bestowed on their families in serving Kalim Allâh.

Every day about one *quntâr* (300 kg) of meat is cooked by the Huseinî family and about the same by the Yûnis. This meat is cooked in large vessels belonging to the *maqâm*. At the same time a great quantity of rice is prepared as *ruzz mfalfal*.<sup>3</sup> *Yahâneh* (pl. of *yahneh*) are also cooked. *Yahnet fûl* (broad beans), *y. başal*

<sup>1</sup> *Aberglaube*, pp. 58, 64, 84, 94 and 95.

<sup>2</sup> Curtiss, chapter XVI.

<sup>3</sup> Not *muftîfil*, as Kahle says in *PJB* VIII, 172.



(onions), *y. mlūhīyeh* (garden mallow<sup>1</sup>), *y. bēdindjān* (egg-plant), etc. are the most important dishes. By *yahneh* cooked vegetables with meat and *samneh* is understood. Every day two public meals, dinner and supper, are prepared. When the food is ready the visitors come

<sup>1</sup> *Corchorus olitorius* (Hava).

and take their share. Generally they unite in small groups and a representative of each group receives the food. Bread is also distributed. It is a densely crowded mass that awaits the time of distribution. Every one carries a vessel and tries to be one of the first, pushing, elbowing and shouting. Many visitors who prefer to cook themselves receive their share as *ḥardj nāšif*, i. e., raw meat and uncooked rice. Well-known families cooking their own food may receive the cooking vessels from the *maṭbah*, while others must give surety (*rahn*).

The animals, mostly sheep, are killed in a special place, outside the sanctuary, on the way to the carriage road. Even a person who has vowed a *ḍbiḥah* for Nebi Mūsā generally kills it in this place. In doing so a special formula is used, namely: *minnak u ilēk adjr u ṭawāb la-seiydnā Mūsā*, "From Thee and to Thee (O God) may it be counted as recompence and reward for our lord Moses." Very often the following sentence is added: *itqabbal niḍrak yā Kalīm Allāh*, "Accept your vow, O Interlocutor of God." The meat is either distributed to those present, at the time of slaughtering, or it is sent to one of the two kitchens of the sanctuary, to be cooked with the other food and then distributed to the *zuwār*. The offerer always keeps a good portion out for himself and his friends. The enormous expenses of these seven days are met with by the income of the Prophet's *waqf*.

The rooms, courtyard and a great area surrounding the building are crowded with visitors. It is a very picturesque, interesting and instructive sight to observe the different faces, costumes, manners, games and other characteristics of this mass. Peasants, half-Bedouin and Bedouin mix with people of Jerusalem, Nâblus and Hebron. A close student of the country easily distinguishes one type from the other. With the exception of the city women, who keep the rooms most of the time or stand on the open veranda of the second story, all female visitors take part in the activities of the men, with whom they mix continually. All are dressed in their best clothes, which exhibit every colour of the rainbow. The number of the pilgrims is at times enormous, and it reaches its climax on Monday and Tuesday. After this time many begin to leave. During all this time, excepting the first day (when nobody goes home) and the last day (when nobody comes any more to the sanctuary) there is a constant going and

coming. The statement of Curtiss that 15000 attend this festival is exaggerated. As soon as Nebi Mûsâ feast is over the place is deserted. Only two guardians remain through the year. At present they are an Indian, appointed by the Hûsêni family, and Aĥmad Yûnis, appointed by the Yûnis family.<sup>1</sup>

A large part of the visitors lodge in the different rooms. Some families have an inherited right to a room, which is always reserved for them. Foreigners are generally invited by one of the two "servant" families, and every accomodation is arranged for their comfort. Every one of these two families has a saloon, in which the visitors and the pilgrims<sup>2</sup> are welcomed by someone — generally the eldest — of the family. Lemonade, coffee and cigarettes are offered. The salon of the Hûsênis overlooks the courtyard and all the activities of the crowd may be seen. Many of the visitors bring tents, which are erected on one of the near-by hills. The Bedouin encamp in their *biût ša'r* (houses of hair = tents). The arrival and departure of this latter group presents a very picturesque sight. The camels are elaborately decorated and carry the women and the children in the *hòdadj*.

An evening walk in the camp is delightful. All tents are lighted, often with candles vowed to be burnt in this place. In one tent we hear the 'ûd (seven-stringed lute) accompanying a voice, while the rest of the party listens attentively, expressing their approval from time to time by the expression *allâh*.<sup>3</sup> In another we find a group sitting at leisure, telling stories, drinking coffee or smoking the *argileh*. Many roam over the neighbouring hills.

Of course such a multitude attracts all sorts of tradesmen and entertainers. The courtyard is full on both sides with merchants, who sell sweets, bonbons and dried fruits, handkerchiefs, cloth belts and common stuffs, glassware and gilded bracelets, rings, chains and

<sup>1</sup> It is believed — as in every *weli* — that the Prophet protects his sanctuary against theft. The following story illustrates this belief. A Bedouin once entered the *maqâm* at a time when the guardians were absent to steal the covers of the tomb. As he tried to get out through the same window by which he has easily entered, the bars grew closer together and he was so badly squeezed that he died soon afterwards. The same night the Prophet appeared to Mûsâ Yûnis in Jerusalem and told him thrice: Mûsâ, go and remove the corpse from my sanctuary. Next day Mûsâ, accompanied by some officials, went and found the dead Bedouin.

<sup>2</sup> The pilgrims to Nebi Mûsâ are not called *hujjâdj*.

<sup>3</sup> The last *a* is prolonged. It means really "O God, how sweet it is."

beads, earthenware pitchers, jars and pots, booklets, tracts and *hidjâbât*, tobacco, match-boxes, candles, and many other things. While many have their merchandise placed on improvised wooden shelves, others spread their goods on a strip of cloth on the ground (*imbassit*, pl. *imbassîin*). All day and far into the night they stand tirelessly, each trying to outshout his neighbour in praising his articles. Outside the courtyard herds of sheep are brought for sale. Any one who has to offer a *dbihah* may buy the animal here. Many bring their offerings with them.

Outside the building there are always coffee-houses, made of rough tentcloth. Low Arabic stools welcome the customers. Coffee, lemonade and *argîleh* may be ordered, and it is not without interest to sit here, especially in the evening, and observe the life and the activities of the crowd, while a phonograph plays monotonous melodies. A shadow theatre (*qaraqôz*) attracts the attention of passers-by and entices them to enter. *Sandûq el-adjam* is also much visited, especially by children, peasants and Bedouin. It is an oblong box decorated outside with small bells, mirrors, glass balls, pictures and flowers, and resting on a small chair. In front it has small holes through which the spectators look at a roll of pictures hidden in the center, and turned so that the observer may follow the story, which is recited in a quick monotonous manner by the operator. One may also spend his time playing cards (*šaddeh* or *waraq*) and *tâwleh* (tric-trac, backgammon).

Outside in the fields parties come together and spend their time with horse-racing (*sbâq*), *djarîd* (mock fight, with long straight branches, where the best player is the one who throws his stick farthest), etc. The last game may also be played on horse-back. Peasants and citizens try to compete with the Bedouin, but rarely show the skill of the latter, who guide their graceful Arab mares with much ease. In another game the players divide themselves into two parties. A Bedouin of the first party, holding the reins of his mare in one hand, and his rifle in the other, gallops at full speed and tries to overthrow his opponent of the second party, or to cut off his retreat. If he succeeds his opponent is captured, but if he is caught, or only touched by the man of the second party, he must go with him. The rest of the captured man's party try to release him by rushing and touching him.

Nor should we pass over the religious observances of these days. As soon as the *muaddin* calls to prayer most of the people answer the call. It is all the same where they pray: in the *maqâm*, *djâmi'*, a room, or outside in a tent. From time to time a *dîkr* is held. A *šêh* with a good voice recites part of the Qoran in a melodious chant. All present keep absolutely quiet; no talking, smoking or coffee-drinking is allowed. I once attended such a *dîkr* at Nebî Mûsâ and found it quite edifying to see how devotionally all listened.

