

God gave that land to our father Abraham as a hereditary possession and to his seed after him. We are the sons of Abraham. You have occupied our lands long enough. Abandon it peacefully and we shall not come into your territory. Otherwise, we shall demand that possession from you with interest.<sup>77</sup>

The sentences placed into the mouths of the Ishmaelites in Ps.-Sebeos's account also cite a gospel parable—this time the parable of the talents (Matt. 25:27; Luke 19:23) rather than the parable of the wicked tenants—so it reflects a similar narrative aesthetic and technique as that encountered above. According to Ps.-Sebeos, Heraclius defied the Ishmaelites' threat, saying, "This land is mine," and, citing the inheritance of their father Ishmael, "Your lot is the desert" (cf. Gen. 20:20–21).<sup>78</sup> What makes this parallel account all the more intriguing is that the Armenian historian Ps.-Sebeos himself explicitly claims to have drawn it from a Palestinian source.<sup>79</sup>

#### IBN SHIHĀB AL-ZUHRI'S CHRISTIAN SOURCE

Most of the evidence hitherto mustered to support this chapter's thesis comes to us obliquely and thus from subtle cues and insights only made possible by close and comparative philological readings of al-Zuhri's account. However, one of the most convincing pieces of evidence that al-Zuhri drew on a non-Muslim source for this story in fact comes directly from al-Zuhri himself, or at least in many of the versions of the story transmitted by his students (see fig. 13). These students include Ibn Ishāq (d. 150/767)<sup>80</sup> and two scribes who recorded the dictations of al-Zuhri for Caliph Hishām ibn 'Abd al-Malik, Shu'ayb ibn Abī Ḥamzah of Ḥimṣ (d. 162/778–79)<sup>81</sup> and Yūnus ibn Yazīd al-Ayḷī (d. 159–60/775–77).<sup>82</sup> In all of the accounts for which he is cited, al-Zuhri attributes the story of Abū Sufyān's encoun-

77. Thomson and Howard-Johnston 1999, Ps.-Sebeos, chap. 42 (trans. Thomson, 97). The reference is to Matt. 25:27, Luke 19:23.

78. Ibid.

79. Shoemaker 2012, 333n8, cites a later account by Thomas Artsruni in which Muḥammad himself sends the letter to Heraclius's brother Theodore. Ps.-Sebeos's apparent use of the later *futūḥ* literature's "summons to Islam" topos is noted by Noth and Conrad 1994, 163–65, who caution, however, against viewing it as historical.

80. Ṭabarī, *Tārīkh*, ed. de Goeje, 1: 1565 (*usquf li-l-naṣārā*); Abū l-Faraj, *Aghānī*, 6: 349 (*usquf al-naṣārā*); Ṭabarānī, *Mu'jam*, 8: 23.ult (*usquf al-naṣārā*); Bayhaqī, *Dalā'il*, 4: 383 (*usquf min al-naṣārā*).

81. Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, k. *bad' al-waḥy*, 1: 6 (*ṣāḥib Ḳliya' wa-Hirqal suqūfan 'alā naṣārā l-Sha'm*); Ṭabarānī, *Musnad*, 4: 219 (*ṣāḥib Ḳliya' wa-Hirqal saqqafahu 'alā l-naṣārā*)>Ibn 'Asākir, *Dimashq*, 2: 93; Ibn Mandah, *Imān*, 1: 287–92.

82. Ṭabarānī, *Mu'jam*, 8: 22 (*ṣāḥib Ḳliya' wa-Hirqal saqqafahu (?) 'alā al-naṣārā*). On Yūnus, see 00–000 above.

196-203

Sean William Anthony, *Muhammad and the Empires of Faith: the Making of the Prophet of Islam*, Oakland: University of California Press, 2020. **ISAM DN. 294886.**

Zuhri

230386

ter with Heraclius and Muḥammad's letter to his teacher 'Ubaydallāh ibn 'Abdallāh ibn 'Utbah ibn Mas'ūd (d. ca. 98/716–17).<sup>83</sup> but he says he heard the story of Heraclius's vision from one Ibn Nāṭūrā (viz., Ibn al-Nāṭūr).

