

Enslaved Scholars:
The Arabic Writings of Muslim Scholars Enslaved in the Americas
Edited by Mbaye Lo and Carl W. Ernst
The Writings of Omar ibn Said
[Editorial Procedures](#)

Document 11

Notations to the Bible (Ḥawāshī)

Repository: Davidson, NC, n.d. 220.59 B58ar 1811. Davidson College Library.

Saadiyah Gaon, and Joseph Dacre Carlyle, trans. *al-Kutub al-Muqaddasa: wa-hiya kutub al-‘Ahd al-‘Atīq wal-‘Ahd al-Jadīd = The Holy Bible: containing the Old and New Testaments*. 2 vols. Early Arabic Printed Books from the British Library. Newcastle-upon-Tyne: Sarah Hodgson, 1811.

URL:

https://davidsonlibraryexhibits.net/archives/search?query=Omar+ibn+said&query_type=keyword&record_types%5B%5D=Item&record_types%5B%5D=Collection&record_types%5B%5D=SimplePagesPage&record_types%5B%5D=Exhibit&record_types%5B%5D=ExhibitPage&submit_search=Submit

URI: 1280CumarIbnSaid.Hawashi.DC22059B58ARD11-ara1

Provenance: "Old Uncle Moreau's Arabick Bible Presented to the Williams Missionary Association, Davidson College, by Mrs. Ellen Guion, Charlotte, N.C. April 1871." (Davidson Archives & Special Collections Website).

Bibliography: Einboden, Jeffrey. "Davidson Marginalia." Arabic Slave Writings and the American Canon, 2011.

<https://www.niu.edu/arabic-slave-writings/davidson-marginalia/index.shtml>

Notes: The front endpaper contains an apparent personal name in Arabic script. The most likely identification is Mrs. Frances Bowen, the director of a school in Fayetteville from 1810 to 1831, and a member of the Episcopal Church of Fayetteville. She also presided over the establishment there of the "United Female Benevolent Society of North Carolina" in December 1819.¹

The text below includes marginal comments made by Omar ibn Said in a Bible procured for him, which is now preserved in the library of Davidson College. The majority of the annotations consist of Arabic transcriptions of the English titles of thirty-six of the books of the Bible (thirty books have no such annotation). References to this Bible, which lacks page numbers, follow the numbering by folios adopted at Davidson College (using the Latin abbreviations "r" for recto, the front side of the folio, and "v" for verso, the back side). The Arabic transliteration of English words, in which a southern accent may be detected, follows Omar's habitual spelling (e.g., Arabic *dh* to represent English *j*).

Translation

Front endpaper

"Praise be to God."

"The Good is with God" (Good formula).

"The Good is with God" (Good formula).

Mrs. Frances Bowen (*mis fīrasiṣ būmwā*)²

"The Good is with God" (Good formula).

Front flyleaf

“Those who believe” (frequent Qur’anic phrase).

“The Good is with God” (Good formula).

Omar ibn Said ibn Adam.

“Qarun was of the ...” (Qur’an 28:76).

Folio	English Title of Biblical Book	Arabic Transcription of English
4r	First Book of Moses, Genesis	<i>kitāb mūsā dhīnisiṣ</i>
22r	Second Book, Exodus	<i>kitāb al-thānī dhīnisiṣ</i> ³
37r	Leviticus	<i>alībitakas</i>
76r	Joshua	<i>dhushuā</i>
85r	Judges	<i>dhuzjis</i>
94r	Ruth the Moabite	<i>rūth baṣabā (?)</i>
96r	First Book of Samuel	<i>al-awwal kitāb sāmūl</i>
144v	First Book of Chronicles	<i>al-awwal kitāb kanakal</i>
168r	Ezra	<i>li- ‘izra</i> [“by Ezra”]
171v	Nehemiah	<i>niḥimyā</i> ⁴
180r	Job	<i>dhūba</i>
189v	Book of Psalms	<i>kitāb sām</i>
230r	Isaiah	<i>aydhī ‘a</i>
248v	Jeremiah	<i>zarimā ‘ya</i>
267v	Lamentations	<i>leman tays</i>

270r	Ezekiel	<i>ḥiziqiyāl</i>
296r	Joel	<i>dhoyil</i>
297r	Amos	<i>ʿīmaṣ</i>
300r	Jonah	<i>dhūna</i>
302v	Nahum	<i>nīham</i>
303r	Habakkuk	<i>ḥabaqak</i>
304r	Zephaniah	<i>zifʿināya</i>
311r	Matthew	<i>māsyuh</i>
322r	“The Good”	(Good formula)
322v	Mark	<i>ma ʿk</i>
329v	Luke	<i>luk</i>
341v	“...what those who...”	(Qurʿanic phrase)
342r	John	<i>dhūn</i>
351r	Acts of the Apostles	<i>īʿakṣu dhībāsila</i>
369v	1 Corinthians	<i>al-kuwinsin</i>
378v	Galatians	<i>kalāsīn</i>
380v	Ephesians	<i>afīdhan</i>
382r	Philippians	<i>fīlībīn</i>
383v	Colossians	<i>kalāsan</i>
385r	1 Thessalonians	<i>taslūnī</i>
387r	1 Timothy	<i>timatī</i>
390r	Philemon	<i>fīlīman</i>
390v	Hebrews	<i>ḥibrū</i>

394v	1 Peter	<i>bitah</i>
401r	Revelation	<i>rebelesan</i>

Endpaper, 407v

“Praise be to God, with much praise. He bestows bounties that overflow” with the good.⁵

My name is Omar bin Said son of Adam, but from my mother’s side, (she is) Umm Hānī Yarmak. O God! May God refresh her grave.

1. Coon, *North Carolina Schools and Academies*, 66, 397, 566; Huske, *A History of the Parish of St. John’s, Fayetteville, N.C., from 1817 to 1831*, 16.

2. Huske, *A History of the Parish of St. John’s*, 16.

3. By mistake, the title of Genesis is repeated here in place of Exodus.

4. The annotations to Ezra and Nehemiah only consist of short vowel marks added to the printed text.

5. From the *Mukhtaṣar* of al-Khalīl, a popular legal work quoted twice in the autobiography.