Circumcision is very common in these days and at this holy place, and one may observe daily several such performances. The child is dressed in new silk clothes, and is decorated with golden chains, buttons, etc. to the extent allowed by his father's purse. Of course a blue bead, *hidjâb*, *mašhaş*, alum or other amulet are never forgotten, in order that he may be protected against the evil effects of the "eye" (*ên*), or "soul" (*nafs*). A child is more subject on the occasion of circumcision to the action of these supernatural powers than at other times.<sup>1</sup> The parents, relatives, friends and neighbours present accompany the child in his procession, which begins in a turn around the building. A band or a group of dancers are hired. All sing as loud as they can. The women relatives may show their joy by trilling *zaghârît*.<sup>2</sup> The boy, who suspects nothing of the pains to come, enjoys the whole performance hugely. As soon as this party reaches the door leading to the courtyard the boy dismounts and is carried by his father or his nearest male relative. The music plays louder and the singing is more enthusiastic. At the window of the *maqâm* the drums play fortissimo and the shouting increases. Amidst an excited crowd the barber—who is the professional surgeon—performs the small operation with the utmost skill. No local anaesthetic is used, nor are aseptic or antiseptic measures taken, and dozens of children are circumcised with the same knife. For this reason many wounds become septic, and cause much trouble. Hâdj Ahmad el-Hallâq and his sons enjoy the reputation of great skill in the speciality of circumcision. The cry of the patient during the operation is drowned by the music. The barber receives his fee,

<sup>1</sup> *Aberglaube*, p. 81.

<sup>2</sup> I have never heard the expression "*olooleh*" used by J. Neil on pages 81 and 143 of his *Palestine Life*. *Tahîl*, *zaghârît* and *wolwâl* are not identical, as he writes.

which depends upon the ability and generosity of the father of the child and ranges between one *medjidi* and one pound. It is not called fee (*udjrah*) but *ikramiyeh* (sign of honour). Some poor persons are circumcised gratis by the barber as an *adjr* (recompence). Because of such a charitable act he believes that the Prophet will bless him here and in the world to come. After the whole party returns the wound is dressed with dried plants powdered and sometimes mixed with oil taken from the lamps of the *maqâm*. Many believe that the latter alone is best cure. At present the barber sometimes uses a drying antiseptic powder.

Most of the songs repeated during the ceremony of circumcision, as well as during dancing and *sêf u turs* have nothing to do with the Prophet Moses, but are common songs used on any occasion. Many songs which are really in praise of Mohammed are sung during these days. Here I shall give a few songs connected directly with Moses.

## 1.

*yâ zuwâr Mûsâ*<sup>1</sup>  
*sîrû*<sup>2</sup> *bit-tahlîl*<sup>3</sup>  
*zurnâ n-nabî Mûsâ*<sup>4</sup>  
*'uqbâl el-Ḥalîl*<sup>5</sup>

O visitors of Moses,  
 March with exultation.  
 We have visited the Prophet Moses—  
 May it soon be (granted to visit) Abraham.

*yâ zuwâr Mûsâ*  
*zûrû bil-'iddêh*  
*zurnâ n-nabî Mûsâ*  
*'uqbâl el-ḥadjjêh*

O visitors of Moses  
 Visit (the shrine) with musical instruments.  
 We have visited the Prophet Moses  
 May it soon be (granted to perform  
 the) *ḥadjj*.

<sup>1</sup> Variant of Kahle, *PJB* VIII, p. 169. Dalman, *Pal. Diwan*, gives only three verses of this song (p. 158).

<sup>2</sup> Some use *sîrû* instead of *zûrû*.

<sup>3</sup> Kahle omits the article.

<sup>4</sup> Kahle notes *kalâmak yâ Mûsâ maktûb bil-manlîl*, "your words, O Moses are written (and kept) in the veil." The above text is more used.

<sup>5</sup> Still another variant of this verse is:

<i>Zurnâ n-nabî Mûsâ</i>	We have visited the Prophet Moses
<i>'uqbâl el-Ḥalîl</i>	May it soon be granted to visit Abraham.
<i>uṣâ'rak yâ Mûsâ</i>	And your hair, O Moses
<i>sâyîl 'al-qandîl</i>	Is flowing over the lamp.



<i>yâ zuwâr Mûsâ</i>	O visitors of Moses,
<i>zûrû bid-daraqeh<sup>1</sup></i>	Visit with the shields.
<i>u ša'arak yâ Mûsâ</i>	And your hair, O Moses,
<i>harîr fi waraqah</i>	(is like) silk (wrapped) in paper.
<i>yâ zuwâr . . . . .<sup>2</sup></i>	O visitors . . . . .,
<i>zûrû bil-'alâm</i>	Visit with the flags.
<i>zurnâ . . . . .</i>	We have . . . . .
<i>u 'alêh es-salâm</i>	Peace be upon him.
<i>yâ zuwâr . . . . .</i>	O visitors . . . . .
<i>tihtû sâlmîn</i>	You went down peacefully (safely),
<i>yâ zuwâr . . . . .</i>	O visitors . . . . .
<i>truddû sâlmîn</i>	May you return in peace (safely).
2.	
<i>'alâ bîr Zamzam itwadlâ</i>	At the well of Zamzam the Prophet
<i>en-nabî<sup>3</sup></i>	washed himself (ritually)
<i>bibrîq fidḍah u šamî yinḍawî</i>	With a silver pitcher and lighted candles.
<i>'alâ bîr Zamzam itwadlâ</i>	At the well of Zamzam the Apostle
<i>er-rasûl<sup>3</sup></i>	washed himself (ritually)
<i>bibrîq fidḍah u šamî' u</i>	With a silver pitcher and candles and
<i>balḥûr</i>	incense.
<i>yallî bnabitak yâ nabî</i>	Through (the power of) your prophecy,
	O Prophet,
<i>fî djanb bêtak 'aš'aš el-</i>	The Muṣṭafâ made his nest near your
<i>Muṣṭafâ<sup>3</sup></i>	house.
<i>kûnî huwânuh yâ ndjûm</i>	Be his brothers (i. e. companions), O stars
<i>es-samâ</i>	of heaven!
<i>kûnî hanîyeh yâ ṭariq en-</i>	Be joyful, O way (leading to the sanc-
<i>nabî</i>	tuary) of the Prophet.
<i>zibdeh ṭariyeh talḥ idjren</i>	(Be as soft as) fresh butter under the
<i>ez-zuwâr</i>	feet of the visitors!
<i>massîk bil-hêr yâ Mûsâ yâ</i>	Good evening, O Moses, O son of
<i>ibn 'Amrân</i>	'Amrân,

<sup>1</sup> Not *bidereke* as Kahle notes it, but with *el* and *q* (instead of *k*). It means "shield" and not "slowly;" see *Muḥîṭ el-Muḥîṭ* I, 645.

<sup>2</sup> The two next verses are not mentioned by Kahle.

<sup>3</sup> The Prophet Mohammed is meant.

*yallî tqûm min manâmak* O thou who dost arise from thy sleep  
*tišbih el-ghuzlân*<sup>1</sup> resembling gazelles.<sup>2</sup>

## 3.

*el-urs mâ hû farhah* The marriage festival is not a (real) joy,  
*walâ thûr eš-subyân* Nor (is that of) the circumcision of boys;  
*mâ farhah illâ*<sup>3</sup> *ziyâret* There is no (real) joy except visiting  
*Mûsâ*<sup>4</sup> Moses—  
*'alêh eš-salâh wis-salâm* Peace and prayer be upon him.<sup>5</sup>  
*lôlak yâ Mûsâ mâ djînâ* If it was not you, O Moses, we would  
*walâ*<sup>6</sup> *t'annênâ* not have come and taken this trouble,  
*walâ dahasnâ el-ḥiṣâ walâ* And we would not have treaded the  
*er-ramil bi-idjrênâ*<sup>7</sup> small stones and the sand with our feet.  
*massik*<sup>8</sup> *bil-ḥer yâ Mûsâ yâ* Good evening, O Moses, O son of 'Amrân.  
*ibn 'Amrân*  
*yâ sâkin el-Ghôr u blâd* Thou who livest in the Jordan valley  
*Ḥôrân.*<sup>9</sup> and in Ḥaurân.<sup>10</sup>

Some short sayings connected with Moses are:

*yâ ibn 'Amrân ḥarrik il-mizân*<sup>11</sup> O son of 'Amrân move the balance.  
*ḥalâwit en-nabi*<sup>12</sup> *Mûsâ* } *ba-* The sweets of the Prophet Moses } are a  
*ṭamar* " " } *ra-* " dates " " " " } blessing  
*lêmûn* " " } *keh* " lemons " " " " }

Some beggars shout continually:

*anâ illî 'asîdî el-kalîm* My lord the Interlocutor owes me  
*ka'keh u ma'mûltên* A cake and two almond cakes

<sup>1</sup> Heard from a woman of Mâlḥâ.

