

# The “Seal of Prophets”: Jesus, Mani, and Muḥammad

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## Abstract

This article deals with the claim that Jesus (4 BC), Mani (216 CE), and Muḥammad (570 CE) are the “Seals of Prophets,” relating it to the theologically developed Johannine concept of the Paraclete. These three historical figures are believed to be the “Seals of Prophets” after whom the chain of Prophets has ended according to their religious and cultural traditions. However, most of the research on the subject is pursued exclusively from within the perspective of each religious and cultural tradition, and without discussing the Johannine theologically developed concept of the Paraclete by relating it properly either to Jesus, or to Mani, or to Muḥammad, especially when one considers the fact that Mani claims to be the Paraclete of Jesus in his recently found works, *Kelley Library and CMC Writings*. Similarly, Muslim writers maintain that Muḥammad was the Paraclete of Jesus and the “Seal of Prophets.” Furthermore, there has been no question about how the claim of being the “Seal of Prophets” about these historical personalities could be considered valid, since after the death of Jesus, Mani came and claimed to be the Paraclete of Jesus and the “Seal of Prophets.” And after Mani’s death, Muḥammad came and, as Muslim writers believe, he was the Paraclete of Jesus and the “Seal of Prophets.”

**Keywords:** Seal of Prophets, Johannine, Paraclete, Jesus, Mani, Muḥammad.

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## **Coining the Expression “Seal of Prophets”**

The expression “Seal of Prophets” is neither used explicitly by Matthew nor by John, though both of them, have asserted that, after the death of Jesus, whoever claims prophethood is a false prophet. According to Carsten Colpe, it was probably Tertullian (220 CE) who coined the expression “Seal of Prophets” for Jesus through whose *Adventus*, prophecy is fulfilled and, thereupon, the “Vision and the Prophecy” will be forever sealed, because Jesus himself was the “Seal of Prophets,” because of what earlier prophets have prophesized (Colpe 1984, 77). However, relating the expression “Seal of Prophets” to Mani and Muḥammad, Colpe thinks that Mani might have coined the expression for himself and Muḥammad might have taken it from him (Colpe 1984, 74-75). Benzin also traces the expression “Seal of Prophets” to Tertullian’s *Adventus Judaeos*, but refers to Jesus and is used polemically against the Jews. It appears in the interpretation of an important passage from the Book of Daniel (9:24) (Robzin 2010, 566), similar to the Quran 33:40, which uses the term Prophet (*nabī*) for Muḥammad addressing in polemics against the Jews in Medina after his migration from Mecca in the year 622 CE.

## **Relating Jesus to the Johannine Concept of the Paraclete**

“The word Paraclete is peculiar in the New Testament to the Johannine literature” (Brown 1967, 113). Only John has used the word “Paraclete” in the Fourth Gospel. In the Synoptic Gospels, the word “Paraclete” is not used, although the concept of the Paraclete, which John developed theologically in the Fourth Gospel, is drawn from the Synoptics, the Hebrew Bible, and the secular Greek language. According to Brown, “the quest for seeking a Hebrew equivalent may be in vain” (Brown 1967, 115) for the Johannine theologically developed concept of the Paraclete. For all intents and purposes, one must depend on the Greek term “Paraclete” with all its forensic functions such as an “advocate,” “counsellor,” “intercessor,” “mediator,” “spokesperson,” “teacher,” or “witness.”

Concerning “the title Paraclete,” Raymond Brown suggests that it is evident from five passages (John xiv. 15-17, 26; xv. 26-27; xvi. 7-11, 13-14) that the title Paraclete is given to someone other than Jesus. Jesus is a prophet or more than a prophet. Mark used the term Prophet as Jesus’s own designation (Mark 6:4). Matthew says that Jesus was a prophet and more than a prophet,

namely divine. Jesus is neither an intercessor identified as the Paraclete, nor is the Paraclete in heaven. Brown categorizes the information regarding the Johannine concept of the Paraclete into four groups, which I am rendering *verbatim* as follows:

