**Biography of the Prophet Mohammed (Muhammad) Seriously Mangles History**

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**by**

**Damien F. Mackey**

*Scholars have long pointed out the historical problems associated with the life of the Prophet Mohammed and the history of Islam, with some going even so far as to cast doubt upon Mohammed’s actual existence. Biblico-historical events, normally separated the one from the other by many centuries, are re-cast as contemporaneous in the Islamic texts. Muslim author, Ahmed Osman, has waxed so bold as to squeeze, into the one Egyptian dynasty, the Eighteenth, persons supposed to span more than one and a half millennia.*

*Now, as I intend to demonstrate in this article, biblico-historical events that occurred during the neo-Assyrian era of the C8th BC, and then later on, in the Persian era, have found their way into the biography of Mohammed supposedly of the C7th AD.*

**Introduction**

Whilst I have long held the belief that the Prophet Mohammed was actually of Old Testament biblical origins, a BC time Israelite mysteriously projected into AD time, I have had the greatest difficulty in pinning him down to a specific character or to a specific biblical period. I better realise now that there is a good reason for this. Mohammed is a composite of a number of major biblical characters, spanning a succession of eras, but masterfully woven by Islam into the one credible figure – were it not for those shocking historical anomalies. Credible, yes, yet also incredible. The Prophet Mohammed is a larger than life figure, inspiring, magnificent, whilst being enormously complex.

He is also highly controversial. One has only to browse the website, *Answering Islam* (<http://www.answering-islam.org/index.html>), to discover this. Colourful articles such as:

William DiPuccio investigates [Islam and Extremism: What is Underneath](http://www.answering-islam.org/authors/dipuccio/extremism.html).

Silas rebuts an article by David Liepert published by the Huffington Post: [Muhammad, Child brides, and David Liepert](http://www.answering-islam.org/authors/silas/liepert.html). Various articles on the nature and attributes of Allah: [The Great Divorce: Allah and His Attributes](http://www.answering-islam.org/authors/rogers/allahs_attributes.html) and [Allah’s Hands: More Than A Handful of Evidence](http://www.answering-islam.org/authors/rogers/allahs_hands.html) by Anthony Rogers, [Allah – the Best of the Inheritors?](http://www.answering-islam.org/authors/katz/quran/incoherence/allah_best_inheritor.html) and [Allah – the Heir?](http://www.answering-islam.org/authors/katz/quran/incoherence/allah_heir.html) by Jochen Katz. Rebuttals to Bassam Zawadi: (1) [Did Muhammad Contemplate Suicide?](http://www.answering-islam.org/authors/shamoun/rebuttals/zawadi/mo_suicide.html), (2) [A Dawagandist Tacitly Accuses His Prophet of Being a Liar](http://www.answering-islam.org/authors/shamoun/rebuttals/zawadi/mo_prophets_bowed.html).

[Did You Know That Muhammad Was A Misogynist?](http://www.answering-islam.org/authors/shamoun/rebuttals/williams/mo_misogynist.html) Did Abraham Build the Kaaba?

# But my pressing interest in this article is not whether or not Mohammed was a paedophile, or had bad breath, told lies, was an epileptic, or delusional. No, what fascinates me is the *historical* problem. And there are others out there who have confronted this issue, from popular writers such as author Robert Spencer, founder of the major website *Jihad Watch,* who recently published a book with the provocative title [Did Muhammad Exist?](http://www.amazon.com/Did-Muhammad-Exist-Inquiry-Obscure/dp/161017061X): An Inquiry into Islam’s Obscure Origins (ISI Books, March 2012),

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# to some genuine scholarly efforts. The *Foreword* to Spencer’s book, for instance, as the blurb informs us (<http://www.frontpagemag.com/2012/fjordman/unmasking-muhammads-dubious>):

# … was written by the eminent scholar Johannes J. G. (Hans) Jansen, an Arabist and a Professor of Modern Islamic thought at the University of Utrecht in the Netherlands until his retirement in 2008. Among his other accomplishments, he has translated the Koran into Dutch. Jansen points out that what sparse information and physical evidence we do have does not seem to confirm the traditional Islamic accounts of the sixth and seventh centuries.

In fact, archaeological findings contradict the traditional picture. Only further archaeological work in present-day Arabia and Greater Syria can shed more light on these issues. In Saudi Arabia, such excavations are forbidden, and Wahhabi hardliners have actively destroyed some sites. Furthermore, the religious authorities may not be interested in bringing to light findings that might contradict their religious views or undermine Saudi Arabia’s central status in Islam.

As Jansen states, “An Iraqi scholar, Ibn Ishaq (c. 760), wrote a book that is the basis of all biographies of Muhammad. No biographical sketches of Muhammad exist that do not depend on Ibn Ishaq. If an analysis of Ibn Ishaq’s book establishes that for whatever reason it cannot be seen as an historical source, all knowledge we possess about Muhammad evaporates. When Ibn Ishaq’s much-quoted and popular book turns out to be nothing but pious fiction, we will have to accept that it is not likely we will ever discover the truth about Muhammad.”