<sup>2</sup> The first part of this song is sung by the pilgrims going to Meccâ. I have heard the whole song used by N. Mûsâ visitors.

<sup>3</sup> *Mâ—illâ* is more correct than *walâ* alone, as mentioned by Kahle.

<sup>4</sup> Many substitute for Mûsâ, *en-nabi*, which points to Mohammed.

<sup>5</sup> Kahle, *PJB* VIII, 168.

<sup>6</sup> *Mâ—walâ* is more correct than *walâ* alone.

<sup>7</sup> Many go barefooted to the sanctuary, thinking that such an act brings a greater blessing.

<sup>8</sup> Not *mâsik*, which means "holding," as Kahle has.

<sup>9</sup> I. e., "the one who is found everywhere."

<sup>10</sup> Kahle, VIII, 169.

<sup>11</sup> Kahle, l. c.

<sup>12</sup> These sweets are very popular.

With games, songs and ceremonies the week is passed in the most agreeable way. We may consider it as one of the most important family feasts of the Mohammedans of the Jerusalem district, playing the part here that Nebî Rûbîn, Nebî Şâleḥ (Dêr Ghassâneh and also in Ramleh), 'Alî ibn 'Elêm, Ḥasan and Ḥusên take in their respective districts. Men and women, old and young, rich and poor enjoy it and every class finds amusements to satisfy its taste. The student of customs and folklore finds in this feast an excellent opportunity to study the tribal differences, customs, dress, superstitions, etc. I have visited Nebî Mûsâ three times during the *môsam*, spending the night there twice, and visiting the building and surroundings twice outside the festival.

On Thursday (Maundy Thursday) the official return with the banner of the Prophet takes place. Most of the visitors have already left the sanctuary and gone home.<sup>1</sup> As soon as the *siddârî* of the Prophet reaches Râs el-'Amûd the procession begins again. The different banners and '*idad* which had accompanied the banner in its departure from Jerusalem go out to welcome it back. The *bayâriq* and musical bands of the *siûh* el-Qazzâz, 'Atîf, Abû Mâdjid, Ḥasan, 'Êzarîyeh, and other villages together with the banners of en-Nabî Dâhûd, el-Ḥaram, and *eş-şabâb* of Jerusalem, Nâblus and Hebron are to be seen. As the procession moves toward the city one observes the same number of spectators of all classes and groups as watched it leave the city. Music, dances, *sêf u turs*, singing, etc., form the most important feature of the procession. The banners of Nebî Mûsâ and Nebî Dâhûd are carried back to the places where they are kept the rest of the year.

But the end of this day does not mark the end of Nebî Mûsâ. On Friday the Ḥaram enclosure is crowded with people celebrating *zaffet el-'alêmât*,<sup>2</sup> "the procession of the flags." The banners of the

<sup>1</sup> Many of the visitors commemorate their visit to a shrine by writing some verse or prayer on the wall of the sanctuary. The simple formulas have been described. A complicated one, which I have found in 'Okâseh, is *اودعت في هذا المقام الشريف شهادة ان لا اله الا الله وأشهد ان محمد رسول الله شهادة القاها يوم القيامة أتضرع الى الحق جل شأنه بان يغفر لي ويرحمني ويعفو عني ويتوفاني على الايمان بجاه سيدنا محمد صلعم وبجاه سيدنا مكاشة صاحب رسول الله*

<sup>2</sup> Really "small flags."

Şahrah and those of Mohammed are carried after the midday prayer in a great procession from el-Aqşâ to es-Şahrah. The Quṭb family are in charge of this honourable duty. Midway, near el-Kâs, they halt. The olive tree just beside this basin, known as *Zetûnit en-Nabî*,<sup>1</sup> is believed to become animated at this time, when Mohammed and his *şahâbeh* visit the mosque area and live in the tree.<sup>2</sup> Under this tree the banners are held and it is believed that the branches bend down to honour them. A representative of the family el-Quṭb ascends the *manbar* (marble pulpit) just above the stairs leading from el-Kâs to the platform of the Mosque of Omar and receives the flags, which he wraps in a silken cloth (*buqđjeh*) and carries back to their resting place in the Şahrah. The participants in the procession of the flags are wildly enthusiastic, but no dancing or *sêf u turs* take place.

On this and the next day most of the Nebî Mûsâ pilgrims leave Jerusalem. One *'iddeh* after the other leaves the city and goes home. In every case a small procession with the *şeh* the banner-bearer, the musicians and some followers is formed. While the *saiyârât* of the villages go home they stop at or even march around every important *welî* whose sanctuary they pass. Every time a *saiyârah* approaches a *welî* the *fâtîhah* is recited, the band plays, the *bêraq* is lowered in honour of the *welî* and the procession stops. They believe that honour shown to these men of God will be counted to them as an *adjr*.<sup>3</sup>

The shrines of the native village are also visited one by one, while the inhabitants of the village go out to welcome the pilgrims home, and make the day a feast.

While the Nebî Mûsâ feast is the largest *môsam*, there are others of equal rank and still others of less importance. The fact that makes Nebî Mûsâ so important is that several shrines have their *môsam* or *ziyârah* at the same time or a week later. The following list gives some of the more important *mawâsim*:

<sup>1</sup> The old tree has nearly dried up. Three new ones have been planted around its remains.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. *Aberglaube*, p. 87.

<sup>3</sup> Once the *'iddeh* of Şatâf passed Dêr Yâsîn, as it was going to Nebî Mûsâ. As it did not pay the usual honours to *es-şeh* Yâsîn, i. e., it did not stop to play the music, nor did the attendants read the *fâtîhah*, the *welî* obliged them in a miraculous way to go back and to perform this duty.

Name of <i>welî</i>	Location	Date of festival
Nabî Şâleh	Dêr Ghassâneh	<i>Djum'et el-'Alêmât</i>
Nabî Şâleh	Ramleh	Friday next to <i>Djum'et el-'Alêmât</i>
Nabî Aiyûb (called Ibriyet Aiyûb).	near ed-Djôrah	Tuesday afternoon and Wednesday of Nebi Mûsâ week
el-Husên	near ed-Djôrah	Wednesday of Nebi Mûsâ feast
en-Nabî 'Annîr	Benî Hâriṭ	<i>Djum'et el-'Alêmât</i>
'Alî ibn 'Alêm	N. of Jaffa	During the melon season (the feast is called <i>Môsam el-Haram</i> )
en-Nabî Rûbin	Nahr Rûbin, S. of Jaffa	In the lunar month falling in August-September
en-Nabî Aiyûb	Râs ibn Simḥân	Wednesday of the Nebi Mûsâ feast
en-Nabî Kafl	Between Dêr Târf and Wilhelma	14th of Şa'bân
el-Haḍr	Lydda (known as <i>'Îd Lidd</i> )	
el-Haḍr	Haifa (Carmel)	
ez-Zarqâ	Spring between Dêr Ghassâneh and 'Abûd	With <i>'Îd Lidd</i> <sup>1</sup>
eş-şehî I'mar	Bêt Duquh	<i>Djum'et el-'Alêmât</i>
Ibrâhîm el-Hauwâs	Dêr Ghassâneh	Ḥamis eṭ-Tal'ah <sup>2</sup>
el-Haḍrâ	Nâblus	'Aşûrah

During the festival of Nebî Rûbin the people gather in great numbers at the river which bears this name. The festival extends over one month, beginning with the new moon of August. During the full

<sup>1</sup> Some Christian saints have also a *môsam*. *Mâr Djirius* and *mâr Eliâs* enjoy only one day, while in the case of St. Mary several days are spent in amusement.

<sup>2</sup> In this day the animals are dyed.

moon nights the place is most popular. The number of visitors to en-Nabî Rûbil<sup>1</sup> exceeds that of en-Nabî Mûsâ. More coffee-houses and shops are erected. The plain around, especially that to the N. W. of the sanctuary, is full of tents. The pilgrims come principally from Jaffa, Lydda, Ramleh and the surrounding villages. It is a picturesque sight to see a small caravan of camels carrying a whole family with the necessary household equipment for spending several days or a few weeks at this place. The sanctuary itself is a small building composed of the shrine proper with the tomb (1,75 m. long by 1 m. broad), a small room east of it and a *ruwâq* with three arches open to the north, with a *mihrâb*. A minaret is connected with it. The whole complex is surrounded by a wall, which encloses a few trees.

