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## Qur'ān and the Contemporary Historical Events. A Historical Study on the Scripture

The war between the two powers, the Persian and Byzantine, had fluctuating at the north beyond the Arabian peninsula, during the years of Muḥammad's life. In the second half of the second decade of the seventh century again the war broke out between the Persian and Rūm, Persia scored a victory over the Byzantine Christians, they overran all Syria, Egypt and a part of Anatolia in a seemingly decisive success. For Muslims this was a war between believers and infidels (Persian duelists). This led the Meccan idolaters rejoice and taunt the Muslims over the defeat of their brothers of the Book- the Christians. The faithful became very sad on account of this defeat and showed their great interest in it, until the Qur'ānic revelation gave the tinding of a Byzantine victory. "The Rūm has been defeated. In a land close by; but they, (even) after (This) defeated of theirs, will soon be victorious within a few years. With God is the decision, in the Past and Future: with the help of the God. He helps whom He will, and He is Exalted in Might, Most Merciful. (It is) the promise of God depart from his promise: But most men understand not".<sup>1</sup>

There is no doubt that the war between the two supremacies of this time had its echo not only in Mecca and other towns in Arabia but also among the Bedouin tribes in the desert. During this period the two empires had been in perpetual warfare for ages. They both dictated to the whole world at that time, and decided the destinies of many peoples and regions.<sup>2</sup> Undoubtedly these Qur'ānic verses indicate a sympathy of Muslims towards Christian against the Persian.<sup>3</sup> Although the aforementioned Sūra bearing title as *Sūrat ar-Rūm* and beginning with defeated of the Rūm, the term never repeat again in any verse in the Qur'ān.

<sup>1</sup> Qur'ān 30: 2-6.

<sup>2</sup> H.St.L.B. Moss, *The Birth of Middle Ages*. Translated into Arabic under the title of "Mīlād al-'uṣūr al-wuṣṭā" Translated by A.T. Ġāwīd. 'Ālam al-Kutub, Cairo 1967. p. 232.

<sup>3</sup> K. Cragg, *The event of the Qur'ān, Islam in its Scripture*. George Allen and Unwin. London 1971, p. 169.

Moreover, the rest of the Sura does not concern itself with the event mentioned at the opening verses.<sup>4</sup>

In the beginning of the war, in the year 614, the Persian were predominant and had occupied Syria, Palestine, Egypt and a great area in Asia Minor, even Constantinople was threatened to fall.<sup>5</sup> One of historical dramatic event happened when the Persian conquered Jerusalem and carried the Great or the Holy Cross to Persia.<sup>6</sup>

The early Arabic sources written in the ninth century give the aforementioned details about this war. Furthermore, *Ad-Dīnawarī* maintains that the reason of this war is attributed to internal troubles in the Byzantine Emperor's family, one from the family escaped to Persian capital asking for help. Accordingly the Persian troops moved to the Byzantine territory.<sup>7</sup> The same detail has also mentioned in the chronicles of *Aṭ-Ṭabarī* who adds that the son of the Byzantine Emperor had escaped to Persian kingdom asking for help<sup>8</sup>. It has been also repeated by *Ibn Haldūn* that. The Persian king Pervaiz had been helped before by the Emperor Moricius and as a courtesy Pervaiz must help the son of the Emperor to return him to the throne.<sup>9</sup>

It seems that the capture of the Holy Rood by Persian was equally serious interest in Muslim records<sup>10</sup>. The Arabs give the name "Ṣalīb aṣ-Ṣalbūt" which means in Arabic the cross of crucifixion to the holy cross, they mentioned its sanctity for the Christians and its important for the Roman Empire.

After eight years, a Byzantine counteroffensive started up to recover all the Byzantine property. The war was continued for about six years. During this period Heraclius was the Emperor of the Byzantine Empire<sup>11</sup> while Pervaiz

<sup>4</sup> Op. cit., p. 167.