Moreover, a fully developed Arabic script did not yet exist at the time when the Koran was supposedly collected for the first time, which further introduces substantial sources of error. The Koran itself was probably far less stable and collected much later than Muslims believe.

Finally, the hadith collections which elaborate upon the personal example of Muhammad were developed many generations after the alleged events of his life had taken place, and are considered partially unreliable even by Muslims. It is likely that a great deal of this material was fabricated outright in a process of political and cultural struggle long after the first conquests.

[End of quote]

Spencer does not claim to be an original scholar in these matters, but credits such individuals as Ignaz Goldziher, Theodor Nöldeke, Arthur Jeffery, Henri Lammens, Alphonse Mingana, Joseph Schacht, Aloys Sprenger and Julius Wellhausen, as well as more recent researchers such as Suliman Bashear, Patricia Crone, Volker Popp, Yehuda Nevo, Michael Cook, Ibn Warraq, Judith Koren, Ibn Rawandi, Günter Lüling, David S. Powers and John Wansbrough. And we continue reading here:

Several contemporary critical scholars — Christoph Luxenberg, for example — have been forced to write under pseudonyms due to persistent threats against their lives. This virtually never happened to scholars in Christian Europe who critically examined the Bible or the historical Jesus during the nineteenth century, but it happens frequently to those who question Islam and its traditions.

One might suspect that the main reason why many Muslims often tend to react with extreme aggression against anyone questioning their religion is because it was originally built on shaky foundations and could collapse if it is subjected to closer scrutiny.

Non-Muslim chroniclers writing at the time of the early Arabian conquests made no mention of the Koran, Islam or Muslims, and scant mention of Muhammad. The Arab conquerors themselves didn’t refer to the Koran during the first decades, quite possibly because it did not then exist in a recognizable form.

Modern scholars like Patricia Crone have questioned whether Mecca as an important trading city and center of pilgrimage truly existed by the year 600 [AD], as Islamic sources claim. Its location makes no sense if it was supposed to be located on the trade routes between the Indian Ocean and Mediterranean Europe. No non-Muslim historian mentions it in any accounts of trade from the sixth or seventh centuries. Given the centrality of Mecca in traditional history, this casts the entire canonical story of the origins of Islam into doubt.

[End of quote]

On this issue of Mecca, J. Toler has asked the question: “Did Abraham Build the Kaaba?” (<http://www.answering-islam.org/authors/toler/abraham_kaaba.html>):

… Why did the Kaaba play a central role in Muhammad’s fantasies? While no historical facts support his claims, Muslims are seldom deterred. Islam is built upon the notion that Abraham was not only a Muslim [*Q. 2:31*] but that he was selected by Allah to build the Kaaba in Mecca [*Q. 2:125-127*], and that while doing so he established the rituals and beliefs which are the cornerstones of Islamic worship. The pagan origins and practices of the Kaaba will not be discussed here, only the patriarchal journeys and the Islamic corruption of the Bible’s texts. Muslims claim that Mecca and the Kaaba are the centers of worship for the entire world. Christians and Jews know that it is Jerusalem, where lays the chief cornerstone of Yahweh's kingdom [*Psalm 102:16; I Peter 2:6*]. The City of David [Zion] is mentioned nearly 50 times in the Bible as the home of God's people [*Isaiah 10:24*] and where the hosts will reign [*Isaiah 24:23*]. Are Muslims going to tell us that these references are corruptions in the texts and that Mecca was the intended city the whole time? Hardly even ***remotely*** plausible.

The Kaaba in Mecca is without equal in veneration in Islamic tradition, and had been revered by Arab pagans long before Muhammad’s birth. The Muslim religion holds that the Kaaba was built by Abraham and Ishmael after hearing a direct revelation from Allah. This seems improbable. After all, once Allah guides a people on the right course and provides a mode of conduct for worship through a chosen Prophet, Allah does not then lead them astray into confusion or an inability to see the right course [*Q. 9:115*]. How is it then that such a man as Abraham would be sent to Mecca to deliver the people from polytheism and build the Kaaba only to later have them fall into apostasy and disbelief, needing yet another prophet in the 7th century A.D.? Abraham being in Mecca is just not consistent with important Islamic doctrines, and a myth. For example, in Q. 2:125 the Kaaba is being purified [*Ar. 'tahara'*], yet in Q. 2:127 the foundation are still being raised [*Ar. Rafa'a*]. Depending on the traditions being reviewed, the Kaaba was built by Allah or maybe Adam or possibly Abraham. But, is it true? ….

