

gnarled tree, or intermittent fountain in Arabia. Sacrifices were common, and the blood of the offering was smeared over the rude stone-altars, while the flesh was eaten by the worshiper. Such was the pagan worship of early Arabia.

**The Jews of
Arabia**

The Jews came to Arabia from the earliest times. Since the days of Solomon the Red Sea was a center of busy traffic, and the Hebrews had probably located at the trading ports. A number of native Arab tribes also embraced Judaism, and at the time of Mohammed we find this people scattered over the peninsula in small compact colonies. The fact that the Koran refers repeatedly to the Jews, and calls them, as well as the Christians, "People of the Book," shows that they possessed and used the Old Testament, and that, doubtless, many of them could read and write. These Jewish colonies, with their teachers and their Talmud, had, for centuries, exerted a strong educational influence toward monotheism. And it is evident, not only from the Koran, but from the earliest Moslem biographies of Mohammed, that he was greatly indebted to Judaism, both for his doctrines and narratives.

**Early
Christianity in
Arabia**

There is no doubt that Christianity also was widely diffused in many parts of Arabia at the time of Mohammed. The picture of the Christian monk in his desert-cell, with his night-