Who was the mysterious Ibn Nāṭūrā? In Ibn Ishāq's version of the legend, al-Zuhri informs his pupil:

A bishop of the Christians [*usquf li-l-naṣārā*], whom I had met in the time of 'Abd al-Malik ibn Marwān, told me this story, and he himself witnessed what transpired concerning the Messenger of God's letter as well as the affair of Heraclius and his intelligence. The bishop said, "When the letter from the Messenger of God came to Heraclius with Dihyah ibn Khalifah, Heraclius took it and held it over his lap, and then he wrote to a man in the city of Rome [*bi-rūmiyah*] who used to read what they read from Aramaic [*kāna yaqra'u min al-'ibrāniyyah mā yaqra'ūnahu*]<sup>84</sup> to inform him of its intent, to describe its subject, and to inform him of its contents. The potentate of Rome [*ṣāḥib rūmiyah*]<sup>85</sup> then wrote him, "He is the prophet whom we have awaited. There is no doubt about it. Follow him and believe his message!"<sup>86</sup>

The citation of non-Muslim authorities is rare among tradents of *ḥadīth*—indeed, the practice eventually becomes quite controversial.<sup>87</sup> One need not affirm the historicity of Ibn Nāṭūrā's purported relationship with Heraclius or even the accuracy of his name. Al-Zuhri was not the only scholar of Umayyad Syria who purported to have personally met someone who witnessed Heraclius's reaction to Muḥammad's letter.<sup>88</sup> What is important is al-Zuhri's recognition that he received

83. On whom, see Horowitz [1927–28] 2002, 11–12.

84. Thus, Salamah ibn al-Faḍl's recension; in the recension of Yūnus ibn Bukayr (Bayhaqī, *Dalā'il*, 4: 384.8) and Muḥammad ibn Salamah (Ṭabarānī, *Mu'jam*, 8: 24.4), the passage reads, "he used to read some Aramaic [*kāna yaqra'u min al-'ibrāniyyah mā yaqra'u*]." That *al-'ibrāniyyah* here means "Aramaic" rather than "Hebrew" can be discerned from the fact that a Christian source is being described. Likewise, Waraqah ibn Nawfal, the cousin of Muḥammad's wife Khadijah, allegedly wrote the Gospels in *al-'ibrāniyyah* (Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, k. *bad' al-waḥy*, 1: 3), which certainly means Aramaic in the context. On how Aramaic came to be commonly called "Hebrew," see Beattie and Davies 2011.

85. The use of the *ṣāḥib* here is intriguing, since it denotes the authority over the city of Rome; hence, this might also be the earliest reference to the pope in Arabic literature.

86. Cf. Ṭabarī, *Tārīkh*, ed. de Goeje, 1: 1565 (recension of Salamah ibn al-Faḍl); Ṭabarānī, *Mu'jam*, 8: 23–24 (recension of Muḥammad ibn Salamah); Bayhaqī, *Dalā'il*, 4: 384 (recension of Yūnus ibn Bukayr). Ibn Ḥajar (*Fath al-bārī*, 1: 40) cites a report from Abū Nu'aym al-Iṣfahānī's *Dalā'il al-nubuwwah* where Zuhri specifies that he met Ibn Nāṭūrā in Damascus; however, it does not appear in the printed editions of the work.

87. Ibn Ḥajar (*Fath al-bārī*, 1:40) justifies al-Zuhri's citation of the authority of a non-Muslim by noting that he was a bishop and thus "informed of [the Christians'] secrets and knowledgeable of the reality behind their stories [*kāna muṭṭali'an 'alā asrārihim wa-'ālīman bi-ḥaqā'iq akhbārhim*]."

