



# Biblaridion

## Pre-Islamic Arabia

*"The political, social, cultural and religious factors in pre-Islamic Arabia that aided the rise of Islam"*

## Introduction

In order to assess the pre-Islamic factors that contributed to the rise of Islam we must first define what we understand as pre-Islamic. The most natural assumption is that the Islamic period began with its founder Mohammed, but the Islamic civilization that conquered the world, adopted Arabic as its holy language, and wrote the Qur'ān is of later origins and even those are ambiguous. [1] The present writer believes that the establishment of the Qur'ān as the authoritative text of Islam is the *terminus ad quem* of the pre-Islamic period. Until the destruction of divergent collections under Uthman the situation was still fluid. [2] The third Caliph becomes the filter through which we understand Islam; to all intents and purposes he becomes the founder of orthodox Islam. We have therefore, used the death of Uthman (ca. 655 AD) as the end of the "pre-Islamic" period. [3]

## The Influence of Trade

In the ancient (and modern) world economic activity and commercial considerations necessitated the first contacts with the outside; this in turn led to cultural exchange and foreign influences. It is significant that Mohammed

spent his early life engaged in "caravan trade", for Arabia was known for the spice trade, particularly frankincense and myrrh, which brought the equivalent wealth that oil export does nowadays. [4] However, Arabia lost its monopoly on the spice trade in the first and early second centuries, for it was cheaper to ship goods around the peninsula than to transport them across it. The discovery of the monsoon wind system made direct contact by sea between southern Arabia and India possible and revolutionized sea trade, the main beneficiary was the kingdom of Axum. Nevertheless, the overland routes were probably preferred during times of war or piracy. An Arab trade in leather goods existed with southern Syria and silver to Persia, but these were trivial in comparison with the spice trade. By the time of Mohammed, Arabian trade had long past its zenith but enough contact existed to ensure a cultural exchange with the civilized world that penetrated far into Arabia.

The Qur'ān reflects the languages found along the trade routes, Syriac, Hebrew, and Ethiopic [5] the Syriac influence on the phraseology of the Qur'ān can be seen on the proper names, religious terms, common words, orthography, construction of sentences, and foreign historical references. The proper names of Biblical individuals found in the Qur'ān are used in their Syriac form. [6] Other non-Arabic words originate from, Aramaic, Abyssinian, Nabataean, Coptic, Greek, and Turkish. The Qur'ān itself, as a word is a technical Syriac word meaning scriptural lesson or reading, imitated from the Syriac *Kiryān*. All the Biblical lessons to be read in the Churches are called by the Syrians *Kiryāns*. The Prophet (Mohamed) called simply his book by the word that was used to name the pericopes (selections from a book, lections) of the Revelation in the Christian Churches of his day ... The reading of the word without *hamzah* as *Kuran* (instead of *Kur'an*) is reminiscent of an earlier pronunciation *Kuryān* or *Kiryān* and that the *hamzah* pronunciation (*Kur'an*) is a late reading adopted to make the word more Arabic and in harmony with the root of the verb *kara'a*." [7]

## The Influence of the Jewish Diaspora

Perhaps the most significant factor influencing pre-Islamic culture and religion was the Jewish Diaspora. As early as Pentecost there was a Jewish presence in Arabia [8], and the apostle Paul himself had lived in Arabia for three years. The apostle's presence in Arabia is lost to antiquity and his whereabouts will probably never be historically established [9], but that there was a Jewish presence very early on is verifiable, for in Muhammad's lifetime we encounter settled tribes. [10]

Safiy Al-Rahman Al-Mubarakfoury writes of the Jews in Medina (Yathrib), Taima'a and Khaibar, that their religion arrived in Arabia during the Babylonian and Ashorian conquests in Palestine and the pressure and persecution of the Jews there, which made them flee to various areas. A similar migration by the Jews came to Arabia from Palestine when the Romans destroyed Jerusalem. Judaism spread amongst the Arabs of Hijaz from the contact they had with the Jewish tribes that settled in Arabia. Judaism also entered into Yemen through Tabban Asad Abi Karb. The Jews set up villages in the areas that they inhabited and worked in agriculture and some trades. [11]

Maududi writes: "In the matter of language, dress, civilization and way of life they had completely adopted Arabism, even their names had become Arabian. Of the 12 Jewish tribes that had settled in Hejaz, none except the Bani Zaura retained its Hebrew name. Except for a few scattered scholars none knew Hebrew. In fact, there is nothing in the poetry of the Jewish poets of the pre-Islamic days to distinguish it from the poetry of the Arab poets in language, ideas and themes. They even inter-married with the Arabs. In fact, nothing distinguished them from the common Arabs **except religion** (my emphasis). Because of this Arabism the western orientalisists have been misled into thinking that perhaps they were not really Israelites but Arabs who had

embraced Judaism, or that at least majority of them consisted of the Arab Jews." [\[12\]](#)

For obvious reasons many Muslim apologists downplay the importance and the number of the Jews of Medina. They are often portrayed as treacherous and hypocritical but the only source available for these claims is the Qur'ān and early Muslim writings. [\[13\]](#)

