

(Josh. iv, 6), and also in a technical religious sense both for the miracles which attest the Divine presence (Ex. viii, 19; Deut. iv, 34; Ps. lxxviii, 43), and for the signs or omens which accompany and testify to the work of the Prophets (1 Sam. x, 7, 9; Ex. iii, 12). In the Rabbinic writings אֶלֶף is similarly used, though it there acquires the meaning of a letter of the alphabet, which meaning, indeed, is the only one the Lexicons know for the Aram. אֶלֶף.¹

While it is not impossible that the Arabs may have got the word from the Jews, it is more probable that it came to them from the Syriac-speaking Christians.² The Syr. ܐܠܦ, while being used precisely as the Heb. אֶלֶף, and translating σημείον both in the LXX and N.T., is also used in the sense of *argumentum*, *documentum* (PSm, 413), and thus approaches even more closely than אֶלֶף the Qur'ānic use of the word.

The word occurs in the old poetry, e.g. in Imrū'ul-Qais, lxx, 1 (Ahlwardt, *Divans*, 160), and so was in use before the time of Muḥammad.

أَيُّوبُ (Ayyūb).

iv, 161; vi, 84; xxi, 83; xxxviii, 40.

Job.

It is the Biblical Job, and the word was recognized as foreign, e.g. al-Jawālīqī, *Mu'arrab*, 8. The exegetes take him to be a Greek, e.g.

Zam. on xxi, 83—رجل من روم and ath-Tha'labī, *Qīṣas*, 106—رومي.

The name would seem to have come into Arabic through a Christian channel, as even Hirschfeld, *Beiträge*, 56, admits. The Heb. אֵיּוֹב appears in Gk. (LXX) as Ἰώβ, and Syr. as ܐܝܘܒ, which latter is obviously the origin of the Arabic form.³ The name appears to have been used in Arabia in the pre-Islamic period. Hess would interpret the אֵיּוֹב of an inscription copied by Huber (No. 521, l, 48), as Aiyūb⁴; there is

¹ In Biblical Aramaic, however, אֶלֶף means a *sign* wrought by God; cf. Dan. iii, 33.

² Mingana, *Syriac Influence*, 86. Note also the Mand. אֶלֶף = *sign*.

³ Rudolph, *Abhängigkeit*, 47.

⁴ Hess, *Die Entzifferung der thamudischen Inschriften* (1911), p. 15, No. 77; Littmann, *Entzifferung*, 15; and see Halévy in *JA*, ser. vii, vol. x, p. 332.