Nebî Rûbîn and 'Alî ibn 'Alêm are the summer feasts of the inhabitants of the plain — so much so that it is related that the Jaffa Mohammedan women say to their husbands: *yâ bitrobinnî yâ bittalliqnî*, "Either you take me to Rûbîn or you divorce me," or *yâ bitrobinnî yâ babrîk*, "Either you take me to Rûbîn or I give you your freedom (divorce you)."

Many local feasts are connected with smaller shrines. On Friday the last day of the Nebî Mûsâ feast (*dj. el-'Alêmât*) most of the important shrines of the villages are visited by the inhabitants. The afternoon is spent in the fields around the sanctuaries and many unpaid vows are fulfilled.

In some districts, like Nâblus, most of the great saints, especially el-Ḥaḍrâ, are visited in Lêlat 'Ašûrah and on the next afternoon, while the *zyârah* of the less important shrines is performed on Saturday. This last is true of:

eš-šêḥ	Moḥammad	es-Sabtî	} all situated in the eastern cemetery
"	"	es-Safârînî	
"	"	el-Baqqânî	
"	"	el-'Aqrabânî	
"	"	el-Buḥârî	

<sup>1</sup> Both *Rûbîn* and *Rûbil* are pronounced. On the tomb there is a writing which reads:

باسم الله الرحمن الرحيم  
وروييل نبي الله

On many shops we may find the following sentence heading the announcement:

مخصوصى لزوار النبي رويين

Another custom prevailing in Palestine among the Mohammedans may be described in this connection. I have no doubt that it is found wherever Moslems live. It is of importance for two reasons: 1. it is a popular feast of the women; 2. it shows the relation of the living to the dead. Even the Mohammedan books of theology advise one to visit the dead. According to *Râqî el-Falâh*,<sup>1</sup> the dead are aware of these visits, especially on a Thursday, and the days preceding and succeeding it. Every Thursday afternoon the relatives of the dead, especially of those who have died during the year, go to the cemetery, sit around the grave and read some parts of the Qorân. But of all Thursdays, *Ĥamis el-Amwât*, "the Thursday of the Dead" (also known as *dj. el-Amwât*), is the most important. It lies fourteen days before Good Friday of the Eastern Church. On this Thursday some take with them dyed eggs, sweets, cakes and even cooked food and meat. The peasants prefer taking dried raisins and figs. The greater part is distributed to the poor, as an *adjr* (recompence). That is, just as 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 to the cemetery, believing that a visit after this time is not so good. Soon after sunrise they come home. The children of the peasants go on Thursday afternoon to the houses of their neighbours and beg *a'tûni bêdah 'an rūh amwâtkum*, "give me an egg for the (sake) of the soul 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: *allâh yirhamhum*, "God be merciful unto them." This day therefore bears also the name *Ĥamis el-Bêd* (Thursday of Eggs).

*Ĥamis el-Amwât* is a feast day of the women. The visiting of the dead is in most cases very superficial, and the time is actually spent in good company out in the fresh air. No men mix with the women, except in Hebron, where the young unmarried and betrothed girls go to the cemetery of eš-Šuhadâ and dance. Unmarried men are allowed to look on from a respectful distance,

### 8. PROCESSIONS

The word "processions" is not used here in the sense of pilgrimages to a *welî*, as already described above, but only *ṭwâf* performed in

<sup>1</sup> *Aḥmad et-Taḥtâwî*, p. 608.

or around a holy place and only on special occasions. Apparently there are only two types belonging under this heading, circumcision and rain processions.

### I. Circumcision Processions

I have above described the custom of taking the child to be circumcised around the whole building of Nebî Mûsâ. The same thing is done in most villages. Thus the people of 'Anâtâ take the child out to the sanctuary of 'Abd es-Salâm. All friends and relatives, of both sexes, accompany the child, who is dressed in his best clothes. He sits either alone, or in front of his father on a beautifully decorated horse. The *šabâb* join in singing, dancing and playing *sêf u turs*, while the local band of music plays. The child is always adorned on this occasion with several amulets, which are supposed to protect him from the evil eye. The procession advances very slowly. After going around the *maqâm* of *eš-šêh* 'Abd es-Salâm where all recite the *fatiḥâh*, the whole crowd goes back to *eš-šêh* Šâlêḥ. The small operation is performed in the courtyard of the *maqâm*. The procession is not called *twâf* but *zaffet el-ṭhûr*. *Twâf* is the name given to the procession around the *maqâm*.

Such processions are found in most villages, but they do not necessarily accompany every circumcision. The most important *welî* is chosen. It is believed that the saint will look favourably at this act and will certainly bless the child. We have seen elsewhere that many mothers vow to have their children circumcised in a special *maqâm*. In such cases a *zaffeh* also takes place. Sometimes the bridegroom must visit the *awliâ* of his village.<sup>1</sup> Such a visit is also accompanied with most of the ceremonies just described.

A procession may also be made in the case of the death of a person who is the descendent of a family of *šîūḥ*, who are connected with a *welî*. If the dead person lived in another village than that in which the principal *šêḥ* of his family lives, this procession will

<sup>1</sup> In Bêt Djâlâ we hear the following verse, which points to the custom of taking the bridegroom to a shrine:

*yâ mâr Djirius wiḥnâ el-yôm zuwârak*  
*djînâ inzaïyn el-'ursân fî maqâmak.*

O St. George, we are today your visitors,  
and have come to shave (and thus to beautify) the bridegrooms in your shrine.



take place. It is a quiet one. The company, headed by the *šēh*, moves slowly to the village of the defunct. They are preceded by a person who announces their coming, who carries a *bāzeh* (a small drum) on which he plays all the way, abstaining completely from conversation. As soon as he reaches the house of the dead person all those assembled stand up and say *lā ilāh illā allāh*. Some go at once to meet the procession, whose *'iddeh* plays the same tune all the way. Such a procession is never called *zaffeh*.

## II. Rain processions

Processions of this category<sup>1</sup> are practiced everywhere in Palestine, by Mohammedans, Christians and Jews, each in his own way. Only those of the Moslems interest us here, and the customs of the Christians will only be mentioned to complete the study, as well as for the sake of comparison.

The success of the whole year's work of the peasant, his entire agricultural life, even his existence depend upon the amount of rain which falls during the winter months. The *fellāh* studies the clouds and the signs of the sky; he examines the direction from which the wind comes, in order to be able to foretell the rain. His observations have led him to fix many weather rules. But when heaven holds back its blessing, he tries to get the help of the saints to intercede for him with God, for he believes that men's transgressions have caused the wrath of the Almighty:

*min qillit hidānā šār šefnā šitānā,*<sup>2</sup>

"From the lack of our true religion, our summer has become our winter."

Old and young gather in a procession which marches around the village,<sup>3</sup> comes to the *welī* regarded as most important, and goes around it. They enter the *maqām*—in some cases stand only at the door—recite the *fātiḥah*, and sometimes even ascend to the roof of

<sup>1</sup> Canaan, *ZDPV* XXXVI, 266—300; Bauer, *ZDPV* XXXVIII, 54—57; Bauer, *Volksleben im Lande der Bibel*, pp. 112—118, with weather rules taken from *Blätter aus Bethlehem*; Canaan, *JPOS* III, 21—35.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. *ZDPV* XXXVI. This means that the seasons have changed and have thus caused an upheaval in all our work and life.

<sup>3</sup> Heard from Abū Dis, Sūrbāhir and Nebī Šamwil.

the sanctuary<sup>1</sup> to be nearer to God. They raise their hands to heaven and pray for rain. Imm el-Ghêt, "the Mother of Rain,"<sup>2</sup> which may be carried all through this procession, is a large, primitively made doll.<sup>3</sup> Two pieces of wood are fastened to each other in the form of a cross and are dressed in female attire. It seems to me that originally this expression<sup>4</sup> referred to the Virgin Mary, but at present it is used vaguely.<sup>5</sup> The procession ends in front of the head of the village (*šêh el-balad*). The women carry one or more *gharâbil* (pl. of *ghurbâl*, "grain sieve"), *manâhîl* (pl. of *munhul*,<sup>6</sup> "flour sieve") and a *tâhûneh*<sup>7</sup> (hand mill) all the way. These are the most important utensils for preparing bread. All are carried empty to show how poor they are, since they do not even possess the most vital necessities of life.

