

The consensus of opinion among the exegetes is that **آزر** is the name of Abraham's father, and is **اسم العجى**. It was also well known, however, that the real name of Abraham's father was **تارح** or **تارخ**, e.g. at-Ṭabarī, *Annales*, i, 252; an-Nawawī, 128; al-Jawālīqī, *Mu'arrab*, 21; *TA*, iii, 12, etc., obviously reproducing the **תָּרַח** of Gen. xi, 26, etc.

In order to escape the difficulty some took **آزر** to be the name of an idol—**اسم صنم**, or an abusive epithet applied by Abraham to his father.¹ They also have various theories as to the origin of the word, some taking it to be Hebrew (as-Suyūṭī, *Itq*, 318), some Syriac (Zam. on vi, 74), and some Persian (Bagh. on vi, 74). Their suggestions, however, are obviously guesses and do not help us at all.

The solution generally found in European works is that which was first set forth by Marracci in *Prodromus*, iv, 90, that the Talmudic name for Terah, by a metathesis became **Aθap* in Eusebius, and this gives the Arabic *Āzar*. This has been repeated over and over again from Ewald² and Sale down to the modern Ahmadiyya Commentators, and even Geiger 128, though he does not mention Marracci, argues that

תָּרַח = **θάρα** (LXX, **θάρρα**) by metathesis gives **Aθap* and thus **آزر**, while Dvořák, *Fremdwörter*, 38, goes even further in discussing the probability of Gk. *θ* being pronounced like *z*. The fact, however, is that Marracci simply misread Eusebius, who uses no such form as **Aθap*.³

Hyde in his *Historia Religionis veterum Persarum*, p. 62, suggested that *Āzer* was the heathen name of Abraham's father, who only became known as Terah after his conversion. This heathen name he would connect with the Av. **𐬀𐬵𐬎𐬎𐬀** *ātar*⁴ (cf. Skt. **अथर्वन्**), Phlv. **𐤀𐤴𐤁𐤓**

¹ Vide as-Suyūṭī, 318, and the Commentators. It should be noted that Zam. gives a number of variant readings for the word, showing that the earliest authorities were puzzled by it.

² *Geschichte Israels*, i, 483.

³ The passage reads (*Hist. Eccl.*, ed. Schwartz, i, iv, p. 14)—*μετὰ δὲ καὶ τοῦτον ἐτέρου, τῶν δὲ τοῦ Νῶε παίδων καὶ ἀπογόνων ἀτὰρ καὶ τὸν Ἀβραάμ, ὃν ἀρχηγὸν καὶ προπάτορα σφῶν αὐτῶν παῖδες Ἑβραίων ἀνχοῦσι*, where the unusual *ἀτὰρ* was apparently misread as **Aθap*. Cf. Pautz, *Offenbarung*, 242 n.

⁴ Bartholomae, *AIW*, 312.