[End of quote]

Returning again to the Spencer article, we read about the problems associated with the original language:

The Koran claims to be written in clear Arabic, but even educated Arabs find parts of it hard to understand. The German philologist Gerd R. Puin, whose pioneering work is quoted by Ibn Warraq in What the Koran Really Says, states that up to a fifth of it is just incomprehensible.

Perhaps one of the reasons why the Koran stresses its Arabic nature may be, ironically, that portions of it were not originally written in Arabic at all, but in related Semitic languages.

Christoph Luxenberg has suggested that some sections of it were originally written in Syriac, a dialect of Aramaic that had long been used as a literary language in much of the Middle East and the Fertile Crescent. He demonstrates convincingly that certain puzzling Koranic verses make more sense if you read them in Syriac. The virgins that brave Muslim men are supposed to enjoy in Paradise (Koran 44:51-57, 52:17-24, 56:27-40) may not be virgins at all, but rather white raisins, or perhaps grapes. Yes, fruit.

It’s possible that some of these Christian Syriac texts were written by a heretical group that rejected the Trinity of mainstream Christianity. It’s certainly true that a few Koranic chapters as we know them are somewhat more tolerant than others, but if we believe this non-traditional reading of history, some of them were based on pre-existing Jewish or Christian texts.

[End of quote]

Much of them, I should argue along similar lines, were based on the Old and New Testament!

I think that Spencer really gets close to hitting the nail on the head when he arrives at the conclusion that the Prophet Mohammed was, in fact, “a semi-legendary figure … whose exploits were greatly elaborated upon by later generations” - though my qualification of what he argues would be that this “semi-legendary figure” was *based on real historical individuals,* and not on figures as historically vague as the ones that Spencer will now propose:

In the final section of the book, Spencer sums up the findings to date. He suggests that Muhammad may have existed as a semi-legendary figure, comparable to Robin Hood, King Arthur or William Tell, whose exploits were greatly elaborated upon by later generations. Yet the traditional account of him as Islam’s founder is riddled with gaps and inconsistencies.

The Arab conquerors may have known some vague monotheism partly inspired by Christians and Jews, but in the generations and centuries after the conquests they abandoned this and developed a more militant creed that came to function as a vehicle for Arab nationalism and imperialism. Perhaps the conquests shaped Islam more than Islam shaped the conquests.

But if someone more or less invented Muhammad, wouldn’t they want to invent a more sympathetic character than the very ruthless and brutal man we see emerge from the traditional accounts? Possibly yes, but as Spencer comments, the Arabs of this age may have thought that such a ruthless character was an inspiration for conquest and empire-building.

[End of quote]

# Most surprising of all is the conclusion of Muslim convert, Muhammad Sven Kalisch, Germany's first professor of Islamic theology, that ‘Mohammed probably never existed’ (<http://www.wsj.com/articles/SB122669909279629451>):

…. Muhammad Sven Kalisch … fasts during the Muslim holy month, doesn't like to shake hands with Muslim women and has spent years studying Islamic scripture. Islam, he says, guides his life.

So it came as something of a surprise when Prof. Kalisch announced the fruit of his theological research. His conclusion: The Prophet Muhammad probably never existed.

Theology Without Muhammad

[Read a translated excerpt](http://www.wsj.com/articles/SB122633888141714211) from "Islamic Theology Without the Historic Muhammad -- Comments on the Challenges of the Historical-Critical Method for Islamic Thinking" by Professor Kalisch.

Muslims, not surprisingly, are outraged. Even Danish cartoonists who triggered global protests a couple of years ago didn't portray the Prophet as fictional. German police, worried about a violent backlash, told the professor to move his religious-studies center to more-secure premises.

"We had no idea he would have ideas like this," says Thomas Bauer, a fellow academic at Münster University who sat on a committee that appointed Prof. Kalisch. "I'm a more orthodox Muslim than he is, and I'm not a Muslim."

When Prof. Kalisch took up his theology chair four years ago, he was seen as proof that modern Western scholarship and Islamic ways can mingle -- and counter the influence of radical preachers in Germany. He was put in charge of a new program at Münster, one of Germany's oldest and most respected universities, to train teachers in state schools to teach Muslim pupils about their faith.

Muslim leaders cheered and joined an advisory board at his Center for Religious Studies. Politicians hailed the appointment as a sign of Germany's readiness to absorb some three million Muslims into mainstream society. But, says Andreas Pinkwart, a minister responsible for higher education in this north German region, "the results are disappointing."

Prof. Kalisch, who insists he's still a Muslim, says he knew he would get in trouble but wanted to subject Islam to the same scrutiny as Christianity and Judaism. German scholars of the 19th century, he notes, were among the first to raise questions about the historical accuracy of the Bible.

Many scholars of Islam question the accuracy of ancient sources on Muhammad's life. The earliest biography, of which no copies survive, dated from roughly a century after the generally accepted year of his death, 632, and is known only by references to it in much later texts. But only a few scholars have doubted Muhammad's existence. Most say his life is better documented than that of Jesus.