The statement of Curtiss<sup>8</sup> that Imm el-Ghêt<sup>9</sup> is sometimes called '*arûs allâh*, "the bride of God," has been already shown by Jaussen<sup>10</sup> to be groundless. Nor have I ever heard this expression, either from the peasants or from the Bedouin. I am also unable to verify the expression mentioned by Jaussen, *nuss 'arûs*, "half bride," which he heard in the Negeb. This custom of carrying a large doll in rain processions is commoner among the Bedouin of Transjordan than among the inhabitants of Palestine Proper. The former dress the wooden framework with better clothes and more ornaments than the peasants of this side of the Jordan. Christians as well as Mohammedans use the expression, although they have no clear idea about its meaning.

<sup>1</sup> Heard from S'ûd Abû Sa'id from Abû Dîs.

<sup>2</sup> Kahle, *PJB* VIII, 164.

<sup>3</sup> This custom is more common among the Bedouin than among the peasants.

<sup>4</sup> The hooded crow (*corvus cornix*) is also called in Arabic Umm el-Ghêt (also *Zâgh*), cf. A. Gustavs, *PJB* VIII, 88. But this expression has apparently nothing to do with Imm el-Ghêt.

<sup>5</sup> No peasant could tell me exactly who is meant by Umm (Imm) el-Ghêt.

<sup>6</sup> Not *môhul* with Kahle, *PJB* VIII, 162.

<sup>7</sup> Not *tâhûneh* with Kahle.

<sup>8</sup> Curtiss, l. c., chapter XI.

<sup>9</sup> In Morocco they carry a well decorated doll through the fields and in a great procession. They think that such an act will give them a good harvest; see Goldziher, *Material zur Kenntnis der Almohadenbewegung*, *ZDMG* 1887, 42.

<sup>10</sup> Jaussen, p. 328.

During all these processions they sing one of the following songs:<sup>1</sup>

<i>el-ghêṭ yâ rabbî</i>	<i>isqî zar'ak el-gharbi</i> <sup>2</sup>
<i>el-ghêṭ yâ raḥmân</i>	<i>isqî zar'ak el-'atšân</i>
<i>yâ rabbî bill eš-šâleh</i>	<i>'abidak fuqarâ u kaiyâleh</i>
<i>yâ rabbî bill eš-šaršûḥ</i> <sup>3</sup>	<i>iḥnâ 'abidak wên inrûḥ</i>
<i>yâ rabbî bill eš-šambar</i> <sup>4</sup>	<i>hâdj et-tudjdjâr titqambar</i>
<i>yâ rabbî šû hal-ghêḏah</i>	<i>dju'nâ u akalnâ el-hummêḏah</i>
<i>yâ rabbî itbill il-mandîl</i>	<i>iḥnâ fuqarâ wên inšûl</i>

(Send) the rain, O Lord, and water Thy western grain!

(Send) the rain, O Merciful One, and water Thy thirsty grain!

O Lord, wet the mantle, Thy servants are poor and grain-measures  
(obliged to measure their grain)!

O Lord, wet the rags (with which so many are dressed because of  
poverty), we are Thy servants wherever we go!

O Lord, wet the head-cloak, put an end to the strutting of the merchants!

O Lord, what is this (Thy) anger, we hunger and eat the woodsorrel!

O Lord, wet the veil, we are poor, where shall we go!

In Bêt Djâlâ I heard:

<i>yâ rabbî lês hal-ghêbeh</i>	<i>akalnâ 'urûq el-hullebeh</i>
<i>yâ rabbî bill eš-šammût</i>	<i>iḥnâ 'abidak biddnâ nmût</i>
<i>yâ rabbî thill el-qašr</i>	<i>willâ bnirḥal 'a-Mašr</i> <sup>5</sup>
<i>yâ rabbî el-maṭar wis-sêl</i>	<i>ta-nisqî el-baqar wil-ḥêl</i>

O Lord, why this Thy absence, we have eaten the roots of the spurge!

O Lord, wet the spadix (of the plants), we Thy servants, are on the  
verge of dying!

<sup>1</sup> Most of these verses have been given in ZDPV XXXVI, 290, 291, while two lines were noted also by Kahle, *PJB*, l. c. The verses given here may be sung separately or together.

<sup>2</sup> A variation of this is found in Dalman, *Palest. Diwan*, p. 56.

<sup>3</sup> Neither *šarmûḥ* (Kahle) nor *šaršûḥ* are known to the lexicographer. A variant of the second line is: *iḥnâ fuqarâ wên inrûḥ*, "we are poor; where shall we go?"

<sup>4</sup> *Šambar* (also *šanbar*, not *šumbar* as noted by Fr. Ulmer, *Südpaläst. Kopfbedeckung*, ZDPV XLI, 113, 114) is a black head-dress with long tassels hanging down from the two sides. It is worn by peasant women in festivals.

<sup>5</sup> So also the sons of Jacob, had to go to Egypt for the same reason.

O Lord, wet the hut,<sup>1</sup> or we shall (be obliged to) go to Egypt!  
 O Lord, (we ask for) the rain and the stream to give our horses  
 and cows to drink!<sup>2</sup>

The following verse is put in the mouth of the shepherd:

*imbû imbû yâ rabbî  
 ħubzî qaĥmaš fî 'ubbî  
 imbû imbû yâ samâ  
 ħubzî qaĥmaš 'ar-ramâ  
 imbû imbû anâ zâmî  
 irĥamnî anâ u ħalâlî.*

Water, water, O Lord,  
 My bread has dried in my bosom!  
 Water, water, O heaven,  
 My bread has dried upon the (garden) walls!  
 Water, water, I am thirsty  
 Have mercy upon me and my cattle!

In Nebî Šamwil they sing, along with parts of the above, also the following:

*yâ rabbî lēš ħal-kanneh wakalnâ 'urûq el-ķirsenneh  
 yâ rabbî lēš u lēš wakalnâ 'urûq el-ĥurfēš  
 yâ rabbî mâ ħû minnâ kulluh min mašâyĥnâ  
 naššaft el-qaṭr 'annâ*

O Lord, why this calmness (indifference) while we have eaten the  
 roots of chick-peas!  
 O Lord, why, why—and we have eaten the roots of thistles!  
 O Lord, it is not due to our faults; all is the fault of our elders,  
 Thou hast dried (withheld) the rain from us!

A variant from Bêt Iksâ is:

*yâ rabbî lēš ħal-qa'deh wakalnâ 'urûq ed-dja'deh  
 yâ rabbî yâ rabb en-nâs tisqî zar'nâ el-yabbâs  
 yâ rabbî tĥill ez-zardeh wilnâ wridnâ 'a Yardeh.*

<sup>1</sup> *Qaşr* means "castle" or "palace." Here it stands for the summer lodges of the peasants, built in the vineyards and made of rough stones and brush-wood.

<sup>2</sup> Other verses may be found in Dalman, *Palest. Diwan*, p. 56—58. Baldensperger gives two verses in his book, *The Immovable East*, p. 256. The transcription is so faulty that the fourth line of the first verse is unintelligible.

- O Lord, why this neglect, while we have eaten the roots of the lupine!  
 O Lord, O Lord of men, water our drying crops!  
 O Lord, wet the thorny bush, and we have gone to drink from (‘Ēn)  
 Yerdeh!

Other verses are:

*yâ rabbî lês hat-ṭûleh wakalnâ ṭḥînet inhûleh*

- O our Lord, why this delay and we have eaten dough of bran!

*zûleh ‘annâ yâ šöbeh ḥaragtnâ has-šöbeh*

- Go away from us, O heat—this heat has burnt us.

*yâ rabbî yâ ‘auwâd(i) akalnâ šarâr el-wâdi*

*yâ rabbî yâ ghaiyûr(i) akalnâ šarâr el-bûri*

*wil-bêt mâ fihâ walâ ṭahneh walâ qirš mašrûr(i)*

- O my Lord, O Accustomer (Thou who hast accustomed us to Thy gifts), we have eaten the pebbles of the stream-bed!

- O my Lord, O Zealous One, we have eaten the pebbles of the uncultivated land!

- And the house does not contain even a mess of flour or a wrapped-up piaster.

From the Bedouin of the ‘Idwân I heard the two following verses:

*ḥutt el-qamlḥ bilj-djarrâh yâ allâh ḥanntak yâ allâh*

*ḥutt el-moiyeh bil-ibrîq yâ allâh yâ blûl ir-riq*

- Put the corn in the jug, O God, (show) Thy mercy, O God!

- Put the water in the pitcher, O God (we beg Thee for) the wetting of the spittle.