- (a) The coming of the Paraclete and the relation of the Paraclete to Father and Son: The Paraclete will come (but only after Jesus departs): xv.26, xvi. 7, 8, 1. The Paraclete comes forth from the Father: xvi. 26. The Father will give Paraclete at Jesus’s request: xiv. 16. The Father will send the Paraclete in Jesus’s name: xvi. 26. Jesus when he goes away will send the Paraclete from the Father: xvi. 7.
- (b) The Identification of the Paraclete: The Paraclete is called “another Paraclete”: xiv. 16.<sup>1</sup> The Paraclete is the Spirit of Truth: xiv. 17; xv. 26; xvi. 15. The Paraclete is the Holy Spirit: xiv. 26.
- (c) The relation of the Paraclete to the disciples: The disciples can recognize the Paraclete: xiv. 17. The Paraclete will be within the disciples and remain with them: xiv. 16-17. The Paraclete will teach the disciples everything: xiv. 17. The Paraclete will announce to the disciples the things to come: xvi. 13. The Paraclete will take what belongs to Jesus to announce to the disciples: xi. 14. The Paraclete will glorify Jesus: xvi. 11. The Paraclete will bear witness on Jesus’s behalf: xv. 29. The Paraclete will remind the disciples of all that Jesus told them: xi. 26. The Paraclete will speak only what he hears and nothing on his own: xvi. 13.
- (d) The relation of the Paraclete to the world: The world cannot accept the Paraclete: xvi. 17. The world neither sees nor recognizes the Paraclete: xiv. 17-18. Against the background of the world’s hate and persecution, the Paraclete will prove the world wrong about sin, justice, and condemnation: xvi. 8-11. (Brown 1967, 113-14)

From the above forensic functions of the Johannine concept of the Paraclete, it is implied that the Paraclete is an advocate or defender in which the Holy Spirit comes to the defense of disciples when they are on trial (Matt,

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1. Another Paraclete can also be rendered: The Father will give another “Paraclete” thus removing any suggestion of prior Paraclete. George Johnston comments that ““as another Paraclete’ the Paraclete is presence of Jesus ... when Jesus is absent” (Johnston 1970, 80).

x. 20; Acts vi. 10) and proves the world wrong. The Johannine picture of the Paraclete does not indicate that he will protect the disciples when they face difficulties. The forensic function of the Paraclete can only be attributed to the witness (xv. 26) by giving evidence as the witness in the trial before Pilate. Given the meaning of the word Paraclete as “helper,” or “friend” and thus as an intercessory, there is nothing in the Paraclete passages to indicate it as the right meaning, because “helper” or “friend” does not do justice to the Paraclete who as a witness proves the world wrong. In John ii, i, Jesus intercedes in the heaven on behalf of the Christians who fall into sins, but the Paraclete is not in heaven. After Jesus’s death, Father would send the Paraclete, who would reside among his (*immediate*) disciples.

Thus, from the above, it is to be concluded that Jesus was a prophet or more than a prophet (i.e. divine), but not the Paraclete. After Jesus departed from this world, Father would send the Paraclete at the request of Jesus to dwell among Jesus’s (*immediate*) disciples, who would complete the unfinished task, which Jesus was unable to accomplish in his lifetime due to his early death.

### **The Background and Purpose of John’s Gospel in General and the Johannine Concept of the Paraclete**

John has himself indicated that he has made selections of material from the Synoptic Gospels, the Hebrew Bible, and the secular Greek language, and theologially developed the historical material before him, rather than simply record the historical facts as Matthew, Mark, and Luke did in their Gospels. John’s Gospel can in some ways be characterized as an interpretation of various elements from the Synoptic Gospels, the Hebrew Bible, and secular Greek language. Now, at the time when John wrote his Gospel, “Christianity as the religious tradition had finally separated from its historical origins and the bonds with Judaism” (Scott 1908, 4). In his Gospel, John endeavored to revive and revitalize the teachings of Jesus and their purpose before they could wither away so that the purpose of the abiding value of Jesus’s historical life can be actualized. For this purpose, at Jesus’s request, Father would send the Paraclete to dwell among his (*immediate*) disciples so that they continue and abide by the teachings of Jesus.