Muhammad Sven Kalish

"Of course Muhammad existed," says Tilman Nagel, a scholar in Göttingen and author of a new book, "Muhammad: Life and Legend." The Prophet differed from the flawless figure of Islamic tradition, Prof. Nagel says, but "it is quite astonishing to say that thousands and thousands of pages about him were all forged" and there was no such person.

All the same, Prof. Nagel has signed a petition in support of Prof. Kalisch, who has faced blistering criticism from Muslim groups and some secular German academics. "We are in Europe," Prof. Nagel says. "Education is about thinking, not just learning by heart."

Prof. Kalisch's religious studies center recently removed a sign and erased its address from its Web site. The professor, a burly 42-year-old, says he has received no specific threats but has been denounced as apostate, a capital offense in some readings of Islam.

"Maybe people are speculating that some idiot will come and cut off my head," he said during an interview in his study.

A few minutes later, an assistant arrived in a panic to say a suspicious-looking digital clock had been found lying in the hallway. Police, called to the scene, declared the clock harmless.

A convert to Islam at age 15, Prof. Kalisch says he was drawn to the faith because it seemed more rational than others. He embraced a branch of Shiite Islam noted for its skeptical bent. After working briefly as a lawyer, he began work in 2001 on a postdoctoral thesis in Islamic law in Hamburg, to go through the elaborate process required to become a professor in Germany.

The Sept. 11 attacks in the U.S. that year appalled Mr. Kalisch but didn't dent his devotion. Indeed, after he arrived at Münster University in 2004, he struck some as too conservative. Sami Alrabaa, a scholar at a nearby college, recalls attending a lecture by Prof. Kalisch and being upset by his doctrinaire defense of Islamic law, known as Sharia.

In private, he was moving in a different direction. He devoured works questioning the existence of Abraham, Moses and Jesus. Then "I said to myself: You've dealt with Christianity and Judaism but what about your own religion? Can you take it for granted that Muhammad existed?"

He had no doubts at first, but slowly they emerged. He was struck, he says, by the fact that the first coins bearing Muhammad's name did not appear until the late 7th century -- six decades after the religion did.

He traded ideas with some scholars in Saarbrücken who in recent years have been pushing the idea of Muhammad's nonexistence. They claim that "Muhammad" wasn't the name of a person but a title, and that Islam began as a Christian heresy.

Prof. Kalisch didn't buy all of this. Contributing last year to a book on Islam, he weighed the odds and called Muhammad's existence "more probable than not." By early this year, though, his thinking had shifted. "The more I read, the historical person at the root of the whole thing became more and more improbable," he says.

He has doubts, too, about the Quran. "God doesn't write books," Prof. Kalisch says.

[End of quote]

**Some Shocking Anomalies in Islamic History**

Whilst one could point to many of these, I just want to mention a few that have struck me as being particularly incredible and bold. Taking these in chronological order - that is, in a proper chronological order - they are:

1. Mecca’s Ka'aba, so vital to Islam, built by Abraham;
2. Egypt’s Vizier Hemiunu identified by some as Haman of the story of Queen Esther;
3. 'Abraha ('Abrahas) attacks Mecca in year of Mohammed’s birth (to be explained);
4. Nehemiah as a contemporary of Mohammed.
5. **Mecca.**

Archaeological evidence suggests that the city of Mecca is late, and certainly could not have been relevant to the time of Abram (Abraham). A study from [Dr. Rafat Amari](http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Dr._Rafat_Amari&action=edit&redlink=1) (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Talk%3ABakkah>) shows that there is no historical record penned before the 4th century AD, that suggests that Mecca ever existed before that time, while other ancient [Arabian](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Arabian_Peninsula) towns are well attested in the historical record.[[11]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Talk%3ABakkah#cite_note-11)In another study, Dr. Rafat Amari found that no pre-4th century historical or archaeological record that suggests that the Kaaba existed before the early 5th century.[[13]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Talk%3ABakkah#cite_note-13)

‘Mecca’, as the centre of worship, at the centre of the world, of the nations (cf. Ezekiel 5:5), can only have been, originally, Jerusalem; the name *Mecca* having been derived from the Arabic *Muqa* (Mecca) in *Bayt al-Muqaddas*, referring to “Jerusalem”. For as quoted above: “Muslims claim that Mecca and the Kaaba are the centers of worship for the entire world. Christians and Jews know that it is Jerusalem, where lays the chief cornerstone of Yahweh's kingdom [*Psalm 102:16; I Peter 2:6*]”. The original Ka'aba, or “Cube”, could only have been the Holy of Holies in the Temple of Yahweh in Jerusalem. The Holy of Holies “was a perfect cube” (<http://the-tabernacle-place.com/articles/what_is_the_tabernacle/tabernacle_holy_of>):

Within the Holy Place of the tabernacle, there was an inner room called the Holy of Holies, or the Most Holy Place. Judging from its name, we can see that it was a most sacred room, a place no ordinary person could enter. It was God’s special dwelling place in the midst of His people. During the Israelites’ wanderings in the wilderness, God appeared as a pillar of cloud or fire in and above the Holy of Holies. The Holy of Holies was a perfect cube — its length, width and height were all equal to 15 feet.