The following verses are intended to show the bad results of the lack of rain on health, especially that of children and women:

*imbû imbû yâ qâdir min el-‘ataš mânî qâdir*

*imbû imbû yâ rahîm inšifna bzâz el-ḥarîm*

*imbû imbû yâ ghaiyûr inšifnâ djuwâ ed-dûr*

*imbû imbû yâ Qatrâwy min el-‘ataš djîtak zâmî*

- Water, water, O Almighty, I am weak with thirst!

- Water, water, O Merciful One, the breasts of the women have dried up!

- Water, water, O Zealous One, we are dry within the houses!

- Water, water, O Qatrâwy, I am coming to you driven by thirst!

Another is:

*yâ rabbî el-ghêt yâ rahîm tirham kull el-ḥarîm*  
*wat-tifâl el-murdi'ât yâ rabbî nišif en-nabât<sup>1</sup>*

O Lord, (send) the rain, O Merciful One, have pity on all women!  
 And suckling babes, O Lord, (for) the plants have dried up.

The children often gather alone, and march through the streets, going around one or more *awliâ*, reciting continually and monotonously a few lines of a song in which God is asked to pity their condition. The old people of the village are accused of having done wrong, but not the children. They take off their head-dress as a sign of humiliation. Generally a great noise is made by beating with sticks on empty petrol tins. Songs used by children at these occasions are:<sup>2</sup>

*yâ rabbî mâ twâḥidnâ kulluh min mašâyhnâ*  
*mašâyhnâ hal-(i)kbâr yâ rabbî tîḥriḡhum bin-nâr.*

O Lord, do not blame us, all (evil) is from our elders;  
 Our elders, our old ones—O Lord, burn them in hell-fire.

*yâ rabbî yâ rabbunâ tib'at<sup>3</sup> šitâ lazar'unâ*  
*hunn(i) kbâr il-aḏnabû<sup>4</sup> ihnâ eš-šighâr šû danbunâ.*

O my Lord, O our Lord, send Thou rain for our crops,  
 It is the old people who have sinned: we young people—what is  
 our sin?

*min ḡulm mašâyhnâ nišif mâ yanâbi'nâ*

For the injustice of our elders, the water of our springs has dried up.

*min ḡulum kull eš-šûḥ ḡismâ min eš-šams maṭbûḥ.*

For the injustice of all the elders, my body is baked by the sun.

*yâ rabbî yâ ḡhaiyûr(i) inšifnâ nšâf el-bûrî*  
*lâ twâḥidnâ bil-(i)kbâr(i) walâ (i)bsâhdîni iz-zûri*

O Lord, send the rain, O Zealous One; we have become as dry as  
 uncultivated land!  
 Do not blame us for the (sins of the) old ones, neither for the bearers  
 of false witness!

<sup>1</sup> This verse and the one mentioned before are used in 'Aṭarah.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Jer. 14 13.

<sup>3</sup> Not *tib'a*, as Kahle offers.

<sup>4</sup> Abbreviated from *illî aḏnabû*.

*šorabbanna šorabbanna mā binrūh illā ib-balleh*  
*haiyā yā rabb el-'ibād haiyā sitrak lil-adjwād*  
*lā twāḥidnā biḡ-zullām wiḥnā fuḡarā mā bninlām.*

What! O Lord, what! O Lord,<sup>1</sup> we shall not go without a wetting!  
 Give, O Lord of men, give Thy concealment<sup>2</sup> for the generous men!  
 Do not blame us for (the acts of) the unjust, since we are poor and  
 can not be blamed!

*yā rabbī ḡaraqnā eš-šōb ramēnā el-ghatā wiṭ-tōb*  
*lā twāḥidnā bil-muḡṡār 'an af'āluh mā bitūb.<sup>3</sup>*

O my Lord, the heat has burned us; we have thrown away the cover  
 and the garment.

Do not blame us for (the faults of) the headman of the village; he  
 will not repent from his evil doings.

*yā rabbunā yā rabbunā iḡnā eš-sighār šū danbunā*  
*ṡalabnā ḡubzeh<sup>4</sup> min umminā ḡarabatnā 'a-tumminā*

O our Lord, O our Lord, we young people—what is our sin?  
 We asked a piece of bread from our mother—she struck us on our  
 mouth.

At times even specific families are accused of being the cause of  
 God's anger:

*yā rabbī ṡbill el-ḡhurbāl kulḡuh min 'Abd ed-Djabbār<sup>5</sup>*

O my Lord, wet the sieve; all (the mischief) is from 'Abd . . .

*yā rabbī ṡbill il-ḡnābeh kulḡuh min Abū ḡabābeh*

O my Lord, wet the wooden plate; all (the mischief) is from Abū . . .

*yā rabbī ṡbill eš-šāleh kulḡuh min eš-šēḡ ṡḡādeh<sup>6</sup>*

O my Lord, wet the cloak; all (the mischief) is from eš-šēḡ ṡ . . .

<sup>1</sup> The expression *šorabbanna* may be a contraction from *šū ḡadā yā rabbnā*.

<sup>2</sup> That is, concealment of the poverty of those who have been very generous  
 up to now, but who can not help any more, since they have nothing of their own.

<sup>3</sup> All these five verses come from 'Aṡārah.

<sup>4</sup> I heard also *fatteh*, "a piece of bread."

<sup>5</sup> A family in Nebi ṡamwil, where I heard the song. The name ḡasan  
 ḡamdān is used by some instead of 'Abd ed-Djabbār.

<sup>6</sup> Another verse is: *yā rabbī ṡbill el-kondēl*  
*kulḡuh min aḡ ṡamwēl*

O my Lord, wet the calycotome villosa;  
 All (the mischief) comes from the inhabitants of Nebi ṡamwil.

I shall describe now more fully a rain procession in 'Ēn Kârim. An old woman mounted on a donkey held a cock<sup>1</sup> in her hands. A great procession of men, women and children followed. Some women carried empty jars on their head, as a sign of lack of water, others ground a small hand-mill, in which no grain was put. Still others carried grain and flour mills, to denote, as already mentioned, poverty and misery. The whole crowd shouts rather than sings a "rain song." During the whole procession the old woman squeezed the cock from time to time, thus forcing the poor animal to crow or squawk. In this way they think that the animals join in their request and implore the Almighty God for help. The cock is chosen because he is considered as a *muaddîn*. The procession went to the *maqâm* of Ḥadj 'Abêd and then to the house of the headman of the village. As soon as they reached this place one could hear them begging:

*billînâ yâ dâr eš-šêh      yâ rabbî ta'tînâ el-ghêt*  
*yâ (Imm el-Ghêt) ghâtînâ      ubillî bšêt râ'inâ*  
*urâ'inâ Faradjallah      byuṭlub min 'indak yâ allah*

Wet us, O house of the *šêh*, O my Lord, give us the rain!

O Imm el-Ghêt, help us and wet the mantle of our shepherd.

Our shepherd is Faradjallah: he begs of Thee, O God (the rain).

The *muṭtâr* came out, sprinkled the crowd, saying: *allah yisqîkû min raḥimî rabbikum*, "May God give you water from the bounty of your Lord!" The sprinkling with water is a symbol of the rain (rain charm). After this the crowd dispersed.

The Palestinian believes that God sends drought as a punishment to chastise human beings for their continuous transgression, but He will not in His mercy punish the poor dumb animals. In the same way little children are guiltless and thus are not the object of the Divine wrath. For this reason a hen, a cock, or both are carried in the procession, and little children are sent by themselves, as noted above. In their rain songs the peasants very often allude to this:

*yâ rabbî ršâšeh ršâšeh      ta-nisqî hadj-djhâšeh*<sup>2</sup>

O Lord, give us a sprinkling rain, a sprinkling rain, that we may  
 water these young donkeys!

<sup>1</sup> Kahle has seen a black hen and a white cock. I heard that sometimes several hens and cocks are carried in the procession.

<sup>2</sup> Heard in Nebi Šamwil.



*yâ rabbî nuqtah nuqtah ta-niṣqî hal-quṭṭah!*

O Lord, give us a drop (of rain), a drop (of rain), that we may water  
this cat!

*yâ rabbî el-maṭar wis-sêl tanisqî el-baqar wil-hêl<sup>1</sup>*

O Lord, give us rain and a running stream, that we may water the  
cows and the horses!

The following, mentioned by Kahle,<sup>2</sup> is another:

*šû biddak yâ qâqî<sup>3</sup> el-lêl*

*biddî maṭar biddî sêl*

*biddî fatteh lal-yatâmâ.*

What do you want, O crower of the night?