For the purpose of my research, we have so far established that Jesus was not the Paraclete as John describes in the Fourth Gospel. Nowhere is it

indicated in the Johannine references to the Paraclete that he would be the “Seal of Prophets.” Since Mani and Muḥammad both claim to be the Paraclete of Jesus and the “Seal of Prophets,” it becomes necessary to explore if and how Mani and Muḥammad could be considered the “Seal of Prophets” according to the Johannine concept of the Paraclete.

### **Mani as the Paraclete of Jesus and the “Seal of Prophets” as Reflected in his Authored Works**

Prior to the recent findings by Western scholars of Mani in the nineteenth century, the most important accounts of Mani in Arabic were those of Birūnī’s duplication of Mani’s *Shābuhrgān* and *al-Fihrist* by Muḥammad Ishāq al-Warrāq known as al-Nadīm, the former work was written about 1000 CE and the latter in the 988 CE. “In the opening chapter of the *Shābuhrgān*, preserved in a later Arabic work by al-Birūnī, Mani located himself and his teachings at the final point in a divinely commissioned apostles: a tradition that formed part of the theology of the community in which Mani was raised, the so-called Elchasaites...” (Baker-Brian 2011, 27). Mani claims that wisdom and deeds were always brought to mankind by the messengers of God in every age, so “the revelation has come down, this prophecy in this age through me, Mani, the messenger of the God of truth to Babylonia” (Birūnī 1879, 190).

However, Colpe thinks that Mani himself might have coined the expression “Seal of Prophets” as Mani in his earlier career had not used it. In the *Shābuhrgān* as well as in the *Living Gospel*, arranged according to the twenty-two letters of Aramaic language, Mani lays claim to the title “Seal of Prophets” and the Paraclete of Jesus (Baker-Brian 2011, 53).<sup>1</sup> In the reworking of al-Birūnī’s *Shābuhrgān* in the revised edition of the Manichaeans *Archegos Jazdānboḥt* by Ibn al-Murtaḍā, we find its parallel in Muḥammad al-Shahrastānī’s *Kitāb al-milal wa-l-niḥal* (Colpe 1984, 74-75; also see “Ibn Murtaḍa” in *Encyclopaedia of Islam*).

“In the later Manichaean writings such as in a section of the Coptic work *The Chapters* constituted an intrinsic part of Manichaean identity as the culminant of religious tradition” (Gardner and Lieu 2004, 265-68). The

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1. However, I am not sure, if al-Birūnī used the Arabic word *rasūl* for the word Paraclete. If that is the case, then it would come close to one of the descriptions of the Paraclete, whom the Father would send, but that would be from among the (*immediate*) disciples of Jesus. Obviously, Muḥammad was not one of the (*immediate*) disciples.

*Shābuhrgān* and the *Living Gospel* disclosed the sense of his own identity as a messenger charged with the task of propagating divine teachings, similar to John's portrayal of the Paraclete whom Father would send among his (*immediate*) disciples after Jesus departed from this world. When we try to identify Mani as the Paraclete of Jesus, there are no forensic functions that are ascribed to him, nor are there any indications either in the Synoptics or the Fourth Gospel that the Paraclete would be Mani. John only says that the Paraclete would come among Jesus's (*immediate*) disciples as we can see from the purpose for which and the circumstances under which John wrote his Gospel as discussed in the previous section. More importantly, however, from within the Judeo-Christian tradition, there is no genealogical linkage to serve as evidence to connect Mani as the Paraclete of Jesus.

However, viewing the expression "Seal of Prophets" from the perspective of the historical development of religious thought, Wilfred Cantwell Smith states that when Mani appeared on the scene around almost more than two hundred years after the death of Jesus, "(t)he traditions of the Jews, the Christians, the Zoroastrians, and the Buddhists had originated from certain content and were developing gradually a form" (Smith 1978, 95). Mani was the first to discern the form and put his revelation in a self-conceptualized definable scriptural form. Smith's view is highly generalized and would need historical evidence to establish that when Mani appeared on the scene at that stage of the historical development of religious traditions of the Jews, the Christians, the Zoroastrians, or the Buddhists had yet no scriptural definable form. Nonetheless, the difficulty remains, as Smith points out, in viewing Jesus, Mani, and Muḥammad as the "Seal of Prophets."