## The Christian influence

Christianity in Arabia had three in centers in the north-west, north-east, and south-west of the peninsula. The first embraces the Kingdom of Ghassan (under Roman rule), the second that of Hira (under Persian power), and the third the kingdoms of Himyar, Yemen, and Najran (under Abyssinian rule). [\[14\]](#) Arabia came into contact with all three major sections of Christianity: Byzantine, Nestorian and Jacobite-Monophysite [\[15\]](#) churches. [\[16\]](#) In 523 AD the Ethiopian king, or Negus, alleviated the persecution and slaughter of some 20,000 Christians by annexing Yemen under the governorship of Abraha, who in turn rebelled and set up a virtually independent state. Abraha initiated a failed attempt (*ca.* 540-546 AD) to Christianise Mecca. [\[17\]](#)

According to Al-Mubarakfoury, Christianity entered Hejaz after occupation of Yemen by the Ethiopians and Romans. A Christian priest called "Femion" (فيميون) came into Najran and called the people to Christianity and some of them accepted it and became Christians. It is also known that other Arabs embraced Christianity in other areas of the Middle East such as "Al-Ghasaniyeen", Taghlib tribes, Tay'a and others who were close to the Roman Empire's influence. [\[18\]](#) Trimmingham, observes that a number of nomad Arabs in the valley of the Euphrates accepted Christianity because they were

attracted to the Christian faith by the power that the Christian monks and hermits exercised over the evil spirits in the name of Jesus. [19] The desert Arabs were superstitious and afraid of evil spirits the later *jinn* of the Qur'ān. According to Trimmingham, the ruler of Edessa, king Abgar who became a Christian, was of Arab origin. Edessa became an important center of Nestorian Christianity. According to O'Leary the heritage of Greek science and philosophy was passed on to the Arabs by the Nestorian Church, "from the time of Maraba onwards there is fairly continuous evidence of translation from the Greek and of work in Aristotelian logic." [20] Tradition even relates that Mohammed encountered a monk named Nestor who predicted his calling:

"Wadi I-Qura', a little to the north-east of Medina, an outpost of the Romans garrisoned, not by Roman troops, but by auxiliaries of the Qoda' tribes. In the time of Muhammad, most of these tribes were Christian, and over the whole wadi were scattered monasteries, cells, and hermitages. From this as their headquarters Nestorian monks wandered through Arabia, visiting the great fairs and preaching to such as were willing to listen to them. Tradition relates that the Prophet as a young man went to Syria and near Bostra was recognized as one predestined to be a prophet by a monk named Nestor (Ibn Sa'd, Itqan, ii, p. 367). Perhaps this may refer to some contact with a Nestorian monk. The chief Christian stronghold in Arabia was the city of Najran, but that was mainly Monophysite. What was called its Ka'ba seems to have been a Christian cathedral." [21]

Although the above account is probably legendary, it reflects the growing Nestorian influence in the peninsula. The Nestorian Church was above all a missionary Church, in the *Foreword to "Nestorian Missionary Enterprise*, Zwemer remarks: "Professor Tore Andre, of the University of Upsala, has shown in his recent study of Christian origins of Islam... that the opinion hitherto current, of sundry heretical sects to which Muhammad was indebted for his Christian ideas, is a mistaken one. He directs attention to the great church of Asia, the Nestorian Church, as the prime source of Christian thought and life in pre-Islamic Arabia. There are many points of similarity between

Muslim teachings and Nestorian Christianity, but the circle of ideas most prominent and characteristic, according to Tore Andre, is eschatology with its extraordinary stress on the Day of Judgment." [22]

## The Pagan influence

The period before the coming of Mohamed and Islam, is known as the *Jahiliyah*, the time of ignorance, but as we have observed this is not strictly true, as Christianity and Judaism had already made inroads in the region. Nevertheless, the bulk of the population still practised paganism, elements of which have been absorbed by Islam. Herodotus already attests Allat, a goddess prominent in the time of Muhammad, in the fifth century BC. The dominant religion that had grown very powerful just before Muhammad's time was that of the Sabeans. The Sabeans had an astral religion in which they worshipped the heavenly bodies. The moon was viewed as a male deity and the sun as the female deity. They used a lunar calendar to regulate their religious rites. For example, a month of fasting was regulated by the phases of the moon. The Sabean pagan rite of fasting began with the appearance of a crescent moon and did not cease until the crescent moon reappeared. [23]

The bull-God Sin was worshipped in parts of Arabia since ancient times, and some speculate that Sin was the origin of the golden calf erected by the Hebrews at Mount Sinai. Arab paganism is a bewildering mixture of animism, evil spirits, fertility cults, worship of inanimate objects and heavenly bodies. Particularly notable is a fetish for worshipping stones; Tore Andrae observes "The most famous of all of the stone fetishes of Arabia was, of course, the black stone in the sanctuary of Mecca. The Ka'ba was, and still is, a rectangular stone structure. Built into its Eastern corner is the black stone which had been an object of worship for many centuries before Mohammed appropriated the Ka'ba for his new religion, and made the pilgrimage to this holy place one of the pillars of Islam." [24]

## Socio-Economic factors in Pre-Islam

Rarely has the assessment of a people's character and destiny been as succinct and accurate as the prophetic pronouncement on the descendents of Ishmael, vouched safe to us at least 2,700 years ago in Genesis:

