

silent on the nature of sin not only, but tells next to nothing about its origin, result and remedy. In this respect the latest Sacred Book of the East stands in marked contrast with all the other sacred books of the heathen and the Word of God in the Old and New Testaments. This was noticed as early as the days of the Reformation; for Melancthon says in an introduction to a Latin Koran that he thinks Mohammed "was inspired by Satan, because he does not explain what sin is and sheweth not the reason of human misery."<sup>1</sup>

The passages of the Koran that treat of sin are the few following: Surahs 4:30; 2:80; 4:46; 14:39; also Surahs 2:284-286; 9:116; 69:35; 86:9; 70:19-25, and 47:2, 3.

The nearest approach to a definition that can be gathered from these passages is that sin is a wilful violation of known law or, as Wherry puts it: "Sin, according to most Moslem authorities, is a conscious act committed against known law; wherefore sins of ignorance are not numbered in the catalogue of crimes." This idea of sin gives rise to the later Judaic distinction of sins great and small (Matt. 22:36, cf. Surah 4:30, etc.) on which are based endless speculations of Moslem commentators. Some say there are seven great sins: idolatry, murder, false charge of adultery, wasting the substance of

<sup>1</sup>Quoted in *Literary Remains of Emanuel Deutsch*, London, 1874, p. 62.