### **Muḥammad as the Paraclete of Jesus and the "Seal of Prophets"**

Concerning Muḥammad, Muslim scholars claim that he was the Paraclete of Jesus and the "Seal of Prophets." Most probably, as Colpe thinks, the expression "Seal of Prophets" could have been overtaken in the Islamic religious tradition from the Manichaean writings translated into Arabic. However, we do not find an exact equivalent of the Greek word Paraclete either in the Quran or the hadith literature. The Greek word Paraclete translated into Arabic as *al-barqlītus* came to be known much later in about 700 AH (Guillaume 1950, 291), while the *Qur'ān* was revealed to Muḥammad from the 612 CE to 632 CE. Much later

after 700 CE, “the earliest translations of the Bible were made in the late 8<sup>th</sup> century after the rise of Islam” (Demiri 2013, 63), “The Alexandria Vulgate Bible, also known as the Egyptian Vulgate, is believed to date back to the 10<sup>th</sup> or even 9<sup>th</sup> century. It was widely read and recognized as authentic by the Christians at that time” (Demiri 2013, 65).

However, the thirteenth and late fourteenth centuries proved a fruitful time for the theological interactions between Christians and Muslims, when Muslim writers explored other religious traditions, in particular Judaism and Christianity, through a direct study of their readily available scriptures. Many prominent figures compiled treatises and commentaries on Christianity. In this era, we find the Ḥanbalī jurist Taqī al-Dīn ibn Taymiyya (d. 1328), known for his work entitled *Takhjīl ahl al-Injīl* among other works on the subject. Ibn Taymiyya “sees no way of demonstrating or verifying whether Jews and Christians altered the very word of the text (*tahrīf al-lafz*)” (Hoover 2010, 478-79). Another Ḥanbalī jurist, who was actively engaged in polemics against Jews and Christians was Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya (d. 1350) known for his work *Hidāyat al-ḥayārā fī ajwibat al-Yahūd wa-l-Naṣārā*. This work draws mainly from Ibn Taymiyya’s *al-Jawāb al-ṣaḥīḥ*, but also from *Kitāb al-fiṣal* by Ibn Ḥazm (d. 1064). As opposed to Ibn Taymiyya, Ibn Ḥazm maintains that the Judeo-Christian scriptures are corrupted and, following Ibn Ḥazm, Ibn Qayyim does the same, but somehow, he sways between Ibn Taymiyya’s position and that of Ibn Ḥazm (Hoover 2010, 478-79). Nonetheless, positively speaking of him, Ibn Qayyim contributes to the discourse and “cites indicating in the texts such as Deuteronomy 18:15, 33:2; John 14: 10-13, 24-37; and Isaiah 42: 1-7 and finds the name Muḥammad explicitly mentioned in the text Habakkuk 3:3 and 3:9” (Hoover 2010, 486). In proving Muḥammad’s prophethood, he follows Ibn Qutayba and draws heavily from Ibn Taymiyya’s book *Takhjīl ahl al-Injīl*. None of these authors explicitly mentions the word *al-Fārqlīṭ* (Paraclete) as one finds in John’s Gospel of the Arabic translation of the *Egyptian Vulgate Bible*, except that they apologetically assert and criticize Christian doctrines based on what is stated in the Muslim scriptures.