*"And he will be a wild man; his hand [will be] against every man, and every man's hand against him; and he shall dwell in the presence of all his brethren"* (16:12) [\[25\]](#)

Sayed Ali Asgher Razwy sums up the Arab character as follows, "All Arabs were notorious for certain characteristics such as arrogance, conceit, boastfulness, vindictiveness and excessive love of plunder. Their arrogance was partly responsible for their failure to establish a state of their own. They lacked political discipline, and until the rise of Islam, never acknowledged any authority as paramount in Arabia...to them, war was a pastime or rather a dangerous sport, or a species of tribal drama, waged by professionals." He quotes G. E. Grunebaum (*Classical Islam – A History 600-1258 – 1970*) "In the century before the rise of Islam the tribes dissipated all their energies in tribal guerrilla fighting, all against all." Sayed Ali Asgher Razwy comments on the total lack of restraint, complete absence of any law (apart from tribal vendetta's), anarchy, deficiency of political activity and general ungovernability of the Arabs. [\[26\]](#) This over harsh assessment of the Arab character (by an Islamic author) is probably exaggerated to emphasize Mohammed's achievement in uniting the tribes; nevertheless, his comments reflect a core of truth. The general lawlessness of pre-Islamic society may explain Islam's later obsession with *Shari'a*, especially the prohibition on alcohol and gambling.

Another factor causing instability was increasing urbanization creating an underclass of the dispossessed, no doubt accelerated by incidents such as the collapse of the Ma'rib dam [\[27\]](#) and general flooding in A. D. 450 or 451,

forced different tribes of the people of Saba to migrate to other parts of Arabia. Among them Aus and the Khazraj went to settle in Yathrib. These two were big tribes yet they were unskilled people. Unlike the Jews who practically were the master of all trades, and the owners of most businesses, Arabs in Yathrib made their living serving the Jews in their farms and households. They were looked down on, by their Jewish masters and this was the cause of resentment. [28] Forcing people into slavery or kidnapping women, and holding them in a harem, was the prerogative of tribal chieftains. Sayed Ali Asgher Razwy writes, "Slavery was an economic institution of the Arabs. Male and female slaves were sold and bought like animals, and they formed the most depressed class of the Arabian society. The most powerful class of the Arabs was made up by the capitalists and money-lenders. The rates of interest that they charged on loans was exorbitant, (200%) and were especially designed to make them richer and richer, and the borrowers poorer and poorer." [29]

## Conclusions

The Persians supported the Lakhmid dynasty, while the Byzantine Empire supported the Ghassanid princes, but these principalities were on the fringe of the Arabian Peninsula, which remained relatively untouched by the struggle between the "super powers." In the interior, Arabian society was still predominantly pagan, but monotheism made steady inroads into Arabian consciousness. We might have expected that Arabia would have come increasingly under the influence and control of one of the "super powers" and that despite its paganism it would eventually become Christianized. We would not have expected Arabia to pose a threat to the outside world; or for it to build both an empire and a religion to rival established religious and political powers.



When Mohammed appeared on the scene Arabia existed in a political vacuum, it was leaderless, lacked a national religion and was suffering social upheaval. For Arabia to become either Christian (Byzantine) or Zoroastrian (Persian) would have brought it under the control of the “super powers.” To favor one of the “old tribal” religions of Arabia would not have had the desired unifying effect, to adopt a ‘foreign religion’ meant ‘foreign influence’ but a new revelation, based on, and superseding the established models was an ideal solution. Not only did Islam draw on the growing trend towards monotheism, it legitimized Arabia’s political aspiration for imperialism, but did so in the guise of missionary zeal, thereby providing a constant source of wealth to support its ambitions.

Mohammed appeared at a time of opportunity and used religion as a political tool to unite the disparate tribes and establish a unique identity. Islam would no doubt have collapsed into internal squabbling among the fractious Arabian tribes, had it not been directed onto the path of temporal power and conquest.

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Author?(BASE institute), *Paul's Arabia* @ [http://www.baseinstitute.org/faqs/pauls\\_arabia.pdf](http://www.baseinstitute.org/faqs/pauls_arabia.pdf)  
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## Notes