[End of quote]

Now, whilst Abraham himself never visited Mecca, he certainly did visit the site of the Temple Mount, or Mount Moriah, with his son, Isaac (Genesis 22:2).

Not surprisingly, the story of this famous incident occurs also in the Qur'an, but differently told. There even appears to be disagreement amongst Islamic scholars as to which son of Abraham was intended for the sacrifice (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Binding_of_Isaac>):

Among early Muslim scholars, however, there was a dispute over the identity of the son.[[12]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Binding_of_Isaac#cite_note-EoI_Ishaq-12) The argument of those early scholars who believed it was Isaac rather than Ishmael (notably Ibn Ḳutayba, and al-Ṭabarī) was that "God's perfecting his mercy on Abraham and Isaac" referred to his making Abraham his friend, and to his rescuing Isaac. On the contrary, the other parties held that the promise to Sarah was of a son, Isaac, and a grandson, Jacob,[[13]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Binding_of_Isaac" \l "cite_note-13) excluded the possibility of a premature death of Isaac.[[12]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Binding_of_Isaac#cite_note-EoI_Ishaq-12)

[End of quote]

**(b) Haman.**

Also quite outlandish are certain attempts to merge the Vizier of Old Kingdom Egypt, Hemiunu, with Haman of the Persian era. Though this preposterous situation seems to be quite consistent with Islam’s worrying lack of any historical perspective (as more recently typified by the efforts of Ahmed Osman), ranking with this absurdity associated with Mary the mother of Jesus (<http://www.answering-islam.org/Responses/Menj/sister_of_aaron.htm>):

The Quran confuses Mary, the mother of the Lord Jesus, with Miriam the sister of Moses. The Quran identifies Mary as the sister of Aaron, the daughter of Imran, whose mother was the wife of Imran:

When *the wife of Imran* said, 'Lord, I have vowed to Thee, in dedication, what is within my womb. Receive Thou this from me; Thou hearest, and knowest.' And when she gave birth to her she said, 'Lord, I have given birth to her, a female.' (And God knew very well what she had given birth to; the male is not as the female.) 'And I have named her *Mary*, and commend her to Thee with her seed, to protect them from the accursed Satan.' S. 3:35-36 Arberry

Then she brought the child to her folk carrying him; and they said, '*Mary*, thou hast surely committed a monstrous thing! *Sister of Aaron*, thy father was not a wicked man, nor was thy mother a woman unchaste.' S. 19:27-28

And *Mary, Imran's daughter*, who guarded her virginity, so We breathed into her of Our Spirit, and she confirmed the Words of her Lord and His Books, and became one of the obedient. S. 66:12

Compare this to what the Holy Bible says:

"Then Mary (Hebrew- *Mariam*), the prophetess, *the sister of Aaron*, took the timbrel in her hand…" Exodus 15:20

"The name of *Amram's wife* was Jochebed, the daughter of Levi, who was born to Levi in Egypt; and to Amram she bore Aaron and Moses and *their sister Miriam*." Numbers 26:49

"The children of *Amram: Aaron, Moses, and Miriam*. The sons of Aaron: Nadab, Abihu, Eleazar, and Ithamar." 1 Chronicles 6:3

"For I brought you up from the land of Egypt and redeemed you from the house of slavery, and I sent before you *Moses, Aaron, and Miriam*." Micah 6:4

[End of quote]

History well knows that Hemiunu was the famous Vizier of Egypt’s Fourth Dynasty, and possibly even the architect of the Great Pyramid at Giza.

Conventional history would date Hemiunu to c. 2500 BC - but, according to my revision of Egyptian history, this would be about a millennium too early. See e.g. my:

**Moses - May be Staring Revisionists Right in the Face**

<http://www.academia.edu/11915103/Moses_-_May_be_Staring_Revisionists_Right_in_the_Face>

And, whether or not I am right in my identifying of Haman with king Jehoiachin (Coniah) “the Captive”, of Judah (based on Jewish legends that Haman was in fact a Jew):

**The Wicked Haman Un-Masked?**

<http://www.academia.edu/5791968/The_Wicked_Haman_Un-Masked>

I am entirely confident, at least, that this estimate of mine is at least a millennium closer to the correct era of Haman than is the version put forward by *Islamic Awareness,* that would locate the evil Haman to old pharaonic Egypt. J. Katz tells of this in “The Haman Hoax” (<http://www.answering-islam.org/authors/katz/haman/app_hammon_hemiunu.html>):

