

QS 9 Q 5:109 – 120

5.109 Beware a Day when God gathers the Messengers together, and He will ask: “What was the response to you?” They answer: “We have no knowledge of this, for it is You who are the All-Knower of the Unseen.”

5.110 Remember when God said: “O Jesus son of Mary, remember My blessing upon you and upon your mother, when I strengthened you with the Holy Spirit, and how you spoke to people in the cradle and in your manhood; When I taught you the Book, the Wisdom, the Torah and the Evangel;

When you created from clay the likeness of birds, by My leave,

Breathing upon them, and they became birds, by My leave;

When you cured the blind and the leper, by My leave,

And when you raised up the dead, by My leave; When I held back the Children of Israel from you when you came to them with miracles,

And those who disbelieved said: ‘This is nothing but manifest sorcery’;

5.111 When I inspired the disciples to have faith in Me and in My Messenger, And they said: ‘We believe, so witness that we are Muslims’;

5.112 When the disciples said: ‘O Jesus son of Mary, can your God

Send down upon us a table from heaven?’

He said: ‘Fear God if you are true believers’.

5.113 They said: ‘We wish to eat from it so that our hearts are at peace,

And we know that you have spoken the truth to us, and we be witnesses thereof;’

5.114 Said Jesus son of Mary: ‘O God our Lord, send down upon us a table from heaven,

And it shall be a feast-day for first and last amongst us, and a miracle from You,

And grant us Your bounty – You are the best of providers.’”

5.115 God said: “I shall send it down upon you. Whoso among you disbelieves hereafter, I shall torment him with a torment the like of which I shall torment no other human being.”

5.109 (Rappelle-toi) le jour où Allah rassemblera (tous) les messagers, et qu’Il dira: «Que vous a-t-on donné comme réponse?» Ils diront: «Nous n’avons aucun savoir: c’est Toi, vraiment, le grand connaisseur de tout ce qui est inconnu».

5.110 Et quand Allah dira: «O Jésus, fils de Marie, rappelle-toi Mon bienfait sur toi et sur ta mère quand Je te fortifiais du Saint-Esprit. Au berceau tu parlais aux gens, tout comme en ton âge mûr. Je t’enseignais le Livre, la Sagesse, la Thora et l’Evangile! Tu fabriquais de l’argile comme une forme d’oiseau par Ma permission; puis tu soufflais dedans. Alors par Ma permission, elle devenait oiseau. Et tu guérissais par Ma permission, l’aveugle-né et le lépreux. Et par Ma permission, tu faisais revivre les morts. Je te protégeais contre les Enfants d’Israël pendant que tu leur apportais les preuves. Mais ceux d’entre eux qui ne croyaient pas dirent: «Ceci n’est que de la magie évidente».

5.111 Et quand J’ai révélé aux Apôtres ceci: «Croyez en Moi et en Mon messager (Jésus)». Ils dirent: «Nous croyons; et atteste que nous sommes entièrement soumis».

5.112 Rappelle-toi le moment) où les Apôtres dirent: «O Jésus, fils de Marie, se peut-il que ton Seigneur fasse descendre sur nous du ciel une table servie?» Il leur dit: « Craignez plutôt Allah, si vous êtes croyants».

5.113 Ils dirent: «Nous voulons en manger, rassurer ainsi nos cours, savoir que tu nous as réellement dit la vérité et en être parmi les témoins».

5.114 «O Allah, notre Seigneur, dit Jésus, fils de Marie, fais descendre du ciel sur nous une table servie qui soit une fête pour nous, pour le premier d’entre nous, comme pour le dernier, ainsi qu’un signe de Ta part. Nourris-nous: Tu es le meilleur des nourrisseurs.»

5.115 «Oui, dit Allah, Je la ferai descendre sur vous. Mais ensuite, quiconque d’entre vous refuse de croire, Je le châtierai d’un châtiment dont Je ne châtierai personne d’autre dans l’univers.»

5.116 (Rappelle-leur) le moment où Allah dira: «O Jésus, fils de Marie, est-ce toi qui as dit aux

5.116 Remember when God said to Jesus son of Mary: "Did you really say to people 'Take me and my mother as two gods, instead of God'?" He said: "Glory be to You! What right have I to assert what does not in truth belong to me?

If I had said it, You would have known it; You know what is in my soul and I know not what is in Your soul,

For it is You who are the All-Knower of the Unseen.

5.117 I said nothing to them except what You commanded me:

'Worship God, my Lord and your Lord.'

