

Torrey's own suggestion is that it is the Heb. **רָצָה** *disaster*, occurring in Is. xlvii, 11, and Ez. vii, 26. Torrey thinks that this word would have been very frequently on the lips of the Jews whom Muḥammad met, "every educated Jew had it at his tongue's end. The whole splendid passage in Isaiah may well have been recited to Muḥammad many times, with appropriate paraphrase or comment in his own tongue, for his edification. The few hell-fire passages in the Hebrew Scriptures must have been of especial interest to him, and it would be strange if some teacher had not been found to gratify him in this respect"—p. 471.

There are objections, however, to this theory. Neither of the O.T. passages mentioned above, though they do prophesy destruction, can strictly be called "hell-fire" passages, and the word neither in the Bible nor in the Rabbinic writings seems to have any connection with "hell-fire", as the Qur'ān certainly thinks it has, if we are to admit the authenticity of the whole passage. Moreover this Sūra is very early, much earlier than the time when he had much contact with the Jews, even if we could admit that the word was as constantly on Jewish lips as Torrey supposes. It would seem rather to have been one of those strange words picked up by Muḥammad in his contact with foreigners in Mecca in his early years, and thus more likely of Christian than of Jewish origin. One might venture a suggestion that it is connected with the Eth. **ሐዊ**,¹ which in the form **ሐዋደ** means the fiery red glow of the evening sky (cf. Matt. xvi, 2), and as **ሐው** means *fire* or *burning coal*. This at least gives us the connection with **نار حامية**, and the change of guttural is not difficult in Ethiopic where such changes are common.

وَأَن (*Wahn*).

xxii, 31; xxix, 16, 24.

An idol.

Used only in the plu. **أَوْثَان**, and only in fairly late passages.

The word **ሐወ** occurs in the S. Arabian inscriptions,² and as this corresponds with the Eth. **ወተን** (plu. **ሐውተን**)³ meaning *idol*,

¹ Mainz in *Der Islam*, xxiii, 300, suggests (**ሐውደ**) **ሐውደ**.

² *JA*, viic ser., vol. xix, p. 374; Rossini, *Glossarium*, 142.

³ Cheikho, *Nagṣrāniya*, 206, wrongly gives this as **ወሐን**.