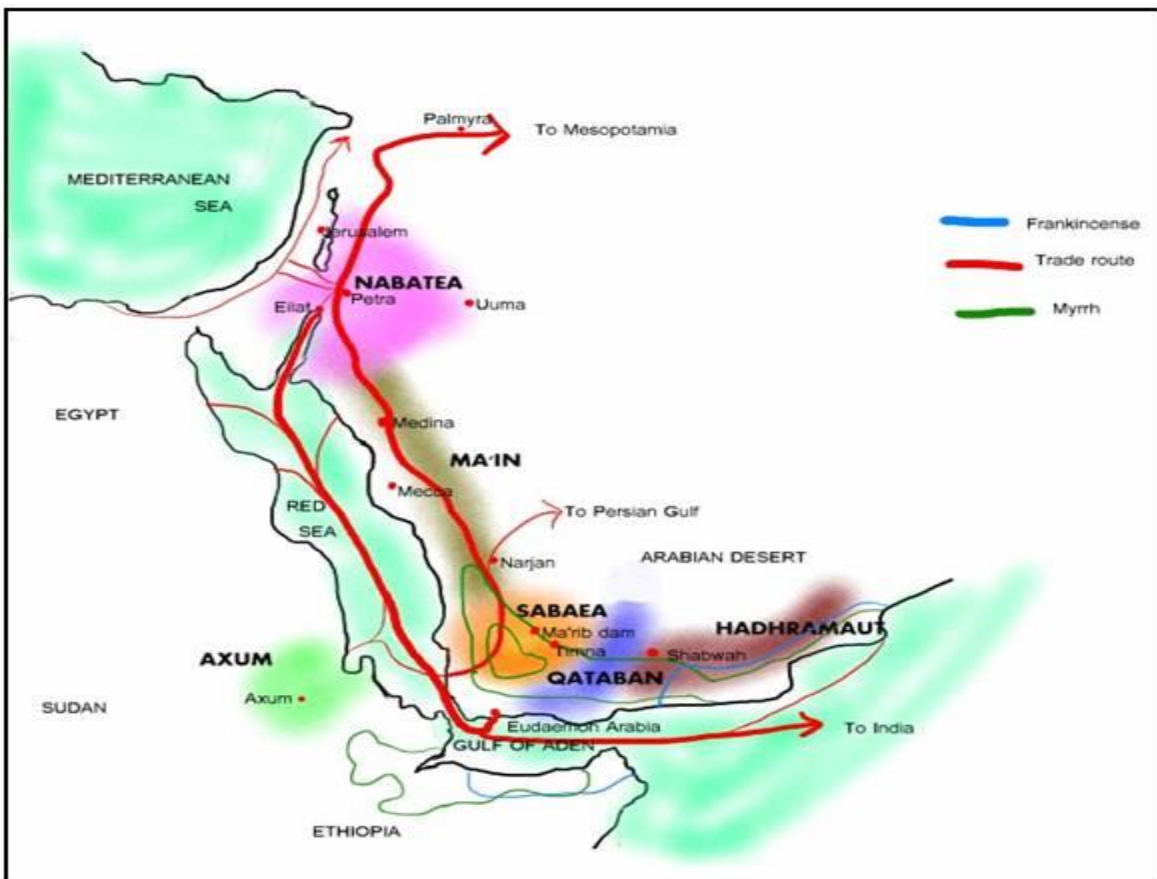
[1] "A new generation of historians argues there are simply too many problems with the source material to write a convincing history of early Islam, the Arab conquests, the early caliphs and the Umayyad dynasty. We can only be sure of the outlines. Contemporary Christian sources even offer differing dates for the death of the Prophet." **Andrew Hammond** Middle East Times staff @ <http://www.metimes.com/cens/c4.htm> [This report comes from the collection of Middle East Times stories censored in (Egypt) 1996, before the electronic edition went online.]

[2] Among these were the codices of Ubayy ibn Ka'b and Adullah ibn Mas'ud; the manuscript of Hafsah was also destroyed. [Thorpe, *The Bible and Islam*]

[3] R. Stephen Humphreys, writing in *Islamic History: A Framework for Inquiry* (1988) concisely summed up the issue that historians confront in studying early Islam. "If our goal is to comprehend the way in which Muslims of the late 2nd/8th and 3rd/9th centuries [Islamic calendar / Christian calendar] understood the origins of their society, then we are very well off indeed. But if our aim is to find out "what really happened," in terms of reliably documented answers to modern questions about the earliest decades of Islamic society, then we are in trouble."

[4] **THE INCENSE STATES:** The incense states of southern Arabia were linked to the prosperous cities of Egypt and the east Mediterranean by overland

routes. Use of the overland routes through arid regions became more regular after the introduction of camels, which could travel for longer periods without water than pack-asses and donkeys. For the most part the routes consisted of dusty desert tracks between settlements or waterholes, but within the kingdom themselves paved roads were built in some places. In the early centuries AD the increasing use of shipping, especially along the Red Sea, tipped the balance of power and prosperity in southern Arabia in favour of those states with control of the major ports such as Qana, Muza and Aden (Eudaemon Arabia). The sea routes were also used to bring exotic merchandise from India, taking advantage of the monsoon wind system. The principle beneficiary of these changes was not southern Arabia, however, but the East African kingdom of Axum.