I was a witness to them while I lived among them,

But when You caused me to die, it was You who was watcher over them.

You are a witness over all things.

5.118 If you torment them, they are Your servants,

And if You forgive them, it is You who are Almighty, All-Wise."

5.119 God said: "This is a day when the truthful profit from their truthfulness. For them shall be Gardens beneath which rivers flow, dwelling therein for ever and ever. God is well-pleased with them and they are well-pleased with Him. This is the greatest of triumphs."

5.120 To God belongs sovereignty of the heavens and the earth and what lies therein. God is Omnipotent.

gens: «Prenez-moi, ainsi que ma mère, pour deux divinités en dehors d'Allah?» Il dira: «Gloire et pureté à Toi! Il ne m'appartient pas de déclarer ce que je n'ai pas le droit de dire! Si je l'avais dit, Tu l'aurais su, certes. Tu sais ce qu'il y a en moi, et je ne sais pas ce qu'il y a en Toi. Tu es, en vérité, le grand connaisseur de tout ce qui est inconnu.

5.117 Je ne leur ai dit que ce que Tu m'avais commandé, (à savoir): «Adorez Allah, mon Seigneur et votre Seigneur». Et je fus témoin contre eux aussi longtemps que je fus parmi eux. Puis quand Tu m'as rappelé, c'est Toi qui fus leur observateur attentif. Et Tu es témoin de toute chose.

5.118 Si Tu les châties, ils sont Tes serviteurs. Et si Tu leur pardones, c'est Toi le Puissant, le Sage».

5.119 Allah dira: «Voilà le jour où leur véracité va profiter aux véridiques: ils auront des Jardins sous lesquels coulent les ruisseaux pour y demeurer éternellement.» Allah les a agréés et eux L'ont agréé. Voilà l'énorme succès.

5.120 A Allah seul appartient le royaume des cieux, de la terre et de ce qu'ils renferment. Et Il est Omnipotent.

سورة المائدة

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا عَلَيْكُمْ أَنْفُسَكُمْ لَا يَضُرُّكُمْ مَنْ ضَلَّ إِذَا اهْتَدَيْتُمْ إِلَى اللَّهِ مَرْجِعُكُمْ جَمِيعًا فَيُنَبِّئُكُمْ بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ (105) يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا شَهَادَةُ بَيْنِكُمْ إِذَا حَضَرَ أَحَدُكُمْ الْمَوْتُ حِينَ الْوَصِيَّةِ اثْنَانِ ذُوَا عَدْلٍ مِنْكُمْ أَوْ آخَرَانِ مِنْ غَيْرِكُمْ إِنْ أَنْتُمْ صَرِيحُونَ فِي الْأَرْضِ فَاصْبِرْ لِحُكْمِ اللَّهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُشْرِكُ بِهِ شَيْئًا وَلَهُ كَانَ ذَا قُرْبَىٰ وَلَا تَكْفُرْ بِاللَّهِ إِنَّهُ إِذَا لَمِنَ الْأَثِمِينَ (106) فَإِنْ عَصَىٰ عَلَىٰ أَنْهَمَا اسْتَحَقَّا إِثْمًا فَآخَرَانِ يَقُومَانِ مَقَامَهُمَا مِنَ الَّذِينَ اسْتَحَقَّ عَلَيْهِمُ الْأَوْلِيَانِ فَيَقْسِمَانِ بِاللَّهِ لَشَهَادَتُنَا أَحَقُّ مِنْ شَهَادَتِهِمَا وَمَا اعْتَدَيْنَا إِنَّا إِذَا لَمِنَ الظَّالِمِينَ (107) ذَلِكَ أَدْنَىٰ أَنْ يَأْتُوا بِالشَّهَادَةِ عَلَىٰ وَجْهِهَا أَوْ يَخَافُوا أَنْ تَرَدَّ أَيْمَانُ بَعْدَ أَيْمَانِهِمْ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَاسْمَعُوا وَاللَّهُ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الْفَاسِقِينَ (108) يَوْمَ يَجْمَعُ اللَّهُ الرُّسُلَ فَيَقُولُ مَاذَا أُجِبْتُمْ قَالُوا لَا عِلْمَ لَنَا بِكَ أَنْتَ عَلَّامُ الْغُيُوبِ (109) إِذْ قَالَ اللَّهُ يَا عِيسَى ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ اذْكُرْ نِعْمَتِي عَلَيْكَ وَعَلَىٰ الذِّكْرِ إِذْ أَنْذَرْتُكَ بِرُوحِ الْقُدُسِ نَكَلَّمَ النَّاسَ فِي الْمَهْدِ وَكَهْلًا وَإِذْ عَلَّمْتُكَ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ وَالتَّوْرَةَ وَالْإِنْجِيلَ وَإِذْ تَخَلَّقُ مِنَ الطِّينِ كَهَيْئَةِ الطَّيْرِ بِإِذْنِي فَتَنْفُخُ فِيهَا فَتَكُونُ طَيْرًا بِإِذْنِي وَتُبْرِئُ الْأَكْمَةَ وَالْأَبْرَصَ بِإِذْنِي وَإِذْ تُخْرَجُ الْمَوْتَىٰ بِإِذْنِي وَإِذْ كَفَفْتُ بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ عَنكَ إِذْ جُنَّتْهُمْ بِالْبَيْتَاتِ فَقَالَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْهُمْ إِنْ هَذَا إِلَّا سِحْرٌ مُبِينٌ (110) وَإِذْ أُوحِيَتْ إِلَىٰ الْحَوَارِيِّينَ أَنْ آمِنُوا بِي وَبِرَسُولِي قَالُوا آمَنَّا وَاشْهَدْ بِأَنَّنَا مُسْلِمُونَ (111) إِذْ قَالَ الْحَوَارِيُّونَ يَا عِيسَى ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ هَلْ يَسْتَطِيعُ رَبُّكَ أَنْ يُنَزِّلَ عَلَيْنَا مَائِدَةً مِنَ السَّمَاءِ قَالَ اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ (112) قَالُوا نُرِيدُ أَنْ نَأْكُلَ مِنْهَا وَتَطْمَئِنَّ قُلُوبُنَا وَنَعْلَمَ أَنْ قَدْ صَدَّقْتَنَا وَنَكُونَ عَلَيْهَا مِنَ الشَّاهِدِينَ (113) قَالَ عِيسَى ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ اللَّهُمَّ رَبَّنَا أَنْزِلْ عَلَيْنَا مَائِدَةً مِنَ السَّمَاءِ تَكُونَ لَنَا عِيدًا لِأَوْلَانَا وَأَجْرِنَا وَأَيَّةَ مِنْكَ وَارزُقْنَا وَأَنْتَ خَيْرُ الرَّازِقِينَ (114) قَالَ اللَّهُ إِنِّي مَرْسَلُهَا عَلَيْكُمْ فَأَمَّا كَفَرُوا مِنْكُمْ

