Details about the book with revelations are found also in Epiphanius' *Panarion*, written in 374–77. According to *Pan.* 19.1.4, "Elxai" or "Elxaios" was the author of the book and also the teacher of a sect resident in areas to the east of the Dead Sea, the "Sampsaeans" or "Elkesaeans (Ἐλκεσαίοι)" (*Pan.* 53). But his report does not clearly indicate that the Sampsaeans/Elkesaeans were familiar with the book (and that Epiphanius owed his information about the book to this sect). Epiphanius "supposed" that Elxai had influenced some neighbouring sects of the Sampsaeans/Elkesaeans, notably the Ebionites (30.3.2; 30.17.5).

The so-called *Cologne Mani Codex* (*CMC*), a recently discovered Mani biography, composed in the 4th or 5th century, speaks of Mani's life in – and eventual break with – a community of Jewish Christian baptists in southern Babylonia, who are said to have referred to "Alchasaios (Ἀλχασαῖος)" as their former leader or their founder (ἀρχηγός, *CMC* 94.10–11). Similar information is contained in the *Kitab al-Fihrist*, a 10th-century Arabic encyclopaedia. The *CMC* and the *Fihrist* do not attach the name "Elchasaites," "Elkesaeans," or any other specific name to the baptists in question nor do their reports suggest that the baptists were influenced by the book which patristic sources connect with the name "Elchasai" or "Elxai." It is a matter of debate whether Epiphanius' Sampsaeans/Elkesaeans and the baptists of Mani's youth can be regarded as Elchasaites in the above sense.

The basic contents of the book can be deduced from references in Hippolytus and Epiphanius. It was probably written by a Mesopotamian Jew in the last year of Trajan's Parthian war (114–16 CE). The book claimed to contain a revelation which was granted by an angel, whose enormous dimensions were recorded in detail and who was accompanied by a female angel of the same size (Hippolytus, *Haer.* 9.13; Epiphanius, *Pan.* 19.4.1–2; 30.17.6–7; 53.1.9). Epiphanius' reports suggest that the name "Elchasai"/"Elxai" means "Hidden Power" (Aram. *ḥayil kĕsay*) and originally belonged to the huge male angel (cf. *Pan.* 19.2.2 with 19.4.1; 30.17.6). The angel predicted an apocalyptic war, "when again three years of Emperor Trajan are completed" (*Haer.* 9.16.4). He assured that at "the Great Judgment Day" (cf. *Pan.* 19.4.3) he would protect all those who were prepared to declare before seven non-human witnesses that they would not sin any more (*Haer.* 9.15.2, 4; *Pan.* 19.1.6; 19.6.4; 30.17.4).

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Gerard P. Luttikhuizen

II. Islam

Although the surviving historical witnesses to the persistence of the Elchasaite and Ebionite communities in Late Antiquity are fragmentary, they testify to the particular vibrancy of the religious landscape of the Near East in the centuries leading up to the emergence of Islam. The Levant appears to have provided rich soil for the proliferation of religious communities that are in some way connected to what eventually became orthodox or mainstream Judaism and Christianity, but that we can no longer dismiss as fringe, heterodox, or "heretical," or as manifestations of an inherently contradictory or anomalous "Jewish Christianity." Rather, in this milieu, diverse forms of Judaism and Christianity shaded into one another imperceptibly, linked by numerous concepts, practices, and discourses held in common – an interest in cosmology and cosmogony, including divine hypostases or quasi-divine intermediary figures; apocalyptic; scriptural exegesis; and salvation through initiatory rites, especially baptism. This complex and fluid environment supported considerable religious diversity well into Late Antiquity. Most importantly, it appears to have contributed in some way to the emergence and growth of major traditions such as Manichaeism – Mani is said to have come from an Elchasaite group active in Mesopotamia in the 3rd century – and later, Islam.

Already in the 19th century Uhlhorn suggested that the persistence of Ebionite teachings – or even the survival of actual Ebionite groups – may explain the Christology of the Qurʾān, which rejects the conception of vicarious atonement that dominates in most varieties of Pauline Christianity. Perhaps the widest hearing the idea of Jewish-Christian influence on the rise of Islam has ever received is in Tor Andræ's popular biography of Muhammad (*Mohammed, sein Leben und sein Glaube*, 1932, translated into English in 1936 and reprinted numerous times), in which he discusses both the Ebionites and the Elchasaites as possible links between the older milieu of the "Jewish-Christian" baptismal sects and the Prophet's mission in Arabia. Notably, Andræ highlights not only these groups' Christology, but also their prophetology and theories of revelation, emphasizing the concern with the falsification

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of revelation common to the Qurʾān (anticipating the doctrine of *taḥrīf*) on the one hand and the Pseudo-Clementines and other supposed "Jewish-Christian" sources on the other.