<sup>5</sup> According to G. Ostrogorski, this event took place in the year 613. Ostrogorski G., *Dzieje Bizancjum*, Warszawa 1968. p. 100.

<sup>6</sup> *Aṭ-Ṭabarī, Tārīḥ ar-rusul wa-al-mulūk*, ed. by M. Abū al-Faḍl Ibrāhīm. Dār al-Ma'ārif, Cairo 1979, Vol. II, p. 181.

<sup>7</sup> *Ad-Dīnawarī, Al-Aḥbār at-ṭiwāl*. Edited by A.M. 'Amir, Turātunā, Cairo 1960, pp. 109-110. *Al-Mas'ūdī. Murūḡ ad-dahab wa-ma'ādīn al-ḡawhar*. Edited by M. 'Abd al-Hamīd Dār ar-Raḡā, Cairo 1938, Vol. I, p. 225, *Al-Mas'ūdī, At-Tanbīh wa-al-iṣrāf* Ed. by V.R. Baron Rosen, reprint, Maktabat Ḥayāt 1965. 156, 157. *Ibn al-'Ibrī, Tārīḥ muḥtaṣar ad-duwal*, Al-Maṭba'a al-Kaṭūlīkyya, Beirut 1958, p. 90, 91.

<sup>8</sup> *Aṭ-Ṭabarī*, op. cit., Vol. II, p. 181.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibn Haldūn, Tārīḥ al-'allāma Ibn Haldūn*, Dār al-Kitāb al-Lubnānī. Beirut 1966, Vol. II, p. 363.

<sup>10</sup> The history of the Holy Rood was closely associated with Helena, the mother of Constantine the great, when she went as a pilgrim to Jerusalem she was desired to find the actual wood on which Christ had been crucified. J.B. Bury, *A History of the Later Roman Empire*, London, 1889, Macmillan & Co., Vol. II, p. 225.

<sup>11</sup> According to *Al-Mas'ūdī* Heraclius was the temporary Byzantine Emperor during the life of Muḥammad, Abū Bakr and 'Umar the Caliphes. *Al-Mas'ūdī, Murūḡ ad-dahab* Vol. I, p. 278. *Al-Mas'ūdī, At-Tanbīh*, op. cit., p. 157.

was the king of the Persian Kingdom<sup>12</sup> In the year 622 Heraclius sailed from Constantinople. The war was looking not only as a revenge but also as a sacred war. His departure was celebrated with religious circumstance, emphasizing the religious character of his enterprise, to prevent the infidels from insulting the heritage of Christ.<sup>13</sup> Heraclius's maneuver was planed to attack the Persian in its heart, the Byzantine troops marched forward to the Capital of Persia. According to Hitti, the Arabs from the Ġassānides tribe participated in the reconquest of Syria beside the Byzantine<sup>14</sup>. The Byzantine flag once again flew over Syria, Palestine and Egypt. Heraclius got the holy cross back after he had given a pledge that he would perform a pilgrimage to Jerusalem on foot if he recovered it, in order to put it in its proper place<sup>15</sup>. For Muslims, the Glorious Qur'ān predicted that, the Romans had been able to achieve victory within a few years ranging between 619 and 628 A.D. For them this wondrous information from the Qur'ānic verses includes an accurate record of the international event which had coincided with the Islamic revolution.<sup>16</sup> It is notable here to mention that the term Rūm as the Byzantine do not figure again in the Qur'ān, nor the Persian, who even in these verses remain unnamed.<sup>17</sup>

A question now arises: Why such a current event which has not directly belonged to the Islamic belief has mention in the Qur'ān? First of all it could be said that the Arab themselves were involved in this war. The Ġasānids tribe who were early settled in the region south-east of Damascus since the sixth century were brought within the sphere of Byzantine political influence.<sup>18</sup> In the course of time, the Ġasānids became the main alliance for the Byzantine, more and more they were involved in the Byzantine war against Persia<sup>19</sup> On other hand, another Arabian tribe of Lakhmids has been wont to trickle along the eastern coast of the Arabian peninsula to the south of Iraq and settle there in. The Lakhmids became eventually the alliance of the Persian Empire against the Byzantine. Many other Arabian tribes were the alliance and reinforcement for the

<sup>12</sup> The counter-attack of Heraclius against Persia was continued for about six years during the years 622-628, Ostrogorski, G., op. cit. p. 112, St.L.B. Moss, op. cit., p. 234.