**The psychology of *Islamic Awareness*: It may be probable that it is somebody else?**

Just how much the *IA*-authors are groping in the dark can be seen in one little formulation in one of their footnotes. Before they turn to their “substantiation” and promotion of Bucaille’s claims, they present this introductory paragraph:

Haman is mentioned six times in the Qur'an: Surah 28, verses 6, 8 and 38; Surah 29, verse 39; and Surah 40, verses 24 and 36. The above ayahs portray Haman as someone close to Pharaoh, who was also in charge of building projects, otherwise the Pharaoh would have directed someone else. So, who is Haman? It appears that no commentator of the Qur'an has dealt with this question on a thorough hieroglyphic basis. As previously mentioned, many authors have suggested that "Haman" in the Qur'an is reference to Haman, a counsellor of Ahasuerus who was an enemy of the Jews. Meanwhile others have been searching for consonances with the name of the Egyptian god "Amun."[58]

There would not be much to comment on in this paragraph, were it not for the fact that they added the following footnote to their last sentence:

[58] Syed suggests that "Haman" is a title of a person not his name, just as Pharaoh was a title and not a proper personal name. Syed proposes that the title "Haman" referred to the "high priest of Amun". Amun is also known as "Hammon" and both are normal pronunciations of the same name. **Syed's identification of Haman as "the high priest of Amun" may be probable.** See S. M. Syed, "Historicity Of Haman As Mentioned In The Qur'an", *The Islamic Quarterly*, 1980, Volume 24, No. 1 and 2, pp. 52-53; Also see a slightly modified article by him published four years later: S. M. Syed, "Haman In The Light Of The Qur'an", *Hamdard Islamicus*, 1984, Volume 7, No. 4, pp. 86-87. ([Source](http://www.answering-islam.org/authors/katz/haman/authors/katz/haman/app_ia_versions.html); bold emphasis mine)[1](http://www.answering-islam.org/authors/katz/haman/authors/katz/haman/app_hammon_hemiunu.html" \l "fn_1)

On one hand, they seem to discount the suggestion of connecting the name Haman with the god Amun since that is something that was only done by “others”, and they do not come back to this idea in their article. On the other hand, they write in their footnote that this “identification of Haman as ‘the high priest of Amun’ may be probable”. What is that supposed to mean? Is it probable or is it not probable? And if this identification is probable, does that mean that Bucaille’s claims are then improbable? Why then do they dedicate most of the space in their article to propagating Bucaille’s claims? After all, two contradictory answers cannot both be probable at the same time. In normal language, “probable” means that it has a probability that is higher than 50%. And that means that all other potential solutions have a probability that is less than 50%. Despite the fact that they expanded this footnote when they revised their paper, this nonsensical formulation stayed the same.

After *Islamic Awareness* argued their case for the Bucaille-ian Haman, they then write:

It is also interesting to note that there also existed a similar sounding name called Hemon[71] (or Hemiunu / Hemionu[72] as he is also known as), a vizier to King Khnum-Khufu who is widely considered to be the architect of Khnum-Khufu's the Great Pyramid at Giza. He lived in the 4th Dynasty of the Old Kingdom Period (*c*. 2700 - 2190 BCE).

It remains unclear, however, *why* Islamic Awareness considers this interesting. Do they seriously consider him a candidate for the quranic Haman, or do they not? If not, why would they introduce him in their article? Somehow, it seems to be an implicit suggestion of Hemiunu as a candidate for Haman – particularly since there are indeed a number of Muslims who are seriously propagating Hemiunu as the Haman of the Qur’an![2](http://www.answering-islam.org/authors/katz/haman/authors/katz/haman/app_hammon_hemiunu.html" \l "fn_2) In any case, we will take a closer look at Hemiunu shortly.

So, all in all, *Islamic Awareness* offers the world *three* Hamans: (a) the high-priest of Amun (a speculative construct and mere hypothesis, no evidence is provided in their article, not connected to a specific date or person), (b) “hmn-h, the overseer of the stone-quarry workers of Amun” (19th or 20th dynasty, roughly 1300-1100 BC), and (c) Hemiunu the vizier of Khufu (4th dynasty, ca. 2570 BC). First the Muslims had the problem that there was no Haman in Egypt, contrary to the claims of the Qur’an, and now we have the opposite problem that there are too many.

Why is that a problem? Because adding more and more “potential Hamans” to the discussion also means that the probability for each one of these to be the right one is decreasing. ….

[End of quote]

**(c)** '**Abraha (**'**Abrahas)**

This is the one that really grabbed my attention. It is chronologically important because it is (unlike **(a)** and **(b)**) dated contemporaneously with Mohammed. In fact, it is dated to the very year of his birth, supposedly c. 570 AD. It is the account of a potentate’s march on Mecca, with the intention of destroying the Ka'aba. The whole thing, however, is entirely fictional, though it is based upon a real event: namely, the famous march upon Jerusalem by the forces of king Sennacherib of Assyria (c. 700 BC). The reference to “elephants” is irrelevant (or irrelephant) in the neo-Assyrian era.