فَأَيُّ أَعْدَبُهُ عَدَابًا لَا أُعَدِّبُهُ أَحَدًا مِنَ الْعَالَمِينَ (115) وَإِذْ قَالَ اللَّهُ يَا عِيسَى ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ اأَنْتَ قُلْتَ لِلنَّاسِ اتَّخِذُونِي وَأُمَّي الْهَيْئِ مِنْ ذُنُوبِ اللَّهِ قَالَ سُبْحَانَكَ مَا يَكُونُ لِي أَنْ أَقُولَ مَا لَيْسَ لِي بِحَقِّ إِنْ كُنْتُ قُلْتُهُ فَقَدْ عَلِمْتَهُ تَعَلَّمَ مَا فِي نَفْسِي وَلَا أَعْلَمُ مَا فِي نَفْسِكَ إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ عَلَّامُ الْغُيُوبِ (116) مَا قُلْتُ لَهُمْ إِلَّا مَا أَمَرْتَنِي بِهِ أَنْ اعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ رَبِّي وَرَبَّكُمْ وَكُنْتُمْ عَلَيْهِمْ شَهِيدًا مَا دُمْتُمْ فِيهِمْ فَلَمَّا تَوَفَّيْتَنِي كُنْتُ أَنْتَ الرَّقِيبَ عَلَيْهِمْ وَأَنْتَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ شَهِيدٌ (117) إِنْ تُعَذِّبُهُمْ فَإِنَّهُمْ عَبْدُكَ وَإِنْ تُغْفِرْ لَهُمْ فَإِنَّكَ أَنْتَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ (118) قَالَ اللَّهُ هَذَا يَوْمٌ يَنْفَعُ الصَّادِقِينَ صِدْقُهُمْ لَهُمْ جَنَّاتٌ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا أَبَدًا رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ وَرَضُوا عَنْهُ ذَلِكَ الْفَوْزُ الْعَظِيمُ (119) لِلَّهِ مَلَكُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَمَا فِيهِنَّ وَهُوَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ (120)

Cuypers

Les vv. 5:109–120 contiennent trois passages, disposés de manière concentrique (ABA'), évoquant trois temps ou moments de la vie de Jésus : [1] l'enfance et la vie publique (vv. 109–111) ; [2] la promesse de la nourriture céleste, allusion à la Cène (vv. 112–115) ; [3] le Jugement de Jésus par Dieu (vv. 116–120).