88. Cf. the story of Sa'īd ibn Abī Rāshid, a *mawlā* of Mu'āwiyah ibn Abī Sufyān, who claimed that his elderly neighbor in Homs (Emesa/Ḥimṣ), a man from the Christian Tanūkh tribe, had witnessed the events and related his story to him. See Ibn Ḥanbal, *Musnad*, ed. Arna'ūṭ, 24: 416–19

02 Mart 2023

MADDE YAYIMLANDIKTAN  
SONRA GELEN DOKÜMAN

## IBN SHIHĀB AL-ZUHĪ AND THE Umayyads

In strictly evidentiary terms, we are on much firmer ground with the signs of a cultural shift in attitudes to recording tradition in the reign of the Umayyad caliph Hishām ibn ‘Abd al-Malik (r. 105–25/724–43). Most accounts assert that Caliph Hishām approached the Medinan scholar Muḥammad ibn Muslim ibn ‘Ubaydallāh ibn ‘Abdallāh ibn Shihāb of the Zuhrah clan of Quraysh, widely known as Ibn Shihāb al-Zuhri (d. 124/742), and had him record his learning and knowledge of the tradition (*‘ilm*) in writing at the court’s behest.<sup>13</sup> That Hishām chose al-Zuhri for the task comes as little surprise: al-Zuhri cultivated intimate ties with the Umayyad court for almost his entire adult life, ties that would have major ramifications for him personally and, more broadly speaking, for the history of committing the Medinans’ oral tradition to writing.

Ibn Sa’d (d. 230/845) records an extraordinary autobiographical account of al-Zuhri in which he relates how his relationship with the Umayyad court came to be and how it influenced his pursuit of knowledge throughout the course of his life. Since such autobiographical accounts are virtually unprecedented for this period, so it merits quotation in full, lengthy though it is.<sup>14</sup> Al-Zuhri begins the story with his youth in Medina during the Second Civil War between the Zubayrids and Umayyads:

When I grew up, I was a young man without any wealth and cut off from the *diwān* [i.e., the registry of Arab notables who received a stipend due either to their ancestor’s participation in the Islamic conquests or their own]. I used to learn the genealogy of my tribe from ‘Abdallāh ibn Tha’labah ibn Ṣu’ayr al-‘Adawī; he was knowledgeable in the lineage of my people and was their ally and related to them by his matrilineal line [*ibn ukhtihim wa-ḥalīfuhum*]. Once a man approached him to ask him a question about divorce, but he couldn’t answer him, so he pointed him to Sa’id ibn al-Musayyab.<sup>15</sup> I said to myself, “Ha! It’s clear to me that although this old man

down for him all the reports (*ahādīth*) he had heard from them “except for the reports of Abū Hurayrah, which we already have.” Ibn Sa’d (Beirut), 7: 448 > Ibn ‘Asākir, *Dimashq*, 50: 58; cf. Fasawī, *Ma’rifah*, 2: 303, and Dinawari, *Akḥbār*, 180. M. Cook 1997: 474, has suggested that this tradition may have served as a prototype for the traditions about his son, ‘Umar ibn ‘Abd al-‘Azīz; however, as noted above, the traditions strike me as too dispersed and variegated for such a monocal explanation. On the corpus of letters attributed to ‘Umar II, see now Tillier 2014, 165ff.

13. The two most comprehensive treatments of his biography are to be found in Lecker 1996b and Judd 2014.

14. Ibn Sa’d (ed. Maṣṣūr), 157–62; cf. Ibn ‘Asākir, *Dimashq*, 55: 322–25, and Dhahabī, *Siyar*, 5: 330–31.

15. Sa’id ibn al-Musayyab is widely regarded as the most learned Medinan scholar of his generation in the *suman* of the prophet and judgments rendered by the caliphs ‘Umar and ‘Uthmān. See Fasawī, *Ma’rifah*, 1: 346; Ibn Zanjawayh, *Ṭabaqāt*, 93. According to Ma’mar ibn Rāshid, al-Zuhri studied with Sa’id ibn al-Musayyab for eight years (Fasawī, *Ma’rifah*, 1: 631), but another student said it was six (Ibn Zanjawayh, *Ṭabaqāt*, 101).

