

كَفَرَ (*Kafara*).

Used very frequently.

To deny the grace or existence of God : then—to be an unbeliever.

In its various forms it is of common use in the Qur'ān, and the root is undoubtedly Arabic, but as a technical religious term it has been influenced by outside usage.

The primitive sense of كَفَرَ to cover or conceal, corresponds with the Aram. כפר ; Syr. כפר, and a derivative from this primitive sense occurs in the Qur'ān, lvii, 19, in the word كُفَّار husbandmen, i.e.

“they who cover the seed”. The form كَفَّرَ, however, corresponds with the Heb. כִּפֵּר, Aram. כִּפֵּר, and means to cover in the sense of atone.<sup>1</sup> In this sense it is used with عَنْ, and as-Suyūṭī, *Itq*, 324; *Mutaw*,

56, tells us that some early authorities noted this كَفَرَ عَنْ as derived from Hebrew or Nabataean. The commoner use, however, is with

ب, in the sense of to deny the existence or goodness of God, and this use with ب is characteristic of Syriac. The form كافر an unbeliever

and كُفْر unbelief, may indeed be independent borrowings from the Heb. כִּפּוּר, Syr. כפון and ܟܦܪܐ (Ahrens, *Christliches*, 41), though a כפר as a proper name seems to occur in the Thamudic

inscriptions (Ryckmans, *Noms propres*, i, 115). The form كفارة may, however, be a direct borrowing from the Jews, cf. Horovitz, *JPN*, 220.

Hirschfeld, *Beiträge*, 90 ; Horovitz, *KU*, 59, and Torrey, *Foundation*, 48, 144, would have the dominant influence on the Arabic in this connection from the Jewish community, and Pautz, *Offenbarung*, 159, n. ; Mingana, *Syriac Influence*, 86, stand for a Christian source. Again it is really impossible to decide (cf. Ahrens, *Christliches*, 21).

<sup>1</sup> The S. Arabian 𐩧𐩣𐩪 seems also to have this meaning ; cf. Rossini, *Glossarium*, 170.