As noted in **(a),** Mecca and Ka'aba ought to be re-read, in the context of Mohammed, as, respectively, Jerusalem and the Holy of Holies.

The legendary account is as follows (<http://www.dacb.org/stories/ethiopia/_abraha.html>):

'Abraha (Ge'ez: 'Abreha) also known as 'Abraha al-Asram or Abraha b. as-Saba'h, was an Aksumite Christian ruler of Yemen.

….

A number of legends of popular origin have been woven around 'Abraha's name in Arab tradition which have not yet been substantiated. Of these traditions, the best-known concern the expedition against Mecca. At this period Mecca was the thriving center of the pagan cult of the Ka'aba and the pilgrim traffic was in the hands of the powerful Qurays family. Fired with Christian zeal, 'Abraha set out to build a magnificent church at Sana'a to serve as a counter-attraction to the surrounding pagan peoples. This aroused the hostility of the Qurays who feared that the pilgrim traffic with its lucrative offerings would be diverted to Sana'a. It is sometimes said that one of their adherents succeeded in defiling the church and this led 'Abraha to embark upon a campaign against Mecca. This event is associated in Islamic tradition with the year of the Prophet's birth, c. 570 A.D. 'Abraha is said to have used elephants in the campaign and the date is celebrated as the Year of the Elephant, *'am al fil.'* An indirect reference to the event is found in *Surah* 105 of the *Quran*. 'Abraha's expedition probably failed due to the successful delaying tactics of the Qurays and pestilence broke out in the camp, which decimated his army and forced him to withdraw. Another tradition relates the expedition to an unsuccessful economic mission to the Qurays by 'Abraha's son.

….

No reliable information exists about the date of 'Abraha's death although tradition places it immediately after his expedition to Mecca. He was succeeded on the throne by two of his sons, Yaksum and Masruq, born to him by Raihäna, a Yemenite noblewoman whom 'Abraha had abducted from her husband.

[End of quote]

This is just one of many later versions, more or less accurate, of the invasion of Israel by the almost 200,000-strong army of Sennacherib. E.g., Sirach refers to it accurately in 14:18-25, as did Judas Maccabeus in 2 Maccabees 8:19. Herodotus managed to mangle it and re-locate it to Pelusium in Egypt (<http://www.varchive.org/tac/lastcamp.htm>):

Herodotus (II. 141) relates this event and gives a version he heard from the Egyptians when he visited their land two and a half centuries after it happened. When Sennacherib invaded Pelusium, the priest-king Sethos went with a weak army to defend the frontier. In a single night hordes of field mice overran the Assyrian camp, devoured quivers, bowstrings and shield handles, and put the Assyrian army to flight. Another version was given by Berosus, the Chaldean priest of the third century before the present era.

[End of quote]

“Pestilence”, or was it “field mice”? Actually, it was neither. The real story can be read in the Hebrew Book of Judith, a simplified account of which I have provided in my article:

**“Nadin went into everlasting darkness”.**

<http://www.academia.edu/7177604/_Nadin_went_into_everlasting_darkness_>

As with the story of Mohammed, this wonderful victory for ancient Israel has been projected into AD time, now with the (possibly Jewish) heroine, “Gudit” (read Judith), defeating the Aksumites [Axumites] (read Assyrians), the Axumites being the same nation as 'Abraha’s (<http://www.africaspeaks.com/reasoning/index.php?topic=1103.0;wap2>):

Historian J.A. Rogers in the early 1900s identified Gudit as one in the  
same with a black Hebrew Queen named Esther and associated her with the  
"Falasha" Jewish dynasty that reigned from 950 to 1260AD. Many Falashas  
today proudly claim her as one of their own.

Yet it is of dispute that Gudit was of the Jewish faith. And many in  
fact believe she probably adhered to indigenous African-Ethiopian based  
religion, hence her seemingly strong resentment towards a then  
encroaching Judeo-Christian Axum.

Whatever her origins or real name, Gudit's conquering of Axum put an end  
to that nation-state's reign of power. Her attack came so swift and  
efficiently, that the Axumite forces were scattered in her army's wake.

[End of quote]

That sounds like the culmination of the Book of Judith!