However, Abū al-Rabī‘ Najm al-Dīn al-Ṭūfī (d. 1316) is the one who devoted his entire *Commentary on the Christian Scripture* (*al-Ta’līq ‘alā al-Anājīl al-‘arba’a wa-l-ta’līq ‘alā al-Tawrāt wa-‘alā gharīḥa*) in which he refers to the idea of *al-Fārqlīṭ* to prove that it refers to Muḥammad. Before reducing his *Commentary* into writing, al-Ṭūfī made sure that his references to John’s Gospel belong to the *Egyptian Vulgate Bible*, which was recognized as

authentic among the circles of the Christians at the time (Demiri 2013, 65). He wrote this Commentary on the Christian Bible to refute a certain Christian by the name Mu'taman ibn al-'Assāl (d. 1253), who wrote a book entitled *al-Sayf al-murshaf fī l-radd 'alā l-muṣḥaf* (*Whetted sword in refutation of the Scripture*).

Before embarking on the critical comments on the *Fārqlīṭ* (Paraclete) as described in John's Gospel at several places, I would focus only on the paragraphs pertaining to the Paraclete whom Father would send at the request of Jesus after his death and that he would be the "Seal of the Prophets."

Among other things, he (Jesus) mentions the Paraclete in various places, and the clearest of what he mentions is where he says: "But the Paraclete, the Holy Spirit (*Rūḥ al-Qudus*) that my Father would send in my name, he shall teach everything and he shall remind you of everything I have said to you". Muslim writers equate this with the name of the Prophet Aḥmad referring to its parallel in the Qur'ānic verse 61:6 "And remember, Jesus, the son of Mary, said: 'O Children of Israel! I am the Apostle (*rasūl*) of God sent to you, confirming the Law [Torah] (that came) before me and giving good tidings of an Apostle to come after me, whose name shall be Aḥmad'". Muslim writers equate Aḥmad, for example, Ibn Qutayba (276/889) who understands the Paraclete, the Holy Spirit, speaking nothing but the truth that is revealed to him, who will come after Jesus in confirmation of him and inform people of the things to come (John 16: 13-14), as a reference to Muḥammad and descriptions of his attribute such as who is a mercy for all creatures (Q 21:107) and most kind and merciful for the believers (Q 9:128). Thus, al-Ṭūfī asserts as a critical comment that "If Muḥammad were not the one whom Christ alluded to, it would necessarily impugn the veracity of (Christ's) promise". (Demiri 2013, 315, 343-45)

Further down in the same paragraph, al-Ṭūfī brings about Muḥammad's being informed that he was the "Seal of Prophets" and that there was no prophet after him, except for a lying pretender (Demiri 2013, 345).<sup>1</sup> According to al-Ṭūfī, this statement of John confirms what is stated in the Quranic verse 33:40, "he (Muḥammad) is the apostle of God and the 'Seal of Prophets.'"

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1. In Islam and as in Christianity, Mani was considered a false prophet.

Al-Ṭūfī also interprets John’s statement “And I shall ask from the Father, and He shall give you another *Fārqlīt* (Paraclete) so that he may abide with you forever. The Spirit of whom the world cannot kill [al-Ṭūfī reads it as *yaqtulūhu* instead of *yaqbalūhu*, meaning accept], because they do not see him and do not know him” (Demiri 2013, 314, 347). Al-Ṭūfī’s interpretation seems to be in line with Ibn Taymiyya’s and later Ibn Qayyim’s understanding of Spirit of Truth (*Ruh al-Ḥaqq*), which seems to be applicable both to Muḥammad and *Rūḥ al-Qudus*; i.e. Gabriel, the messenger of divine revelations. When one views this interpretation of the Spirit of Truth from within Islamic theological and religious tradition, it makes sense. However, John is speaking of the Paraclete that shall reside with and among the (*immediate*) disciples of Jesus at that time and that would enable them to keep the Christian religious tradition alive and not withered away after its separation from Judaism. However, this equating of John’s concept of *Fārqlīt* (Paraclete) does not explain the linkage that connects its historical transmission to Muḥammad, except that, having known about it from the *Egyptian Vulgate Bible* in Arabic translation, al-Ṭūfī simply equates John’s concept of *Fārqlīt* to Muḥammad.