<sup>13</sup> J.B. Bury, *A History of the Later Roman Empire*, London Macmillan and Co. 1912, pp. 225, 226.

<sup>14</sup> Ph., Hitti, *History of the Arabs*, Macmillan and Co, London 1943, p. 80.

<sup>15</sup> Aṭ-Ṭabarī, op. cit., p. 646. Al-Mas'ūdī, op. cit., pp. 243-5. Ibn Ḥaldūn, op. cit., p. 369.

<sup>16</sup> M.F. Bakkoush, *The Great Battles of Islam, Risālat al-Jihād*, Tripoli 1985, p. 220.

<sup>17</sup> The term *Al-Maḡūs* (Magi) refers to in the Qur'ān the Persian who are considered as infidels, Qur'ān, 22:17. See also Al-Ġawālīqī, *Al-Mu'rab min al-kalām al-a'ḡamī*. Edited by A.M. Šakir, *Wizārat at-Taḡāfa*, Cairo 1969, p. 368.

<sup>18</sup> Ph. Hitti, *History of the Arabs*, op. cit. p. 78.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

two main aforementioned tribes.<sup>20</sup> According to Brockelmann, the Byzantines were always able to gain Arabs as vassals on the border of Arabia. The same policy toward the Arabs as that of the Byzantines was practiced by their hereditary Persians<sup>21</sup>. The second main reason behind the importance of this war for the Arabs in Mecca was an economical one. The fact that this was interrupted the transport route that pound Arabia with the Byzantine Empire effected the Meccan trade and the interest of other main towns in Arabia. These were two joint and closely connected reasons, for the mentioning of this event in Qur'ān. Another event connected with this war might have its effect over the area. According to Bury, Heraclius in his offensive movements made a major mistake. He continued an unfortunate policy which had already proved disastrous, the persecution of the Jews. They were massacred in Palestine, and were forced to flee to Arabia.<sup>22</sup> Most probably the Byzantine policy against Jews and this event might have taken a different course. Therefore we can assume that this event provided a new position and a new movement in Arabia. It should be taken in consideration the fact that in the same time when the Emperor was driving out the Jews from Palestine, Muḥammed was pursuing the same policy against the Jews in Madīna and Haybar in the sixth and seventh years of the Hīġra 626/627.<sup>23</sup>

Having mentioned these historical events, it should be stressed that although the majority of the Arabian Peninsula was not under direct Persian and Byzantine occupation, the Arabs were under the influence of the two powers. Moreover, Yemen and Iraq were subdued a long time before by the Persians<sup>24</sup>, while the north area of the peninsula, now comprising south of Syria and Jordan, was under the control of Byzantine. The life of the Arabs particularly from Mecca, depended upon their trade with Yemen and Syria.<sup>25</sup> They were therefore in great need of being on good terms with both Persia and the Byzantine Empire, so that they might not be hindered with their trade. According to the Muslim tradition of sources, the above mentioned Qur'ānic verses are Meccan<sup>26</sup>. They were re-

<sup>20</sup> E. Gibbon, *Idmihlāl al-Imbirāṭuriyya ar-Rūmāniyya wa-ṣuqūṭuhā. The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*. Translated by M.S. Sālim. Cairo 1969, Al-Hay'a al-Miṣriyya li-al-Kitāb, Vol. III. P. 16.