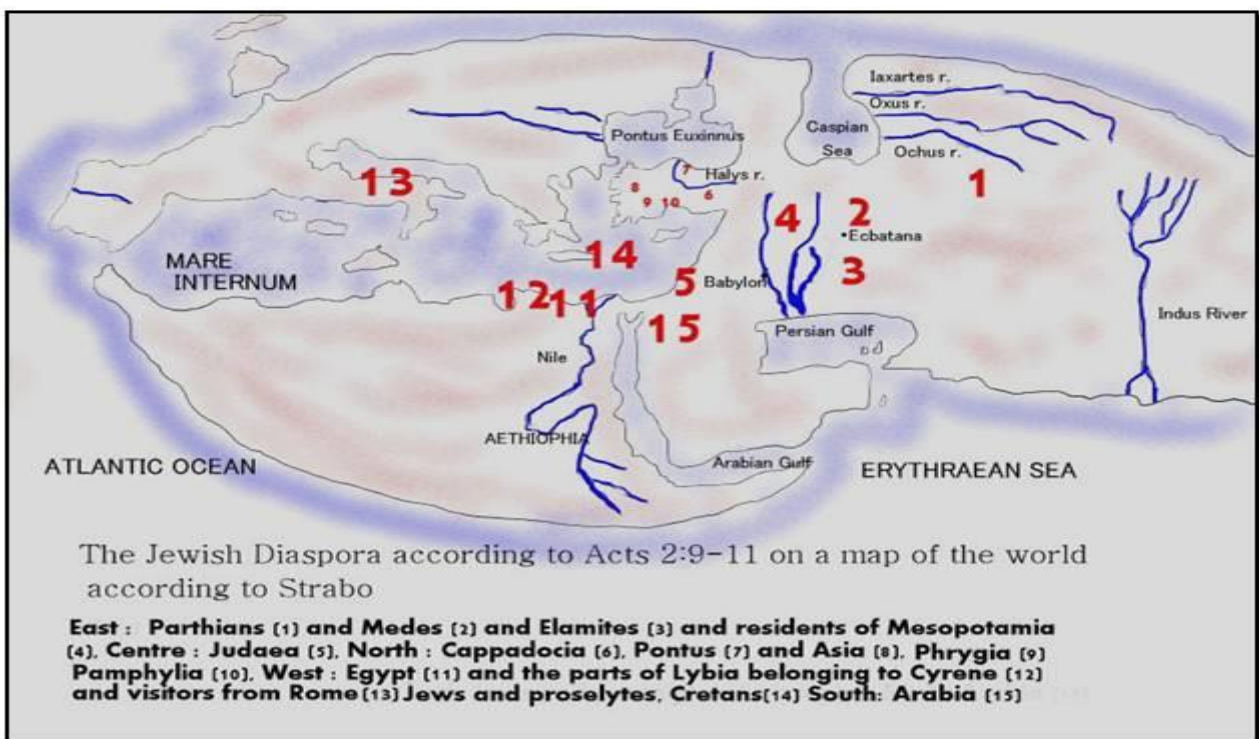
This map is drawn using a graphics tablet (not to scale), the source is, *Past Worlds, The Times Atlas of Archaeology*, p.184. For ancient accounts see Herodotus: [The Histories](#), c. 430 BCE: Strabo: [Geography](#), c. 22 CE: Dio Cassius: [History of Rome](#), c. 220 CE: Ammianus Marcellinus: [The Roman History](#), c. 380 CE: Procopius of Caesarea: [History of the Wars](#), c. 550 CE.

[5] "In this connection we may state with some confidence that taking the number 100 as a unit of the foreign influences on the style and terminology of the Kur'an Ethiopic would represent about 5 per cent of the total, Hebrew about 10 per cent the Graeco-Roman languages about 10 per cent. Persian about 5 per cent, and Syriac (including Aramaic and Palestinian Syriac) about 70 per cent." [Rev. Alphonse Mingana, D.D. *Syriac Influence On The Style Of The Kur'an*, John Rylands Library Bulletin, Manchester, 1927, volume 11, pages 77-98.]

[6] Solomon [*Šlemon, Süleyman*- the 'a' (aleph) before the 'n' is said to be a later addition of the scribes]; Pharaoh (*Fir'avn, Fir'avun*), Isaac (*İshak*), Ishmael (*İsma'il*), Israel (*İsra'il*), Jacob (*Yakup*), Noah (*Nuh*), Zachariah (*Zakarya, Zekarya*), and Mary (*Maryam*; in the Massoretic text it is Miryam. But Targum of Onkelos on Exodus 15:20 renders it as Maryam. Ethiopic is also Maryam). [Rev. Mingana, *ibid.*]

[7] Rev. Mingana, *ibid.*

[8] Acts 2:9-11. Approx AD 35.