"I want rain, I want stream,

I want a piece of bread for the orphans."

A variant is:

*dâknâ byiz' aq ṭul el-lêl*

*biddû maṭar biddû sêl*

*biddû raḥmeh min rabbih*

Our cock crows all the night through,

He wants rain and a stream,

He wants mercy of his Lord.

There are some shrines which are more efficacious in giving this blessing than others, especially the following (among the Moslems): *es-sitt el-Badriyeh*, *es-šêh Ghêt*, *es-šêh Maṭar*, *es-šêh Lêmûn*,<sup>4</sup> *es-šêh el-Qaṭrawânî*, etc. It is believed that these holy men or women are most powerful and will hear prayer most quickly, being able to influence the Almighty in a special way. But it must be emphasized that every *welî* may help if asked. A man of Abû Dis assured me that a procession which went around the *djâmi'* of Şalâh ed-Din was answered the next day by a heavy rain, which filled all the cisterns. The people waited until two months of the winter were

<sup>1</sup> Known nearly everywhere.

<sup>2</sup> *PJB loc. cit.* The last two lines do not properly belong here, but come under the general heading of rain songs. They have been given elsewhere.

<sup>3</sup> *Qâqa* is really used for the cackle of the hen (*qâqat ed-djâdjeh*, "the hen cackles"), *biṣîh* means "the (cock) crows;" *qâqî el-lêl* is, however, known as a name of the cock.

<sup>4</sup> Kahle, *PJB VIII*.

gone, after which they decided to make the procession, whereupon abundant rain fell. In some villages the people go from one *welî* to another, hoping that if one cannot or will not help, the other will answer the prayers.<sup>1</sup>

Among the rain songs in which a special *welî* is called upon for help are the following:

*yâ sittî yâ Badriyeh isqî zar' el-barrîyeh*<sup>2</sup>

O my Lady, O Badriyeh, water the grain in the fields.<sup>3</sup>

*yâ rabbî tisqînâ el-maṭar ib-barket eš-šeh Maṭar*<sup>4</sup>

O Lord, give us rain to drink, for the sake (blessing) of my master, *šeh Maṭar*.

*yâ rabbî tisqînâ el-ghêt ib-barkat sidî eš-šeh Ghêt*<sup>4</sup>

O my Lord, give us rain to drink for the sake (blessing) of my master *eš-šeh Ghêt*.

*yâ (I)mm el-Ghêt*<sup>5</sup> *ghitînâ billî bšêt*<sup>6</sup> *râ'inâ*

*râ'inâ Ḥasan el-Aqra' tûl el-lêl u-hû yizra'*

*yizra' fî qamiḥ qaşrî ta-nmallî ḥawâbinâ*

O Mother of Rain, help us and wet the mantle of our shepherd, Our shepherd is Ḥasan el-Aqra',<sup>7</sup> who has been sowing all the night Sowing *qaşrî*<sup>8</sup> grain to fill<sup>9</sup> our granary.<sup>10</sup> [through,

<sup>1</sup> Heard from Bêt Djibrîn.

<sup>2</sup> Canaan, *ZDPV XXXVI*, 292.

<sup>3</sup> *Barrîyeh* means "wilderness, desert." The Palestinians use it often in the sense of "fields," as here.

<sup>4</sup> The words *maṭar* and *ghêt* mean "rain." and from them the names of the saints are taken.

<sup>5</sup> The *imâm* of 'Aṭārah said that there is also an Abû el-Ghêt, the "Father of Rain," a statement which I have been unable to verify in other places.

<sup>6</sup> *Bšêt*, dim. of *bišt*, is a long, wide woollen mantle.

<sup>7</sup> *El-aqra'* means "bald-headed."

<sup>8</sup> A specially good variety of wheat, not mentioned in my article in *ZDMG LXX* (1916), 166.

<sup>9</sup> The *ḥâbiyeh* is made of sun-dried clay. Nearly every village house has such a granary, made by the women.

<sup>10</sup> A variation to this verse was mentioned in *ZDPV XXXVI*, 292. When the prayers are answered and rain falls down, they say:

"The Mother of Rain went to bring thunder; scarcely had she come back—the corn was as high as a camel,

The Mother of Rain went to bring rain; scarcely had she come back—the corn was as high as the trees."

*yâ (Imm el-Ghêt ghâtînâ qatta'nâ lawâtînâ*<sup>1</sup>

O Mother of Rain, help us; we have cut off the coins on our head-dress.

From the 'Idwân Bedouin I heard:

*yâmm el-Ghêt yâ taq'ah*<sup>2</sup> *qatalnâ l-bard wis-saq'ah*<sup>3</sup>

O Mother of Rain, O—, cold has killed us.

Jaussen<sup>4</sup> mentions a song about Imm el-Ghêt which is a variant to the combination of two verses, cited above.<sup>5</sup>

*yâ djâmi'nâ nistardjîk ruşq el-maţar yudhul fik*

O our mosque, we implore thee, may a flood of rain enter thee!

*yâ šêh (nabî or mâr) . . . ruşq el-maţar yudhul fik*<sup>1</sup>

O šêh (nabî or mâr) . . . we implore thee, may a flood of rain enter thee!

*yâ sidî anâ nâhîk*

*ruşq el-maţar yu'bur fik*

*lêlit ed-djum'ah la-ađwîk*

O my Lord, I extol Thee!

May a flood of rain enter Thee!

(Then) I shall indeed light Thy *maqâm* Friday night!

*yâ nabî Şamwil tisqînâ yâ rabb es-samâ tisqînâ*

O Prophet Samuel, give us to drink; O Lord of Heaven, give us to drink!

<sup>1</sup> The more elegant sort of this decoration is called *şaffeh*.

<sup>2</sup> I have not secured any explanation for *taq'ah*. It may point to the pealing of the thunder.

<sup>3</sup> *Bard* and *saq'ah* are synonyms

<sup>4</sup> *Coutumes*, pp. 326, 327.

<sup>5</sup> The translation of Jaussen in the first verse should be changed. *Yâ Imm el-Ghêt yâ dâim*, "O Mother of Rain, O Immortal (appellation of God, and not of Imm el-Ghêt)." The verb *billî* goes back to Imm el-Ghêt.

<sup>6</sup> I heard:

*yâ šêh 'Abdallah*

*yâ nabî Şamwil*

*yâ nabî Lêmûn*

*yâ Mâr Eliâs*

*yâ Mâr Mûsâ*

To the last expression my attention was drawn by Mr. S. H. Stephan. Any other *welî* may be invoked.—The second line of the verse given by Kahle, *PJB* VIII 165, is not *mitwaşşlîn bir-rabbe dînak*, but *mitwaşşlîn* (with *s* and not *ş*) *birabb(e) dînak*, i. e., "We entreat the Lord of your religion."

*yâ rabbî tbill el-kondêl wišnâ wridnâ 'a Şamwêl*

O y Lord, wet the calycotome villosa, for we have come to Samuel  
to ask (his mediation) for water!<sup>1</sup>

In 'Aṭarah and the surrounding villages they sing:

<i>yâ rabbî el-ghêṭ samâwî</i>	<i>ib-djâh eš-šêḥ el-Qaṭrâwî</i>
<i>ib-djâh eš-šêḥ Abû l-'Ēnên</i>	<i>yâ rabbî nişfat el-'ên</i>
<i>yâ rabbî tbill eš-šûšek</i>	<i>karâmeh l-Abû Şûšek</i>
<i>yâ rabbî el-ghêṭ dqîqah</i>	<i>ib-djâh en-nabî u şadiqah</i>
<i>ib-djâhuh tirḥam el-(a)wlâd</i>	<i>bil-maṭar 'imm el-blâd</i>
<i>yâ rabbî el-ghêṭ yâ djawwâd</i>	<i>nuṭlub minnak djarret wâd</i>
<i>ib-djâh eš-šêḥ el-Qaṭrâwî</i>	<i>yâ rabbî wâd Silwâd</i>

O Lord (send) the heavenly rain (I beg Thee), by the high rank  
(and influence) of el-Qaṭrâwî.

By the high rank of eš-šêḥ Abû l-'Ēnên, O Lord the fountain has  
dried up.

O Lord, wet the lock of the scalp, in honour of Abû Şûšek!

O Lord, (send) the rain one minute, by the rank of the Prophet  
and his friend!

By his rank (I beg Thee) to have mercy upon the children and cover  
the land with rain!

