The Meaning of *Kalāla* is Defined in the Summer Verse

The camel-*sabab* tradition, analyzed in section 3.4, signals an important change in the exegetical treatment of *kalāla*. Unlike the other intermediate traditions, in which the meaning of *kalāla* is known but withheld by ‘Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb or suppressed by a transmitter of his words, the men who circulated the camel-*sabab* narrative were pointing to the Quran as the source from which to derive a definition of *kalāla*. ‘Abd al-A’lā b. ‘Abd al-A’lā taught that the meaning of *kalāla* is found in the ‘*kalāla* verse,’ by which he likely meant Q 4:12. In a parallel version of the narrative, ‘Abd al-Razzāq asserted that Q 4:176 was the definitive *kalāla* verse.

In this chapter I take up the traditions that, much like those transmitted by ‘Abd al-A’lā and ‘Abd al-Razzāq, locate the definition of *kalāla* in the Quran. Instead of the ‘*kalāla* verse,’ these traditions refer to the ‘summer verse,’ for which reason I designate them as ‘the *kalāla*-cum-summer-verse traditions.’ In different ways, these traditions attempt to relieve a second-century exegetical anxiety over the ambiguity of Q 4:12b and its connection to Q 4:176.

4.1 Cluster 13: The Medinese Version of the *Kalāla-cum*-Summer-Verse Tradition

The *Muwaṭṭaʾ* of the Medinese jurist Mālik b. Anas (d. 179/795) is the earliest surviving source to include a *kalāla-cum*-summer-verse tradition. In this tradition the Prophet responds to ‘Umar’s question about *kalāla* by advising him to consult “the verse that was sent down in the summer at the end of *Sura al-Nisāʾ*.” Mālik never endorsed a “definitive ḥadīth collection,”1 and the *Muwaṭṭaʾ* is known from several fully or partly preserved recensions prepared by his students and followers. The present tradition is found in the following printed editions of the *Muwaṭṭaʾ*:

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The Meaning of kalāla is Defined in the Summer Verse 253

Isnād diagram KQ-1

Mālik b. Anas’ kalāla-cum-summer-verse tradition

Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr

Al-Jawhārī, d. 381

Aḥm. b. Muḥ. al-Makki

‘Ali

Al-Qā’nabī, d. 220–1

Ibn Qāsim, d. 191

Mālik, d. 179

Yahyā b. Yahyā, d. 234

Abū Muṣ’ab, d. 242

Italics – collectors

Small Caps – key figures

→ The isnāds of al-Qa’nabī and Ibn Qāsim

Abā-hu

Zayd b. Aslam, d. 136

(1a) Anna ‘Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb sa’ala rasūlAllah (s) ‘an al-kalālati fa-qāla la-hu rasūlAllah (s): “Yakfī-ka min dhālikā l-āyat l-lāhit l-latī unzialat fi l-ṣayf.”

(1b) ‘Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb asked the Messenger of Allah (s) about kalāla (1b) whereupon the Messenger of Allah (s) said to him, “Let the verse that was sent down in summer be sufficient for you with regard to this.”

Isnād diagram KQ-1  Mālik b. Anas’ kalāla-cum-summer-verse tradition