<sup>21</sup> C. Brockelmann, *History of the Islamic Peoples*, Translated by J. Carmichael and M. Perlmann, New York 1947, pp. 7, 8, G.P. Putnam's Sons.

<sup>22</sup> Bury, op. cit., p. 246.

<sup>23</sup> Ibn Hišām, *As-Sīra an-Nabawyya*. Edited by 'Umar Tadmūrī. Cairo 1987, Vol. III, p. 275-286, Dār Ar-Rayyān.

<sup>24</sup> According to Aṭ-Ṭabarī, the Persians occupied Yemen during the reign of the Persian King Qubād and this happened as the result of political and economical competition between the Rūm and the Persian. Aṭ-Ṭabarī, op. cit., pp. 105, 123.

<sup>25</sup> Brockelmann, op. cit., p. 6. Hitti, op. cit., p. 102.

<sup>26</sup> The *Sūra of Rūm* is considered by jurists as a Meccan *Sūra*, all its verses are Meccan except one. See the Qur'ān, *Sūra XXX*. The Meccan *Sūras* are usually subdivided into four groups:

vealed when Muḥammad was still living in Mecca. Muḥammad's favor attitude to Christianity was remarkable, and expressed many times.<sup>27</sup> When the Prophet and his companions were deeply in struggle with Qurayš, and Meccan animosity grew into persecution, they began to ill-treat Muḥammad and his followers. So the Prophet advised many of his disciples to take refuge to Abyssinia saying that, there is a good Christian king and will not be under oppression in his country.

It seems that the relation between Meccan trader and Abyssinia became cold after the flight of Muḥammad's poor fellows there.<sup>28</sup> All of these explained the Meccan idolaters' gladness for the defeated of the Christians' believers in front of the Persian Pagans. Cragg maintained that we may understand the reference to suggest a certain parallel between the resurgence of the Byzantine cause against the Persian and the Muslim cause against Qurayš, each of these emerging, by promise, out of seeming failure success.<sup>29</sup>

Additionally we must take in to consideration that these verses also call for the unity of all the nations believing in one God in order to become a strong front against atheism and idolatry. As a direct effect for this war and the defeat of the Rūm, these verses open with statement and promise and expressed the will of God towards the victory of Rūm against the Persian within a few years.<sup>30</sup> According to the interpretation of Al-Bayḍāwī, the idolaters in Mecca welcomed news of the Persian victory and exulted over the Muslims, saying: "Our brothers who are unscriptured have triumphed over your brothers and we shall indeed overcome you".<sup>31</sup>

According to some recent scholar's opinion, the passage at the beginning of the above mentioned Sūra, may indicate a sympathy of Muḥammad with the Christian side against the Persian Maḡūs. Or it may also suggest a further historical

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Very early, middle early and late. Thought the historical data and traditions are insufficient for a strict chronological grouping, the very early Sūras are, roughly speaking, those revealed before the beginning of the persecution and the conversion of 'Umar; the middle sūras those revealed between the conversion of 'Umar and the destruction of the deed of the ostracism, and the late Sūras those revealed between the raising of the ostracism and the Hīgra. See the *Introduction of the meaning of the Glorious Qur'ān*. Edited by Islamic Call Society, Tripoli, without date, p. 7. Al-Bayḍāwī, Naṣīr ad-Dīn, *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-Karīm*. Maktabat al-Ġumhūriyya, Cairo, without date, p. 539.

<sup>27</sup> In the six year of the Hīgra, the Prophet granted to the monks of the Monastery of st. Catherine in Sinai, and to all Christians, a charter, which is a monument of enlightened tolerance. In this charter the Prophet undertook himself, and enjoined on his followers, to protect the Christians, to guard them from all injuries, and to defend their churches, and the residences of their priests. See Ameer Ali, Seyed, *A Short History of the Saracens*. New York 1955. Macmillan & Co LTD.

<sup>28</sup> Ibn Hišām, op. cit., vol. I, p. 349. Abū al-Fidā, *Al-Muḥtaṣar fī āḥbār al-bašar*. Maktabat al-Mutanabbī, Cairo, without date, vol. I, pp. 118, 119.