There may be some true glimpses of Sennacherib in the account of the invasion by the forces of 'Abraha. It was actually Sennacherib’s son (the “Nadin” above) who was killed by Judith, and we read above: “Another tradition relates the expedition to an unsuccessful economic mission … by 'Abraha's son”. And, as Sennacherib died shortly after his army’s demise, so: “No reliable information exists about the date of 'Abraha's death although tradition places it immediately after his expedition to Mecca”. And Sennacherib’s death occurred at the hands of two of his sons, whilst: “['Abraha] was succeeded on the throne by two of his sons …”. (<http://www.the-faith.com/featured/abrahas-elephant-destruction-kabah/>)

Moreover, Sennacherib had formerly sent up to Jerusalem his official, *Rabshakeh* (Isaiah 36:2): “Then the king of Assyria sent his field commander with a large army from Lachish to King Hezekiah at Jerusalem”. Similarly: “From Al-Maghmas [Michmash?], Abraha sent a man named Al-Aswad ibn Maqsud to the forefront of his army”. Now, the sarcastic *Rabshakeh* had taunted the officials of king Hezekiah with these words (v. 8): ‘Come now, make a bargain with my master, the king of Assyria: I will give you two thousand horses—if you can put riders on them!’ In a dim reflection of this powerful incident, whilst reversing it, we find 'Abraha’s man saying: “I have come to the House that is your religion and the religion of your fathers and that is your sanctuary and protection – for the purpose of destroying it. You do not speak to me about that, yet you speak to me about (a meager) 200 camels that belong to you!” 2000 horses reduced to a tenth and becoming 200 camels.

In a further connection with Assyria, with Nineveh, Mohammed is said to have encountered a young Christian from that famous city. One wonders, therefore, if Mohammed ought to be re-dated closer to c. 612 BC (when Nineveh was irrevocably destroyed), or, say (for symmetry), to c. 612 AD.

The Christian servant 'Addas was greatly impressed by these words and said: "These are words which people in this land do not generally use." The prophet (s) asked: "What land are you from, and what is your religion?" 'Addas replied: "I am Christian by faith and come from Nineveh." The prophet Muhammad (s) then said: "You belong to the city of the righteous Yunus (Jonah), son of Matta."

Even more worryingly, perhaps, Mohammed claimed to be the very “brother” of the prophet Jonah: “ 'Addas asked him anxiously if he knew anything about Jonah. The prophet (s) significantly remarked: "He is my brother. He was a prophet and so am I." Thereupon 'Addas paid homage to Muhammad (s) and kissed his head, his hands and his feet”.

For my reconstruction of Jonah and Nineveh, see:

# **Prophet Jonah and the Beginnings of a New History**

<https://www.academia.edu/6007295/Prophet_Jonah_and_the_Beginnings_of_a_New_History>

1. **Nehemiah**

Having fairly often read about the biblical Nehemiah, I nearly fell off my chair when I read in a French publication that there was supposedly a Jewish Nehemiah contemporaneous with the Prophet Mohammed, that Nehemiah doing the same sorts of things that the biblical version of the name had done. I have recently written about this in:

# **Two Supposed Nehemiahs: BC time and AD time**

<https://www.academia.edu/12429764/Two_Supposed_Nehemiahs_BC_time_and_AD_time>

**Now this is a very strange Afterglow of BC in AD time!**

There is a strange interfacing (mirroring) of c. 600 BC [I picked this round figure for purposes of symmetry only] events with c. 600 AD events, particularly the appearance of [a] Nehemiah in both cases, serving the Persians in both cases, in relation to Jerusalem in both cases.

600 BC, approximately, has been sucked all the way forward to 600 AD!

…. One extraordinary case [reference to the Velikovskian aftershocks as quoted above] that has just come to light for me concerns Nehemiah (thought to be a Jew) of c. 600 BC.

Now I find that there was a Nehemiah, a Jew, supposedly in 614 AD (the era of Mohammed), to whom a Persian general had entrusted the city of Jerusalem (just as “Artaxerxes”, thought to have been an ancient Persian king, had allowed Nehemiah his cupbearer, the governor, to return to Jerusalem and to restore the damaged city). This supposedly later Nehemiah “offers a sacrifice on the site of the Temple”, according to Étienne Couvert (*La Vérité sur les Manuscripts de la Mer Morte,* 2nd ed, Éditions de Chiré, p. 98. My translation). “He even seems to have attempted to restore the Jewish cult of sacrifice”, says Maxine Lenôtre (*Mahomet Fondateur de L’Islam,* Publications MC, p. 111, quoting from S.W. Baron’s, *Histoire d’Israël,* T. III, p. 187. My translation), who then adds (quoting from the same source): “Without any doubt, a number of Jews saw in these events a repetition of the re-establishment of the Jewish State by Cyrus and Darius [C6th BC kings of ancient Persia] and behaved as the rulers of the city and of the country”.

Whilst this is quite a penetrating observation as far as it goes, I think that the conclusion ought actually to go far deeper even than this. This “Nehemiah, a Jew”, I now suggest, was none other than the original Nehemiah himself, “the governor”, of the OT Book of Nehemiah. He was not ‘repeating the re-establishment of the Jewish state by Cyrus and Darius’, but was the very one who had prophetically envisioned it!

He has been sucked all the way forward to 600 AD!

And Mohammed, orginally an Old Testament prophet, has been curiously metamorphosised into a C7th AD Arabian prophet.

[End of quote]

**21st May 2015**