More recent investigations of the question have focused on prophetology as well, and the links between the Syro-Mesopotamian sects and Islam cannot be considered in isolation from the possible impact of Manichaeism on Arabia in Late Antiquity. Whereas former scholars have seen a possible Manichaean substrate or subtext in the Qurʾān – particularly as regards the concept of the finality of prophethood – this has now been problematized in various ways. Nevertheless, Blois has convincingly argued that a common and diffuse "Jewish-Christian" religious heritage may have separately informed both Manichaeism and the Qurʾān, while also positing the possible existence of a "Jewish-Christian" sect of "Nazoreans" active in Arabia in Muhammad's time and addressed in the qurʾānic dialogues with the *Naṣārā*.

Though his discussion pertains specifically to Manichaeism, Simon's examination of the methodological issues should inform any attempt to revisit the subject of possible Ebionite or Elchasaite continuities in Islam, and the question remains an open one. Aside from having an indirect impact through their influence on Manichaeism and Mandaeism, the survival of significant numbers of these older "Jewish-Christian" groups in the Islamicate Middle Ages is rather unlikely, despite the occasional reference to them in Islamic heresiographical or ethnographic literature. Muslim authors such as Ibn al-Nadīm did recognize the specifically Elchasaite background to Manichaeism, though they naturally would have rejected the idea of any possible impact on Muḥammad himself.

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See also →Ebionites; →Jewish Christianity; →Mani, Manichaeans; →Nazoraeans, Gospel of the

Eldaah

Eldaah (person; Heb. *ʾEldāʿâ*) is the last of five sons of Midian and descendants of Abraham's Arabian concubine, Keturah (Gen 25:4; 1 Chr 1:33). The name is possibly of Arabic origin, the second element being related to Arabic *daʿā* (*dʿw*), "to call," hence "God has called," though Hebrew also asttests the verb *dāʿâ*, "to search for, ask for" (Hos 6:3; Prov 10:32, etc.). Nothing else is known of this individual and he appears to have generated no interests in the history of reception.

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Amy E. Meverden

Eldad and Medad (Persons)

I. Hebrew Bible/Old Testament

Eldad and Medad (MT *ʾEldād*, *Mêdād*) are two of the 70 elders ordained to assist Moses in administrative duties during the wilderness wanderings (Num 11:26–27). These elders were supposed to be gathered at the tent of the tabernacle to carry some of the burden (previously held solely by Moses) of being an intermediary between YHWH and the people. There, YHWH bestowed upon the elders some of the Spirit (*rûaḥ*) that was upon Moses, thus enabling them to prophesy.

Eldad and Medad, though they did not meet with the other elders at the tent as requested, also received this *rûaḥ* and prophesied inside the camp. While they were prophesying, Joshua, son of Nun implored Moses to silence them. In response, Moses explains that the prophecy of these two elders is rather to be esteemed, and he wishes that all of YHWH's people were blessed with this power.

Little of the nature of this prophecy can be certain because of both the ambiguity of the text and variant preserved vocalizations of *yspw* (Num 11:25). The MT renders the word as *wĕlōʾ yāsāpû* "and they did not continue" (from *ysp*), suggesting that this prophecy was a singular incident, perhaps a visible sign of their aptitude to assist Moses, which is further supported by LXX. For *yspw*, however, *Targum Pseudo-Jonathan* has *psqyn*, which reflects Hebrew *yāsūpû* "and they did not cease" (from *swp*), suggesting that the prophesying continued.

Variant traditions also doubt cast on the original names of these two prophets: the Samaritan Pentateuch has *ʾĔlîdād* (cf. 34:21) and *Môdād* (corroborated by LXX, Μωδαδ). An apocryphal story offering clarifications of the prophecies of these two figures utilizes the LXX pronunciations (see "Eldad and Modad [Book]").

John Lewis

II. Judaism

The brief story of Eldad and Medad (Num 11:26–29) prompted the sages to fill in some of the gaps. One tradition (*TPsJ* to Num 11:26) suggests that

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