<sup>29</sup> Cragg, op. cit., pp. 167, 168.

<sup>30</sup> Cragg, op. cit., p. 167.

<sup>31</sup> Al-Bayḍāwī, op. cit., pp. 539, 540.

logic in the see-saw of northern rivalries, whereby the enemies, in weakening each other, were more exposed to the future eruption of the Muslim armies against both.<sup>32</sup>

The Qur'ān in another Sūra expresses sympathy for Christians: "Strongest among men in enmity to the believers wilt thou find the Jews and Pagans; and nearest among them in love to the believers wilt thou find those who say, we are Christians: because amongst these are men devoted to learning and men who have renounced the world, and they are not arrogant".<sup>33</sup>

After a few years the Muslim Policy suddenly changed its strategy towards Banū al-Aṣfar<sup>34</sup> or the Rūm (Byzantine). The motives here are not clear. According to Bury, Muḥammad took the first step in the direction of spreading Islam beyond the confines of Arabia.<sup>35</sup> Muslim sources tell us that the Prophet wrote letters to the Emperor Heraclius, to the king of Persia, to the governor of Buṣrā, and to the King of Abyssinia, exhorting them to embrace the faith of Islam. The king of Abyssinia accepted the invitation, Husraw, the King of Persia, badly treated Muḥammad's delegates, and ordered the governor of Yemen to send him the insolent Arab in chains, while Heraclius said neither no nor yes, but sent presents to Muḥammad. The governor of Buṣrā had not received the Prophet's letter, because the ruler of Mu'ta Ṣarḥabīl Ibn 'Amr had captured the messenger, ordered his men to cut off his head. He was the only envoy who was seized and killed.<sup>36</sup> Another event connected with the early Arab-Byzantine conflict is the accident which happened to the Prophet's envoy who was sent to the Roman Empire. After Duḥya Ibn Ḥalīfa al-Kalbī had delivered the Muḥammad's message to Heraclius, he was attacked by Banū Ġudām who used to live in the land of Roman propriety.<sup>37</sup>

The consequence of these replies might be a conflict between the Arab and the Persian not only with the Byzantine. It is also difficult to arrive at a certain conclusion about the main motive behind the Arab-Byzantine conflict of that time. It could be also said that the main factor of Muslim mobilize was to launch a military campaign against the Christian Arab tribes who had been attacking the Muslims' caravans at the north border of Arabia.<sup>38</sup> It seems that in the absence of the defeated Roman Empire during the war with Persia, the Christian Arab

<sup>32</sup> Ibid.

<sup>33</sup> Qur'ān, Sūra V: 82.

<sup>34</sup> The Arab gives many names to identify the Eastern Romans, among them there is the word *Rūm*. It was in a use common in Arabic historical and literature sources. The name *Banū al-Aṣfar* (the sons of Yellow) was rarely used by some authors.

<sup>35</sup> Bury, op. cit., p. 261.

<sup>36</sup> Aṭ-Ṭabarī, op. cit., Vol. II, p. 644. Abū al-Fidā, *Al-Muḥtaṣar fī aḥbār al-baṣar*, p. 141. Ibn Ḥayyāt, *Tārīḥ Ḥalīfa Ibn Ḥayyāt*, Edited by Suhayl Zakkār. Matba'at Wizarat at-Taḳāfa, Damascus 1967, pp. 46-47.

<sup>37</sup> M.F. Bakkoush, *The Great Battles of Islam*, p. 223.

