Chapter 2  The Qurʾān

The prophets of the past


The Qurʾān as a book


God as the central theme

On the general theme of God and the imagery used for Him in the Qurʾān see Andrew Rippin, “God,” in A. Rippin (ed.), The Blackwell Companion to the Qurʾān, 223–33.


The prophets of the past

Jesus

Jesus as portrayed in the Qurʾān and Islam has been studied by many people. The standard work on the topic is Edward Geoffrey Parrinder, *Jesus in the Qurʾān*, London, Faber and Faber, 1965.


The message of the judgement day


The path to paradise


The character of the Qurʾān

The observations about the apparent unorganized state of the Qurʾān have provoked a great deal of academic comment (some of it markedly polemical); see the collection of articles on this topic in Ibn Warraq (ed.), *The Origins of the Koran: Classic Essays on Islam’s Holy Book*, Amherst, NY, Prometheus Books, 1998.

*Sūra 2* has been studied by several scholars for its structure in order to determine its inner coherence. What is presented here is certainly not the only possible way of dividing up the *sūra*, of course; for another view see, for example, Neal Robinson, *Discovering the Qurʾān: A Contemporary Approach to a Veiled Text*, London, SCM Press, 1996, pp. 201–23, and Raymond K. Farrin, “Surat al-Baqara: A Structural Analysis,” *The Muslim World*, 100 (2010), 17–32.


**Muslim accounts of the collection of the text**


**The evidence of the manuscripts**
The most readily available source of information about these manuscripts and some of the controversy about them is to be found in Toby Lester, “What is the Koran?” *The Atlantic Monthly*, 283, i (January 1999), 43–56. The text of the article is available on the Web in *The Atlantic Monthly* archives (www.theatlantic.com). Scholarly consideration of related issues (including some of the treatments which have gained media attention) is to be found in a number of the essays found in Gabriel Said Reynolds (ed.), *The Qurʾān in its Historical Context*, London, Routledge, 2008.


**The authority of the Qurʾān**


**The Qurʾān as the proof of Islam**

The doctrine of inimitability


Interpretation of the Qurʾān


For an introduction to *tafsīr* and its early form and structure see the collection of scholarly articles assembled in Andrew Rippin (ed.), *The Qur’an: Formative Interpretation*, Aldershot, Ashgate Variorum, 1999.

The Qurʾān as an object of faith

Chapters on the merits of the Qurʾān are found in standard collections of ḥadīth material: see for example, Muslim ibn al-Ḥajjāj, Ṣahīḥ Muslim, Kitāb al-Ṣalāt, Muḥammad Fuʿād ʿAbd al-Bāqī (ed.), Cairo, Dār Iḥyāʾ al-Kutub al-ʿArabiyya, 1955–6, volume 1, pp. 295–8, traditions 34–46, translated in Andrew Rippin, Jan Knappert, Textual Sources for the Study of Islam, Manchester, Manchester University Press, 1986, section 3.2.3.2. A full English translation of Muslim ibn al-Ḥajjāj’s work is available: Abdul Hameed Siddiqui, Sahīḥ Muslim Being Traditions of the Sayings and Doings of the Prophet Muhammad as Narrated by his Companions and Compiled Under the Title al-Jamīʿ-us-Sahīḥ, Lahore, M. Ashraf, 1973-5; also al-Bukhārī, al-Ṣaḥīḥ, Kitāb Faḍāʾil al-Qurʾān, Muḥammad Muḥsin Khān (ed. and trans.), New Delhi, Kitab Bhavan, 1984, 5th revised edition, volume 6, pp. 489–96. For a somewhat later treatment of the same subject see A. E. Christensen, Xavāṣṣ-i-Āyāt. Notices et extraits d’un manuscrit persan traitant la magie des versets du Coran, Copenhagen, A. F. Høst and Son, 1920.