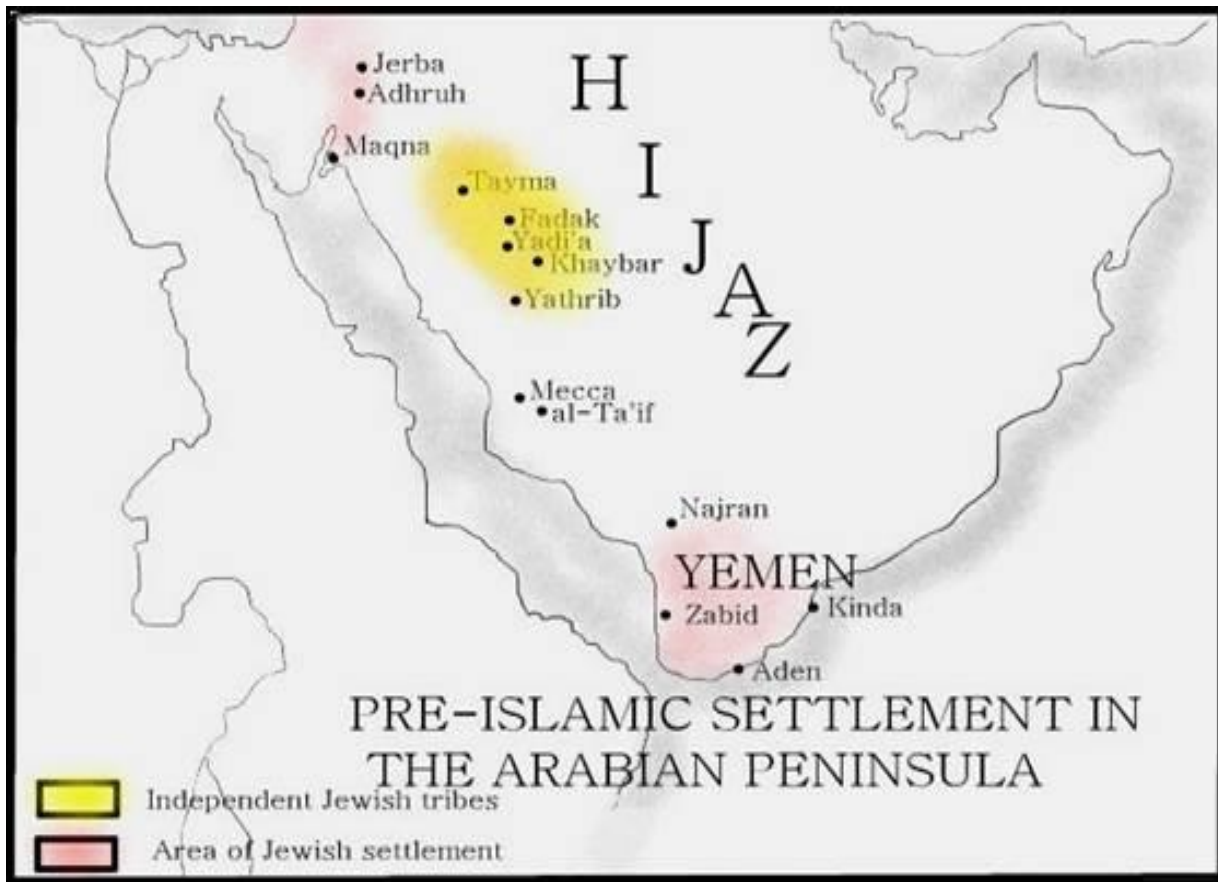
This map is drawn using a graphics tablet (not to scale), the source is, *The Book of Acts in its First Century Setting*, ed., Bruce de Winter (Vol.4, p.421). In the footnote R. Bauckham comments: "On Nabataea as 'Arabia' to 1<sup>st</sup> century Jews, see J. Murphy-O'Connor, 'Paul in Arabia', *CBQ* 55 (1993) 732-3. For Jews in Nabataea in the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD, see E. Schürer, *The History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus* (175BC-AD135), revised by G. Vermes, F. Millar and M. Goodman, vol. III, 1 (Edinburgh: T&T. Clark, 1986) 17.

[9] It is possible that the apostles stay in Arabia (Gal.4: 25) involved missionary work [so Légasse, *The Book of Acts in its First Century Setting*, (Vol.4, p.375 n.30)], Jerome, however, suggests that he may have gone to a tribe where his mission was unsuccessful as regards visible results. The Geographical setting of Arabia is often disputed here, some understand it as the Sinai Peninsula others as the area around Damascus [so Harnack, *Expansion of Christianity*, 1905, II, 301]. An article by the BASE institute argues cogently for the vicinity of *Jabal al Lawz* in Arabia proper as the location for Sinai and for Paul's stay.

[http://www.baseinstitute.org/faqs/pauls\\_arabia.pdf](http://www.baseinstitute.org/faqs/pauls_arabia.pdf).

My conclusion is that it would suit the apostle, who was a tent maker by trade, to dwell among the semi-nomadic Jewish and Arab tribes of the Hijaz. The apostle's revelations that he describes in 2 Cor.12: 1-10 may well have been received in Arabia (at *Jabal al Lawz*= Sinai?) Mohammed's night journey bears a resemblance to Paul's revelations. Zwemer's suggestion [*Arabia, the Cradle of Islam* (1900), 302-303] that the Qur'ānic allusion to a certain Nebi Salih, or the Prophet Salih, who is said to have come to the Arabs preaching the truth and was not listened to, and who, consequently, in leaving them said: "O my people, I did preach unto you the message of my Lord, and I gave you good advice, but ye love not sincere advisers" (Surah vii), refers to Paul of Tarsus, but is probably legendary.

[10] This map is drawn using a graphics tablet (not to scale), source, *Atlas of Jewish History*, p.73.