<sup>38</sup> Op. cit., p. 219.

tribes living along the northern borders had attacked Muslims, in order to satisfy the Meccan idolaters who had been their allies.<sup>39</sup>

Al-Mas'ūdī gives more details about the direct reason of this expedition, he mentions that Uḥaydar Ibn 'Abd al-Malik al-Kindī, the chief of Dawmat al-Ġandal, was a Christian and a vassal of the Byzantine Emperor. He was usually attacking the Muslim traders and envoys who were traveling from Madīna.<sup>40</sup> According to Lammens who without making investigation of the historical events maintained that, after Muḥammad had signed the agreement of Ḥudaybiyya with Meccan idolaters, he had a good chance to direct his activities towards other tribes at the north of Madīna, particularly against these who were Christians. Among them there were the tribes who had a contact with the Byzantines and were residing in Dawmat al-Ġandal.<sup>41</sup>

Since Muslim power in Madīna was spreading among the Bedouin tribes of the northern Arabia, they soon came into contact with the Byzantine frontier posts. In 629, a messenger was sent by Muḥammad to Buṣrā where he was intercepted and executed.<sup>42</sup>

Muḥammad sent an army of three thousand men under the command of Zayd Ibn Ḥāritha who marched to Mu'ta. The first collision between the two powers took place in Mu'ta, near the Dead Sea. Here the Muslim army came up against the Byzantine troops where the Muslim defeated, with difficulty, succeeded in leading back to Madīna.<sup>43</sup>

To avenge this, the Muslim army under the command of Muḥammad himself marched to Tabūk. The expedition was organised in Summer time in the year 9 H. 628/629.<sup>44</sup> The army marched in a very hot weather, the matter which caused that many Muslims were eluded. Many Qur'ānic verses authenticated this historical event, by condemning the evaders and describing such Muslims as hypocrites. In the *Sura of the Tawbah* (Repentance) we read: "Those who were left behind (in Tabūk expedition) rejoiced in their inaction behind the back of the Apostle of God: they hated to strive and fight, with their goods and their persons, in the

<sup>39</sup> An expedition was directed by Muḥammad in the fifth year of Hīġra against the Arab tribes living in Dawmat al-Ġandal at the far north of Madīna. See Ibn Hišām, op. cit., vol. III, p. 165. See also Ibn 'Abd al-Barr, *Ad-Durar fī iḥtişār al-maġāzī wa-as-siyar*, Al-Maġlis al-A'lā li-aşu'un al-Islāmyya, Cairo 1966, pp. 222, 223.

<sup>40</sup> Al-Mas'ūdī, *Tanbīh*, op. cit., p. 248.

<sup>41</sup> H.L. Lammens, *Arabic Occidentale avant l'Hégire*. Imprimerie Catholique 1928, p. 321. See also *L'Islam croyances et institutions*, p. 43.

<sup>42</sup> Abū al-Fidā, op. cit., p. 143.

<sup>43</sup> Lammens, *L'Islam croyances et institutions*, p. 43.

<sup>44</sup> According to many Muslim sources this expedition took place in the year 9 H. Most of this sources indicate that the army marched during a very hot summer in the month of Raġab, the matter which make us assume that it was during the summer of the year 628, whereas the begining of the year 9 H. Started in April 269. Or most probably that April of 269 was very hot.

cause of God: they said, go not forth in the heat. Say, the fire of hell is fiercer in heat. If only they could understand.<sup>45</sup> In verse 83 in the same Sura we read: "If thou, God bring thee back to any of them, and they ask thy permission to come out (with thee), say: never shall ye come out with me, nor fight on enemy with me: for ye preferred to sit inactive on the first occasion: then sit ye (now) with those who lag behind."<sup>46</sup>

The Muslim historical sources give us detailed informations about this expedition. Some relations which have come down to us show clearly that Arabia during this period suffered not only from hot weather but also from starvation. Among the economical motives we also can add here the failure in trade either because of the Persian-Byzantine war or because of the war between the Muslim and the idolaters in Arabia itself.