Le premier passage reprend des données de deux apocryphes : la *Vie de Jésus en arabe* et l'*Histoire de l'enfance de Jésus*.

Le deuxième passage ne doit pas être mis en relation, comme certains le font, avec la vision de Pierre dans les Actes des Apôtres (chap. 10) ni avec les récits de la multiplication des pains, dans les évangiles (par ex. Matt 14:13–21 et 15:32–39), mais avec le « Discours du pain de vie », dans Jean, chap. 6, dont il reprend nombre d'éléments. Le récit coranique est un récit de discours, non d'action, comme Jn 6 : dans aucun de ces deux récits la nourriture n'est donnée, sinon en promesse. Jn 6 cite le v. 24 du Ps 78 : « Il leur a donné à manger le pain du ciel (la manne) » ; le Coran en cite un autre, du même psaume : « Est-il capable, Dieu, de dresser une table au désert ? » (Ps 78:19), qui devient, dans le Coran : « Est-ce que ton Seigneur peut faire descendre vers nous une table du ciel ? » (Q 5:112). Ces versets du Ps 78, dans les deux textes (Jean et Coran), font allusion au livre de l'Exode. Il en va de même pour le verset suivant du Coran : « Elle [la nourriture céleste] sera pour nous une fête, pour les premiers d'entre nous et pour les derniers d'entre nous » (Q 5:114) // « vous le fêterez... dans vos générations, c'est un décret perpétuel » (Ex 12:14).

Le troisième passage se situe dans l'au-delà. Au centre exact de ce passage, Jésus atteste devant Dieu le caractère parfaitement monothéiste de son enseignement, contre ceux qui le divinisèrent : « Je ne leur ai dit que ce que tu m'as commandé : "Adorez Dieu, mon Seigneur et votre Seigneur." C'est sur cette affirmation solennelle de Jésus que se termine la sourate *al-Mā'ida*, qui se présente comme un texte testament qui clôt la prédication mohammadienne.

Dye

Le v. 110 doit être rapproché d'autres épisodes du Coran parlant de Jésus, notamment Q 3:42–55 et Q 61:6. Tout se passe comme si le rédacteur du verset entendait résumer en quelques lignes les traits saillants de la carrière prophétique de Jésus, *telle que le Coran la raconte*. On peut s'interroger sur la date à laquelle ce passage a été com-

posé : la tradition musulmane le situe à la fin de la période médinoise, mais je ne serais pas surpris s'il s'avérait qu'il a été composé après la mort du Prophète, probablement peu de temps avant la collecte – ou plutôt de la composition – du Coran.

Comme l'ont remarqué Reynolds (2012a) et Cuypers (2007: 340–358), l'épisode de la « table servie » fait un usage créatif de péripetie bibliques (Ps 78:19, Exod 16–17) et évangélique (John 6:22–71, dont le sous-texte est précisément constitué par les deux passages bibliques mentionnés précédemment), mais dans une perspective antichrétienne. L'abondance de termes empruntés au guèze (*inğil*, *hawāriyy*, *mā'ida*) est frappante.

V. 116 : ce verset a donné lieu à de nombreuses spéculations. On a ainsi imaginé des adorateurs arabes de Marie, qui seraient les cibles de ce verset, ou on y a vu une preuve de la méconnaissance du christianisme de la part de l'auteur du Coran, qui ferait de Marie une des personnes de la Trinité. Il me semble plutôt qu'il faut voir ici un argument polémique, une *réduction à l'absurde* des discours chrétiens, qui peut opérer de deux manières (on peut bien sûr aussi y voir une polémique contre les pratiques culturelles chrétiennes). Soit : puisque Jésus a été engendré par l'Esprit saint, et que les chrétiens persistent à appeler Jésus « fils de Dieu », alors, si Dieu est le père, l'Esprit saint (l'arabe *rūḥ* est féminin, comme le sont les termes apparentés en hébreu ou en araméen), par lequel Jésus a été engendré (Luke 1:35), doit être la mère (cf. Gallez 2005: 74–83). « Soit, plus plausiblement : vous (chrétiens) » faites de Jésus Dieu et le fils de Dieu, et par conséquent, vous devez aussi faire de Marie, dont vous dites qu'elle est la mère de Dieu, un être divin. « L'objection rappelle les polémiques nestoriennes contre la thèse de Marie Theotokos (Marie, mère de Dieu) »