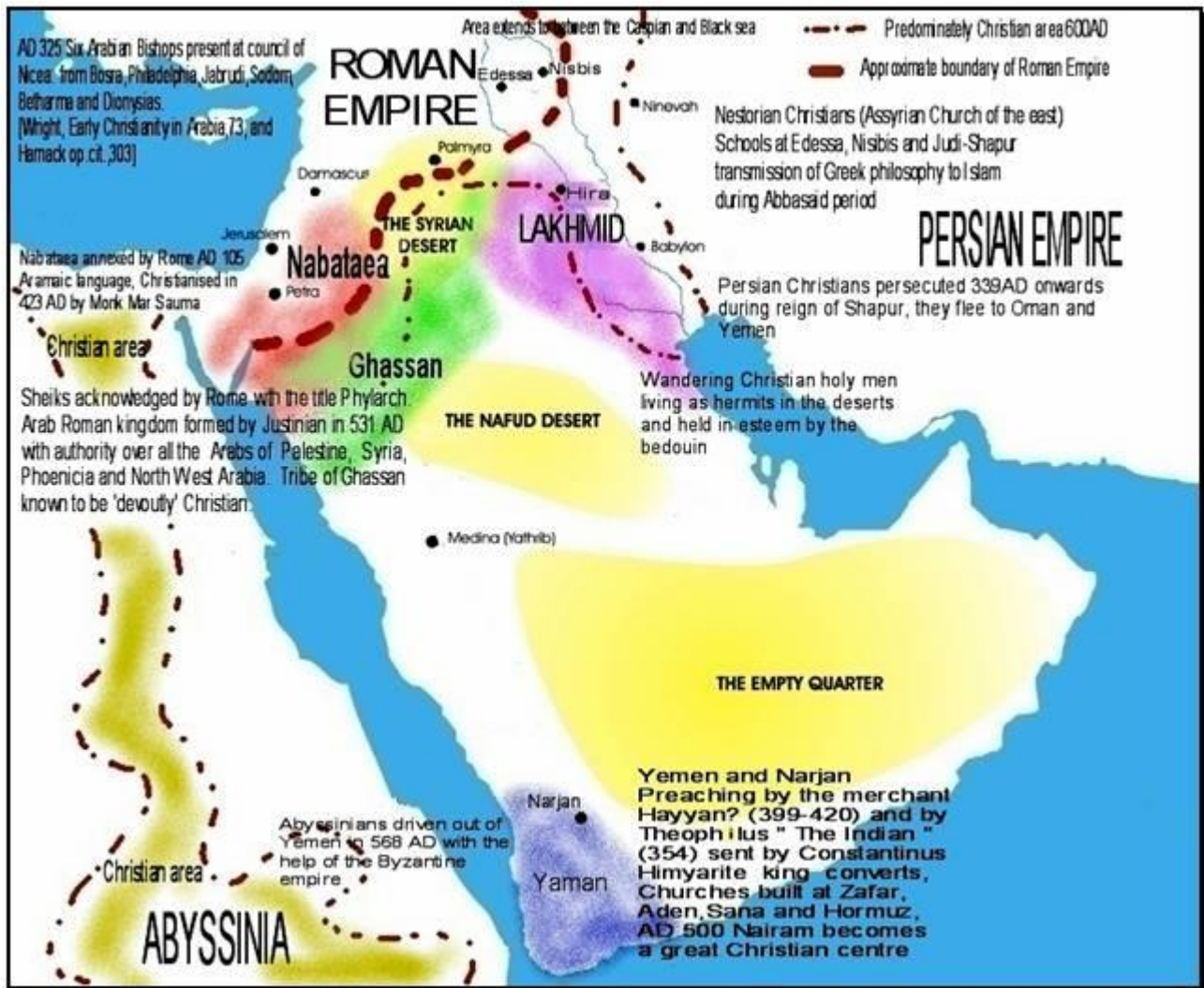
[11] Safiy Al-Rahman Al-Mubarakfoury, *Al-Raheeq Al-Makhtoom* (1418 A.H.)  
See: <http://www.bismikaallahuma.org/History/hejaz.htm>

[12] Maududi, in his comments on the Surah 59 of Quran reporting from *Kitab al-Aghani*, [a book of songs, an important source for information on medieval Islamic society, vol. xix, p. 94, by Abu al-Faraj Ali of Esfahan (897-967)] see: <http://www.usc.edu/dept/MSA/quran/maududi/mau59.html>

[13] For an interesting but somewhat polemical article see, *What Happened to the Jews of Medina* @ <http://www.faithfreedom.org/Articles/sina/jews.htm>



[14]



This map is drawn using a graphics tablet (not to scale), information sourced from, *Past Worlds, The Times Atlas of Archaeology*, p.184. *The Catholic Encyclopedia, Volume I*, [Copyright © 1907 by Robert Appleton Company. Online Edition Copyright © 1999 by Kevin Knight, Nihil Obstat, March 1, 1907. Remy Lafort, S.T.D., Censor Imprimatur. +John Cardinal Farley, Archbishop of New York.], and *The Hutchinson Dictionary of World History*, (Helicon, 1993).