O Lord, (we beg for) the rain; O Generous One, we ask Thee for a  
flowing stream-bed!

In respect of eš-šêḥ el-Qaṭrâwî O my Lord, the valley of Silwâd!

The Christians call on *mâr Inqûlâ* (St. Nicholas) and *mâr Eliâs*.  
In Bêt Djâlâ I heard the following song:<sup>2</sup>

*mâr Inqûlâ djînâ lêk*  
*şuḥb el-maṭar dâḥîl lêk*  
*iḥnâ el-yôm 'abidak*  
*muftâḥ es-samâ fi îdak*  
*haiy imbû yâ haiy imbû*

<sup>1</sup> The exact wording of the translation is correctly given by Kahle, *PJB* VIII, 103, but the intention of the verse is not to go to the village and bring water from it, but to ask the Prophet for help. I heard this verse from a woman of Nebi Şamwil, so the translation of Kahle would hardly fit the case.

<sup>2</sup> Given in part in my paper, *Der Kalender*, loc. cit.

*ḥuṭṭ el-fūl fidj-djarrah*  
*wistannū raḥmit allah.*  
*mār Inqūlā yā djārnā*  
*yā ḥabīb zghārnā wikbārnā*  
*titšaffa' la-ilāhnā*  
*umṭur yā rabb 'alā blādnā*  
*yā rabbunā yā rabbunā*  
*tumṭur 'alēnā yā rabbunā*  
*mīn qillit el-maṭar 'alā blādnā*  
*mār Inqūlā itšaffa' la-ilāhnā*  
*mār Inqūlā djīnā lēk*  
*naḥnu zghār u ḥaḍa'nā lēk*  
*u-naḥnu el-yōm fī ḥimāytak*  
*tumṭur 'alēnā yā rabbunā.*

We have come to you, St. Nicholas!

O stream of rain, I implore you!

We are today your servants;

Heaven's key is in your hand—

Bring water,<sup>1</sup> Oh bring water,

Put the broad-beans in the jar,<sup>2</sup>

And wait for God's mercy,

St. Nicholas, O our neighbour!

O friend of our young and old,

Intercede (for us) with our God,

Send rain, O our Lord, on our land!

O our Lord, O our Lord,

Let it rain on us, O our Lord.

Because of the scarcety of rain on our land

(We implore you) O St. Nicholas to intercede (for us) with

We are coming to you, St. Nicholas; [our God.

We are young and we submit to you;

We are to day under your protection;

Send us (therefore) rain, O our Lord.

<sup>1</sup> The exclamation *ḥay imbū* (at times pronounced *ḥimbū*) perhaps means "bring water." *Imbū* is baby talk all over Palestine for "water."

<sup>2</sup> A variant is *ḥuṭṭ el-'ūd fidj-djarrah*, "Put the stick in the jar." I really cannot say what these two expressions mean.

We see that *mâr Inqûlâ* is called *šuhb el-maṭar*<sup>1</sup>, "a stream of rain," and is believed to possess the keys of heaven (for sending rain). Dalman notes in his *Divân*:<sup>2</sup>

*qaṣadnâ l-'Adrâ u-mâr Ya'qûb*  
*tisqî zar'nâ l-mašyûb*<sup>3</sup>  
*qaṣadnâ l-'Adrâ u-mâr Eliâs*  
*(i)thadder zar'nâ el-yabbâs*<sup>4</sup>.

We went to the Virgin and to St. James,  
 (And ask:) Water our suffering grain!  
 We went to the Virgin and to St. Eliâs,  
 (And ask:) Make green our dying grain!

A variant heard from a Mohammedan leper is:

*yâ sidî Haḍr el-Aḥḍar*  
*tisqî zar'nâ el-aḥḍar*  
*yâ sidî mâr Eliâs*  
*tisqî zar'na el-yabbâs.*

O Lord, O St. George, water our green crops!  
 O Lord, O St. Eliâs, water our drying crops!

From a beautiful song which I heard from a man of Ḥalḥûl I quote the stanzas which belong to our subject:

*yâ rabbunâ yâ rabbunâ yâ ḥaiy yâ qaiyûm irḥam ḍuḥfanâ*  
*yâ rabbunâ yâ rabbunâ biḥalîlak il-auwâhî*<sup>5</sup> ḥassin sa'yanâ  
*yâ rabbunâ yâ rabbunâ bis-saiyd el-ghaiyûri anbit zar'anâ*  
*yâ rabbunâ yâ rabbunâ birasûlika Isrâyila aḍrir ḍar'nâ*  
*yâ rabbunâ yâ rabbunâ biṣ-ṣaddîqi Yûsufa 'ummanâ*  
*bi-sa'ÿ wadjbir yâ muḥaimin kasranâ.*

<sup>1</sup> *Šuhb* means primarily "stream of milk."

<sup>2</sup> The last part of the first song on p. 56.

<sup>3</sup> *Mašyûb* means "attacked with disease," or "dried up by the heat of the sun."

<sup>4</sup> The following verse shows how St. Mary is thought to welcome her visitors:

*tallat el-'Adrâ u qâlat*  
*marḥabâ yâ zâyirîn*  
*marḥabâ fî eš-šêḥ minkum*  
*wil-ḥawârnî l-bâdilîn.*

The Virgin looked down and said, Be welcome, O visitors,  
 Be welcome, (O) elders and gowned priests.

<sup>5</sup> *Auwâh*, "he who sighs and cries to God."

O our Lord, O our Lord, O Living One, O Self-existing, have mercy  
upon our weakness!

O our Lord, O our Lord, For the sake of Thy friend,<sup>1</sup> continually  
sighing, make our intents good!

O our Lord, O our Lord, For the sake of the zealous lord<sup>2</sup> make  
our crops grow!

O our Lord, O our Lord, For the sake of Thy prophet Israel<sup>3</sup> make  
our udders flow (with milk)!

O our Lord, O our Lord, For the sake of the true friend Joseph  
include us all  
in good endeavour, and mend, O Watcher,  
our broken hearts!

Another rain procession<sup>4</sup> described to me by the *imâm* of 'Aṭarah has many biblical parallels. He said that when the Almighty holds back the rain for a long time<sup>5</sup> the *imâm*<sup>6</sup> of the village asks all the inhabitants to fast, and appoints, together with the chief of the village, a day in which all the people, men women and children, leave their houses and go to some distant valley or mountain. In this procession every one puts off his good clothes and dresses in the worst rags he has. Babies are not allowed to suckle. All animals of that village are also taken out, but no food or water is given them. Out in the fields on their way of "emigration" from their habitations they implore the Almighty God to have pity on them, their children and their animals. Before they leave the village every one forgives the faults of the others, and in this way they hope to deserve the forgiveness of their God. In nearly the same way the ancient Israelites<sup>7</sup> tried to gain the favour of their gods. They used to fast and pray, removing their clothes and putting on coarse sackcloth. Their prophets and highpriests promised them

<sup>1</sup> That is, Abraham.

<sup>2</sup> That is, Isaac.

<sup>3</sup> That is, Jacob.

<sup>4</sup> It was called by the *imâm*, *el-istisqâ*.

<sup>5</sup> Even in the Bible we observe that public fasts were proclaimed to express national humiliation on account of sin and misfortune, and to supplicate divine favour in the face of threatening danger.

<sup>6</sup> In the time of the Israelites the chief used to proclaim a fast: Samuel (1 Sam. 7 s), Jehoshaphet (2 Chr. 20 s), Jeremiah and Baruch (Jer. 36 6-10), etc.

<sup>7</sup> Joel 2 12; Esther 4 s, 16; Bar. 1 s; Judith 4 7, 11; Jonah 3, 5, 7.

always that their God would hear their prayer and help them, just as today. Stories of ancient and modern times illustrate this practise.

In conclusion I will quote several verses of Jeremiah, chapter XIV, which show many points of resemblance between rain processions of biblical times and of to day. This chapter seems to me to describe customs connected with rain processions: „Judah mourneth, and the gates thereof languish; they are black unto the ground; and the cry of Jerusalem is gone up. And their nobles have sent their little ones to the waters: they came to the pits, and found no water; they returned with their vessels empty; they were ashamed and confounded, and covered their heads. Because the ground is chapt, for there was no rain in the earth, the plowmen were ashamed, they covered their heads. - Yea, the hind also calved in the field, and forsook it, because there was no grass. O Lord, through our iniquities testify against us, do thou it for thy name's sake, for our backslidings are many we have sinned against thee.”