El-Badawi

Q 5:110–15 is the Qur'ān's take on the Last Supper from Christian Scripture and tradition. This episode immediately shifts to narrating God's questioning of Jesus, the son of Mary (Q 5:116–20), nullifying what appears to be, on the surface, the worship of a Trinity or Duality (?) composed of "Jesus and his mother." This wording is striking and may point towards the devotion of 'Mother and Child.' Icons of the Madonna and baby Jesus have been a staple of the Eastern Orthodox Church since Late Antiquity. Since then as well, the feast known as the "Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God (Greek *theotokos*)" has been celebrated in the East on January 1, just before Christmas on January 6 or 7. How much of this is being criticized by Q 5:116–20 is unclear given the brevity characteristic of such Qur'ānic language.

Pregill

Contains many details featured in the description of Jesus' life in Q 3:45–57, but what was prophecy in that *sūra* is now a retrospective narration of a conversation between God and Jesus – one that will, however, take place in the eschatological future (a

context established in v. 109). Comparison of the two passages demonstrates the Qur'ān's sophisticated use of different temporal frames in its narratology.

The *mā'ida* passage (vv. 112–115) is quite clearly not eucharistic but rather describes the waywardness of the disciples (cf. Q 3:52–53) who here demand a kind of evidentiary miracle from Jesus; as Reynolds 2012a masterfully demonstrates, the subtext is a comparison with Moses' provision of the Israelites in the desert, with the specific literary intertext here provided by Psalm 78:19, almost indisputably channeled through Ethiopic (Hebrew *shulḥan* → Ge'ez *mā'edd*), especially given that *mā'ida* is a near-*hapax*, occurring only twice, and only in this passage (vv. 112, 114). The threat against those who disbelieve after being given this sign (v. 115) is indeed ominous given the following allusion to the Christians' unjust deification of Jesus and Mary. The whole passage seems tailored to exonerate the prophets of the crimes of their followers (and underscore the latter), with Jesus the prime example. The forensic quality of the exchange is foreshadowed in v. 109 and confirmed in v. 116.

Reynolds

For my analysis of the *mā'ida* passage (vv. 112–115), and its connection to Ethiopic Psalm 78:19 see Reynolds 2012a. In verse 111 (*wa-iḍ awḥaytu ilā al-ḥawāriyyīna an āminū bī wa-bi-rasūlī*) the Qur'ān has God remember the *waḥy* He once gave to the apostles. Traditional commentators generally define this as a different sort of *waḥy* from the revelation given to prophets, comparing it, for example, to the *waḥy* which God gives to the bees (Q 16:68) or to the earth (Q 99:5). However, the Qur'ān suggests here that the apostles' *waḥy* was verbal dictation (i.e. God said to them: “*āminū bī wa-bi-rasūlī*”; one might compare the *waḥy* given to Moses' mother in Q 28:7). Thus it may be that the Qur'ān's understanding of revelation is more expansive than is often assumed.

Tesei

The sentence *ḡannātun taḡrī min taḥtiḥā l-anhāru* (v. 119) should be related to a cosmological concept fairly widespread during Late Antiquity, according to which the rivers of Paradise reach the inhabited part of the world by flowing under the sea. The expression *min taḥtiḥā* would represent an allusion to both the place of origin and the subterranean course of the paradisiacal rivers. The presence of the determinative article before the word *anhār* suggests that the Qur'ān is here speaking of *all* the rivers. This would reflect the ancient Near Eastern (and Biblical) idea that the rivers of the Earth have a divine origin and a source located in a paradisiacal land. This view is consistent with Toelle's observation that the Qur'ān implies a direct relationship between the sweet waters of Paradise and that of the Earth, as the paradisiacal and terrestrial watercourses are indicated through the same terminology (Toelle 1999: 122). The cosmological notion of the underground course of the rivers of Paradise

goes back at least to Ephrem, according to whom the rivers enter the sea surrounding Paradise “as it were down a water pipe and after passing through the ground beneath the sea they reach this earth” (1994: 101). Much the same idea is expressed by Philostorgius (*Church History*, III, 10), Severian of Gabala (*Homilies on Creation and Fall*, V), Epiphanius of Salamis (*Ancoratus*, 58:1–8), Augustine (*Literal Meaning of Genesis*, 7:14; Cf. Philo of Alexandria, *Questions and Answers on Genesis*, I, 12) and Cosmas Indicopleustes (*Christian Topography*, II, 81). Narsai refers to a very similar concept about the course of the rivers from Paradise, which – he states – is “like a tunnel in the sea” (1968: I, 395–6). The Qur’ān more explicitly alludes to this same cosmological notion in Q 18:61, where a fish is said to take its way through a tunnel/subterranean passage (*sarab*) in the sea. The episode of the fish’s escape is related to the theme of the paradisiacal rivers through the Alexander legend of the water of life, that is evoked in Q 18:60–65 (cf. Tesei 2014a).