[15] Monophysitism (Definition from [www.wordiq.com](http://www.wordiq.com)) **Monophysitism** (from the Greek **monos** meaning 'one' and **physis** meaning 'nature') is the [christological](#) position that Christ has only one nature, as opposed to the Chalcedonian position which holds that Christ has two natures, one divine and one human. There are three major doctrines that can be called **monophysite**: [Eutychianism](#) holds that the human nature of Christ was essentially obliterated

by the Divine, "dissolved like a drop of honey in the sea". [Apollinarism](#) holds that Christ had a human body and human "living principle" but that the [Divine Logos](#) had taken the place of the *nous*, or "thinking principle", analogous but not identical to what might be called a [mind](#) in the present day. Finally, there is the "monophysite" Christology of extant "monophysite" Churches. However, members of "monophysite" Churches object to the term, preferring the term **miaphysite**. This term uses a different Greek root, **mios** meaning 'a complex unity', reflecting their position that in Christ the divine and human nature become one nature, the natures being united without separation, without confusion, and without change. Monophysitism emerged in Egypt as a response to [Nestorianism](#). It was rejected by the Catholic/Eastern Orthodox church at the [Council of Chalcedon](#). Later, [monothelism](#) was developed as an attempt to bridge the gap between Monophysitism and the Chalcedonian position, but it too was also rejected by the Chalcedonians, despite at times having the support of the [Byzantine](#) Emperors. Monophysite churches are still found today, and include the [Coptic Orthodox Church](#) of Egypt, the Ethiopian Orthodox [Tewahedo Church](#) (*tewahido* being an Ethiopian word meaning "being made one"), the newly [autocephalous Eritrean Orthodox Church](#), and the [Armenian Apostolic Church](#). These are considered branches of [Oriental Orthodoxy](#).

[16] *Islam and Christian Theology*, Lutterworth Press, 1945, Vol I p. 2

[17] Abraha's expedition is commemorated as the "Year of the Elephant" and is recorded in Sura 105 ("The Elephant"). M. Pickthall, (*The Life of Mohammed*, xciii) comments: "The allusion is to the campaign of Arabia...against Mecca, with the purpose of destroying the Ka'bah in the year of the Prophet's birth." This event has been mythologized and conflated, for Mohammed was born some twenty years later, by which time the Persians had expelled the Ethiopians from Yemen.

[18] Safiy Al-Rahman Al-Mubarakfoury, *ibid*.



[19] J. Spencer Trimingham, *Christianity Among the Arabs in Pre-Islamic Times*, London, Longman, 1979 p.128

[20] De Lacy O'Leary, D.D., *How Greek science passed to the Arabs*, (Routledge & Kegan Paul, London, 1980 p.79)

[21] Ibid. p.68

An excellent history of Syrian Christianity is available - split into seven different tables listing important events (change the table no in browser address bar i.e., table 5 = tab5.html).

History of Syrian texts and Syriac history:

1. From Alexander to the end of Trajan's reign, AD 117
2. From the end of Trajan's reign to the annexation of Edessa, AD 117 - 216.
3. From the Roman annexation of Edessa to the Edict of Milan, AD 216 - 313.
4. From the Edict of Milan to the first Council of Ephesus, AD 313 - 431.

[ [http://www.srr.axbridge.org.uk/chron\\_tab4.html](http://www.srr.axbridge.org.uk/chron_tab4.html) ]

5. From the first Council of Ephesus to the martyrdom of Philoxenus, AD 431 - 523.
6. From the martyrdom of Philoxenus, to the Muslim conquest of Persia, AD 523 - 645.
7. From the Muslim Conquest of Persia in AD 645 onwards

A short summary of Nabataean history (40AD-600AD) is available @ <http://nabataea.net/!history.html>

[22] Samuel Zwemer: *Foreword to "Nestorian Missionary Enterprise"* by J. Stewart, T&T Clark, 1928, p. 8

[23] Fr. Gnana Pragash Suresh, @ [http://www.sspxafrica.com/documents/2001\\_August/Understanding\\_Islam.htm](http://www.sspxafrica.com/documents/2001_August/Understanding_Islam.htm)

[24] Mohammed: The man and his faith, Tor Andrae, 1936, Translated by Theophil Menzel, 1960, p13-30)

[25] The same impression is gained from the names of the sons of Abraham by his concubine Keturah (Gen.25: 2), that he sent away to the east [For example Jokshan = "**snarer**", Medan = "**contention**", Midian or Midianite = "**strife**", Ishbak = "**he releases**", (from a root which means "loner" i.e. left alone)]

[26] Sayed Ali Asgher Razwy, *A Restatement of the History of Islam and Muslims CE 570 to 661* (Published by: World Federation of KSI Muslim Communities U.K.ISBN 0 95 09879 1 3) @ <http://www.al-islam.org/restatement/title.htm> For a completely different perspective: "*It is, therefore, nothing short of slanderous to say that the pre-Islamic Arabs were barbarians devoid of religion and culture, unless we mean by religion and culture what the Muslim theologians mean.*"

See: <http://www.bharatvani.org/books/htemples2/ch10.htm#19a> [Hindu Site]

[27] The construction of the dam in the Sabaean capital of Marib was one of the great engineering achievements of the ancient world, a massive stone-faced dam 600m in length built in the 6<sup>th</sup> century BC. For more than 1,000 years the dam supplied miles of carefully dug channels, controlled by sluices, watering a vast agricultural area around the capital; cereals were the staple crop, and there were probably irrigated groves of myrrh trees. The city of Marib itself covered 100 hectares. The bursting of the dam, in the sixth century AD, was accompanied by a tremendous social upheaval, scattering the kingdom's tribes throughout the Arabian Peninsula.

[*Past Worlds, The Times Atlas of Archaeology*, p.184. background, B.Doe: *Southern Arabia*, (London, 1971)].

[28] Ibid, note 13.

[29] Ibid. note 25.