132-150

Sean William Anthony, *Muhammad and the Empires of Faith: the Making of the Prophet of Islam*, Oakland: University of California Press, 2020. **ISAM DN. 294886.**

Zuhri (230386)

knows that the Messenger of God anointed his head, he doesn’t know what this [other] man does!” So I set out alongside the questioner to Sa’id ibn al-Musayyab, and when he asked him the question, he answered him. Thus did I begin sitting with Sa’id and abandon ‘Abdallāh ibn Tha’labah. I also sat in on the sessions of ‘Urwah ibn al-Zubayr, ‘Ubaydallāh ibn ‘Abdallāh ibn ‘Utbah, and Abū Bakr ibn ‘Abd al-Raḥmān ibn al-Ḥārith ibn Hishām until I gained some knowledge.

I then journeyed to Syria and went inside the Mosque of Damascus around dawn and betook myself to a circle with throngs of students around the spot where the imam leads the prayers and took a seat there. The group asked me my lineage, and I said [I was], “A man of Quraysh from the inhabitants of Medina.” They said, “Do you know any tradition [*‘ilm*] concerning the ruling on slave women who bear their master children [*fi ummahāt al-awlād*]?”<sup>16</sup> I told them what ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb said concerning such slave women, and the group said to me, “This is the gathering of Qabiṣah ibn Dhu’ayb. He’s on his way to see you, for ‘Abd al-Malik had asked him about this, and us as well, but he found that none of us knew of a tradition about that.”

Qabisah came, and they told him the story. He asked my lineage, which I gave, and he asked me about Sa’id ibn al-Musayyab and his peers. I informed him of what I knew. Then he said, “I’m going to take you to meet the Commander of the Faithful.” He prayed the morning prayer and then departed, while I followed close behind. He went in to see ‘Abd al-Malik ibn Marwān, but I sat at the doorway for about an hour until the sun rose. Later he came out and said, “Where’s that Qurashī from Medina?” “Right here!” I said. I stood up to [ . . . ]<sup>17</sup>

I entered the presence of the Commander of the Faithful at [Qabiṣah’s] side. I saw before him a copy of the Qur’an that he had just closed and commanded to be taken away. No one else besides Qabiṣah sat in his presence. I offered him the salutations owed the caliph, and he said, “Who are you?” I said, “I am Muḥammad ibn Muslim ibn ‘Ubaydallāh ibn ‘Abdallāh ibn Shihāb ibn ‘Abdallāh ibn al-Ḥārith ibn Zuhrah.” “Aha!” he said, “a tribe that clamored for civil strife among the Muslims!”<sup>18</sup>—for [my father] Muslim ibn ‘Ubaydallāh was on the side of [Ibn] al-Zubayr. Then he said, “What [tradition] do you have concerning a slave woman who bears her master a child?” I informed him and said, “Sa’id ibn al-Musayyab related to me [ . . . ]” And he asked, “How is Sa’id, and how is he doing?” I informed him, and then I said, “[ . . . ] and Abū Bakr ibn ‘Abd al-Raḥmān ibn al-Ḥārith ibn Hishām also related to me [ . . . ]” So he asked about him, too. I said, “[ . . . ] and ‘Urwah ibn al-Zubayr related to me [ . . . ], and he asked about him. I said, “[ . . . ] and ‘Ubaydallāh ibn ‘Abdallāh ibn ‘Utbah related to me [ . . . ],” and he even asked about him. At last I related him the *ḥadīth* concerning slave women who bear their masters children from ‘Umar ibn

16. Another account attributed to al-Zuhri specifies that the dispute was over ‘Urwah ibn al-Zubayr’s attempt to deny an *umm walad* her share in the inheritance of her deceased son. Fasawī, *Ma’rifah*, 1: 626–29; Abū Nu’aym, *Hilyah*, 3: 367–69; Lecker 1996b, 45–48.

17. Lacuna in the text.

18. Reading يقوم يخلزون في القتن for قوم يخلزون في القتن.

MAKDE YAYIMLANDIKTAN  
SONRA GELEN DOKÜMAN

02 Mart 2023