Younes

[1] This passage includes a number of beautifully crafted phrases and sentences which strike the reader, and probably even more, the listener, with their careful choice of words repeated at regular intervals. For instance, the particle *id* is used in the first verse of the passage (v. 110) seven times, while the word *bi’idni*, which includes the sounds of *id* in it, is repeated at the end of four phrases in the same verse. Such language must have had and probably continues to have a special effect on the reader/hearer of the Qur’ān.

[2] The phrase *rūḥ al-quḍus* (also found in Q2: 87, 253, and Q16: 102) is probably a borrowing from a sister Semitic language. In English translations of the Qur’ān, e.g. Pickthall, the phrase is translated as “the holy spirit.” This translation fails to reflect the original structure, which is a construct phrase, more correctly translated as “the spirit of the holy,” as in the Hebrew *ruaḥ ha-kōdeš*.

Zellentín

The Qur’ān’s table *min al-samā’*, “from heaven,” and the promised festival of the disciples, may echo a series of rabbinic and Syriac traditions. In the Babylonian Talmud, to begin with, a “table of fire... descended from heaven (*mn hšmyḡm*, Menahot 29b),” serving as a model for the table Moses then makes for the tabernacle. This is the only actual table from heaven of which I am aware in late antique literature. In the Syriac *Gospel of the Twelve Apostles*, however, Jesus’ disciples gather, and some object is placed in front of them that is *mlyn kl ṭwbyḡn*, “full of all good things” (Harris 1900: 9) which Jesus himself had eaten. The manuscript is torn here, yet regardless of whether or not this object is a *ptwr’*, “a banquet table,” as is Harris’ conjecture, it is clear that the Qur’ān presupposes knowledge of a similar event that the disciples witnessed. It is furthermore remarkable that in the same *sūra* at hand, the cognate Arabic root *T-Y-B*, “good things,” is repeatedly used to describe the foods the Qur’ān per-

mits (Q 5:5, 87 and 88), in explicit reference to Jesus' partial abrogation of Jewish food laws (Q 3:50).

I would suggest, *pace* many others, that the pertinence of the symbolic breaching of food laws in Acts 10:6–16 (where it sanctions the inclusion of “impure” gentiles) should therefore not be entirely dismissed from consideration in the present context. The most relevant recorded passage against which to hear the Qur'ān here, however, as remarked by Cuypers and Reynolds, is surely Jesus' disciples' explicit demand for the “bread of God ... which came down from heaven” in John 6:27–52. This becomes clear especially when considering the passage as recorded by the *Diatessaron* 19:16–35. The disciple's request here is similar to their demand in the Qur'ān to “send down to us a table from the heavens” (v. 112). Moreover, this Gospel passage shares with the Qur'ānic passage under discussion a discourse on Jesus' “signs,” on “faith,” “unbelief,” “witness,” and on the Jew's actions against Jesus. The *Diatessaron*'s commands to “*tu'minū bi-man ārsala*,” “believe in him whom [God] has sent” (Ciasca 1888:75, the Arabic *editio princeps*, the Syriac *Diatessaron* is lost, the Peshitta has *d-thymnwn b-mn d-hw šdr*),” that is in Jesus, is repeated and slightly amended in the Qur'ān by God's command to *'āminū bī wa-bi-rasūlī* “believe in Me and in My apostle,” that is in God and Jesus. While the language of the Arabic *Diatessaron* is of course likely influenced by the Qur'ān, the direction of “influence” would if anything be inverted when it comes to the message: In both texts, food from heaven is then actually sent, with the remarkable difference that in the *Diatessaron* the climax is that Jesus himself is the heavenly food and the object of belief, whereas in the Qur'ān, the heavenly food is a sign that leads to belief in God and in Jesus' mission. If read against texts such as Acts and John, the Qur'ān's shift becomes not an anti-Christian, but an anti-Christological statement and a clear response to the (likely oral) Christian tradition.