We shall now turn to the Quran 33:40 itself. When one reads the verse in its entirety that “Muḥammad is not the father of any of your men, but (he is) the Apostle (*rasūl*) of God, and the ‘Seal of Prophets’” without taking each part selectively in separation from other parts, then it provides us with the background and the real context in which it was revealed for establishing if Muḥammad can be considered the “Seal of Prophets” (*khātam al-nabīyyīn*) based on the term Prophet (*nabīyyūn*, plural of *nabī*) in the above verse, which was addressed to a Jewish audience in Medina after his migration from Mecca. However, prior to this, Muḥammad was addressed in the Quran by the term Messenger (*rasūl*) and not by the term Prophet (*nabī*). According to Hartmut Bobzin, in the Meccan Sūras “the Qur’ān does not use the expression ‘Prophet (*nabī*) of God’...” (Bobzin 2010, 567), but this is not correct as shown by Bijlefeld. According to Bijlefeld, there are at least twelve Meccan texts in which the term Prophet (*nabī*) occurs. They are (Middle) Meccan Sūras: 37:112; 19:30, 41, 49, 51; 43: 6, 7. Furthermore, it is not quite true as Bobzin claims that the term “Prophet appears predominantly in the Medinan Sūras and plays hardly any role in Muḥammad’s early revelations” (Bobzin 2010, 568). There is, nevertheless, no cogent argument offered by Bobzin that, according to linguistic conventions, two different words, i.e., *rasūl* (messenger) and *nabī* (prophet), could not be used to denote the same meaning or the same word

denoting different meanings in different contexts. On the whole, it would be safe to conclude that the term *rasūl* and the term *nabī* are used interchangeably in the Quran 33:40 and at other places in the Quran in different contexts.

It is widely held, as cited by Bijlefeld from al-Diyārbakrī's *Tārikh al-khamīs fī aḥwāl anfas nafīs* (1302 AH, 319), that Sūra 96 forms the beginning of Muḥammad's ministry as a prophet (*nabī*) and the task of Muḥammad being a messenger (*rasūl*) began with Sūra 74 (Bijlefeld 1969, 13). Both Sūras, the Sūra 96 and Sūra 74, were revealed to Muḥammad in Mecca in 612 CE and around 614 CE respectively. Sūra 96 marks the beginning of the office of Muḥammad's prophecy. After the seed of the prophecy was firmly rooted and past the stage of personal contemplation, Muḥammad is called forth to proclaim publicly God's message. After his heart was purified that demand all the pious deeds and virtues, Muḥammad was commanded to "arise and deliver warnings!" He is now asked to perform public role while he is still in Mecca. It already began as indicated in Meccan Sūra 74 and only after a very brief span of time, say, one or two years after the revelation of Sūra 96. This means, according to the Muslim tradition, that God appointed Muḥammad first as a prophet (*nabī*) as in Sūra 96 in Mecca and then as a messenger (*rasūl*) as in Sūra 74 in Mecca as, for example, in case of other prophets such as Abraham. "God chose him (Abraham) as the prophet (*nabī*) before choosing him as the messenger (*rasūl*)" (Kulaynī 2015, 151). In case of Muḥammad, "when prophecy was established in him, then *Jibrīl* (Gabriel) brought him the message that he was to be a messenger (*rasūl*)" (Kulaynī 2015, 153). Irrespective of whether one holds that there is no mention of the word "prophet" in the Meccan Sūras before Muḥammad's migration, one finds Bobzin's analysis inconclusive.

After this clarification, we shall now turn to the first part of the Quran 33:40, "Muḥammad is not the father of any of your men," which refers to Zayd, the so-called adopted son of Muḥammad. The ethical reason for the Jews not to accept Muḥammad as the prophet was that prophets do not seek political power and are not led by fleshly desires (Bobzin 2010, 576). This point is bound up with Muḥammad's marriage with Zaynab bint Jaḥsh. She was married to Zayd, the so-called adopted son of Muḥammad. After their divorce, Muḥammad married Zaynab. Historians, especially in the Western scholarship, considered it an illicit act. However, the Quran 33:40 refutes it and states that God "did not make any adopted sons your sons in fact." According to the ancient law (or better, custom!), a person or a servant is

treated like other members of the family, but that does not qualify him to be considered a son according to the Islamic law. Thus, Zayd had no legal status like that of other members of Muḥammad’s family. Adoption in the technical sense is not allowed in Muslim Law. Throughout the Quran, there is no mention of anyone’s adopted children having any portion of inheritance in the property of the deceased person who had adopted them.