In the year 9 H. about 630 BC, Muḥammad was able to send the Muslim troops against the Byzantine. The Muslim army was under the command of Usāma, the son of Zayd, who had fallen at the battle of Mu'ta about less than two years before. The goal of the dispatching of this expedition was to seek reparation for the murder of the Muslim envoy. During the preparations of this innovation the Prophet fell ill and soon he died.<sup>47</sup> It halted however, in the suburbs, and Prophet's illness terminated this raid. Accordingly Zayd and his forces returned back to Madīna.

According to many authors, Abū Bakr after having been proclaimed Caliph, determined to fulfill the wishes of the Prophet and carried the Muslim armies towards Syria. It seems that Abū Bakr realized that the best way to avoid the *Ridda* (apostasy) war was to direct the Arab tribes warriors towards the outsider enemy, but not by conflicts in Arabia.

The second great expedition was sent also during the reign of Abū Bakr. The Caliph appointed four generals of division: Yazīd Ibn Abī Sufyān, Abū 'Ubayda Ibn al-Ġarrāḥ, Mu'āz Ibn Ġabal and Šarḥabīl Ibn Ḥasna. Of these Abū 'Ubayda was the chief, and Yazīd the second in command. It was intended that each should attack a separate part of the Syrian provinces, but the serious resistance which was encountered made a combination of forces necessary and the caliph consequently recalled Ḥālīd Ibn al-Walīd from southern Mesopotamia to be the chief command of the Muslim army in Palestine.

According to Al-Baṣrī, the Roman Emperor Heraclius was at that time in Palestine,<sup>48</sup> and the march of the Arabs did not remain long unknown to him.

<sup>45</sup> Qur'ān, 9:81.

<sup>46</sup> About the same matter see, Qur'ān, 9:92, 93, 94, 95. See the interpretation of Al-Bayḍāwī of these verses, op. cit., pp. 278, 288.

<sup>47</sup> Ḥalīfa Ibn Ḥayyāṭ, op. cit., pp. 56, 64.

<sup>48</sup> Al-Baṣrī, Abū Ismā'īl Muḥammad Ibn 'Abdallāh al-Azdī, *Futūḥ aš-Šām*. Edited by Ensing W.N. Lees. Biblioteca Indica, J. Thomas, At the Baptist Mission Press. Calcutta. 1854, pp. 8-10. Attention must be given here to the fact that Heraclius and his retinue were in

The Emperor immediately assembled his chiefs and haranguing them, with the view to incite them to war with the Arabs, told them that "a set of barefooted, nicked and half-starved wretches" had entered their country.<sup>49</sup>

We can also assert here that the first verses of *Surat ar-Rūm* are considered by the Muslims as prophecy verses . Then give prophetic event which should happen in future.<sup>50</sup> It is incontestable that Qur'ān indicates the pivotal historical events that only relate the struggle with idolatry. Nevertheless, our intention here, without ignoring and by no way reducing the involvement of Qur'ānic verses is to explain that Qur'ān was not isolated of world events of that time. Undoubtedly there exists any explicit Qur'ānic controversy with the earlier faiths, but this arose after the Hīgra: most of the Madīna's Qur'ānic verses expressed more and more a critical attitude towards Judaism and Christianity. During the Meccan period most of Qur'ānic verses should be regarded local events in the frame of the conflict between the Muslims and the Meccan idolatry. There are few other historical events in some scripts scattered which still need more investigation.

One can agree with Cragg's opinion that the event of the Qur'ān and the life of Muḥammad belong powerfully to the world history by a sturdy independence of it. According to that scholar, there is nothing in religion quite so concentrated as the Islamic scripture, as a single book, through a single prophet, in a single territory, in a single quarter century.<sup>51</sup>

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Jerusalem in the year 629 (about the year 8-9 H). The Emperor remained in Jerusalem after his triumph not a long time. See Bury, op. cit., p. 247.

<sup>49</sup> Op. cit., p. 22-23.

<sup>50</sup> Al-Bayḍāwī, op. cit., p. 539.

<sup>51</sup> K. Cragg, *The Event of the Qur'ān*, op. cit., p. 166.