After clarifying that the word *rasūl* (messenger) and the word *nabī* (prophet) are used in the Quran interchangeably, we shall briefly discuss that in the Quran 33:40, Muḥammad is called the “Seal of Prophets” (*khātam al-nabīyyīn*). All Muslims understand by this that anyone who claims to be a prophet after the death of Muḥammad is a false prophet. Muḥammad was the last prophet in the chain of prophets. Muslim scholars maintain that Muḥammad was the Paraclete of Jesus and the “Seal of Prophets.” Muslim scholars tend to translate the Greek word “Paraclete” as the comforter or counsellor. In the Islamic religious tradition, it is held that God would permit Muḥammad to act as an intercessor on behalf of Muslims who committed sins, but he would be permitted to do so as a prophet, but not as the Paraclete sent by God at the request of Jesus among his (*immediate*) disciples. At present, we do not have evidence about whether Muḥammad could be considered the Paraclete in the Johannine sense of the term. It is possible that it was after the Manichaean works in Arabic, the term *barqlītus* (Paraclete), as suggested by Colpe, was adopted by Muslim scholars who conceived of Muḥammad as the Paraclete of Jesus. It was only after the translation of the *Egyptian Vulgate Bible* in Arabic around ninth or tenth centuries that Muslim writers had access to the theologically developed concept of *Fārqlīt* from John’s Gospel. They simply equated this notion with Muḥammad without explaining how it was historically transmitted to Muḥammad and properly identified Muḥammad as the Johannine concept of the Paraclete (*Fārqlīt*).

## Conclusion

Relating the Johannine theologically developed concept of the Paraclete, our forgoing discussion shows that the Paraclete is someone who is not Jesus, nor is he in heaven. Father would send the Paraclete at the request of Jesus to dwell among his (*immediate*) disciples so as to continue and propagate the teachings of Jesus, though Matthew and John assert that, after the death of Jesus, there would come no other prophets.

Relating the Johannine theologically developed concept of the Paraclete to Mani, who designates himself as the Paraclete of Jesus is a claim without being ascribed to Mani any forensic functions of the Johannine theological concept of the Paraclete. This makes it difficult to explain how one can designate Mani as the Paraclete sent by Father at the request of Jesus, although, as a historical fact, Mani was considered the Paraclete of Jesus and the “Seal of Prophets” in the religious and cultural tradition of Manichaeism just as Jesus was considered the “Seal of Prophets” in the religious and cultural tradition of Christianity.

As for Muḥammad’s designation as the Paraclete of Jesus, the term “Paraclete” was first introduced, as already mentioned before, in the “Vision of the Gospels used in Medina in Circa 700 A. D.” The term “Paraclete” is not used in the Quran or hadiths. Muslim authors became familiar with the Johannine concept of *Fārqlīt* (Paraclete) around ninth or tenth centuries after the *Egyptian Vulgate Bible* was translated into Arabic. They simply equate it with Muḥammad, without providing any explanation as to how this concept was historically transmitted and connected to Muḥammad as the Paraclete of Jesus.

Our current scholarship and resources do not permit us to construct or rather reconstruct Jesus, Mani, and Muḥammad as the “Seal of Prophets.” There is no clear linear historical recourse of the evolutionary trajectory that might have been driven by the religious and social forces that aspired the notion of “Seal of Prophets” in each of these three religious and cultural traditions. It did not develop along a predictable evolution with the exact lineage that connects Jesus, Mani, and Muḥammad to the Johannine concept of the Paraclete and, consequently, as the “Seal of Prophets.” Until further research might bring light into the matter, for now we have to be content with the contention that Jesus, Mani, and Muḥammad are considered the “Seal of Prophets” *independently* in each of these three religious and cultural traditions of Christianity, Manichaeism, and Islam, without invoking the Johannine theologically developed concept of the Paraclete.

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