

## A Christian's Guide to the Koran, Lesson 17, **ABRAHAM THE MUSLIM**

Sura 2, "the cow", verses 116-153.

Though not in its clearest form yet, in 2:116 the Koran begins its teaching that Jesus is not the Son of God. "And they say, Allah has taken a son. Praise be to him." "They" can only refer to the Christians. And their belief does not seem to concur with the belief of the writer. He complains in this paragraph that both Jews and Christians will not be happy until we follow their religion. And of course he adds that Allah forbids same. He calls "losers" those who are unfaithful to Muhammad's recitations.

Next comes the Koranic version of the story of Abraham ( 2:124ff), a man central to Islamic hopes. If his story is the Biblical one, Islam falls.

"Ibrahim" comes right to the point in this narrative, when told he will be an "imam", or spiritual leader. He asks, "And who is my offspring?" Allah immediately points to his covenant with Ishmael. Then the author has Abraham praying that God will raise up a Muslim nation, and that a messenger will be raised up who will recite Allah's verses. Hence, Islam is an Abrahamic religion, and Muhammad is nothing short of an answer to Abraham's prayers.

To re-enforce this use of the word "Muslim" 2,600 years before it came into existence, Allah tells Abraham, "Be Muslim," to which Abraham responds, "I have become a Muslim to the lord of the world."

Some have seen in this phrase "lord of the world" a clear reference to the Bible's mention of Satan, also called "god of this world." Some would go so far, then, as to say that Islam's god is none other than Lucifer. Such an interpretation does explain the vicious attack on the person of Jesus in this book. But for now, I only offer it as one interpretation.

The writer goes on in verses 132ff to relate how Abraham passes on to his sons and grandson Jacob the mandate that they must die Muslims. And Jacob, on his own deathbed, says in passing, to his sons (later the 12 tribes of Israel), that Abraham, Ishmael, and Isaac are their "fathers." Of course, the Bible is very clear that Ishmael, though promised greatness, is not in the ancestral line that leads to Jewish kingship, or Messiahship, or priesthood. He is in fact one half Egyptian, and does not therefore meet the test of being in that holy line.

Also in this enlightening series of verses is the first mention of the "polytheists" when speaking of Christians. In both Jewish and Islamic eyes, Christians worship three gods. The concept of a being Who can be Three and yet One is over the top for the one who cannot hear the voice of the shepherd.

For the record, our Scriptures do of course teach this. Jesus pointed out that even David had a glimpse of it, and questioned the Pharisees as to how David could call one of his descendants (Jesus) "Lord" in that famous text that declares, "The Lord said to my Lord, sit at my right hand until I make your enemies your footstool." The Jewish Messiah was to be God Himself!

The Father and the Son being Divine is thus a concept that goes back at least to the Psalms. And what of Genesis, with its "Let us" passages? A plural idea, yet no Jew ever thought of his God in the plural. Yet from the beginning, as the Spirit of God hovered over the waters at the command of Father and Son, a Trinity was being pictured.

We will keep our eyes open for much use of this word "polytheist", and how Muhammad used it to write off the entire Christian experience, in suras to come.

Next comes a statement that good Muslims are to believe in all three expressions of God's revelations: Moses, Jesus, Muhammad. But, as always, he reminds followers of the first two groups that they turned away from the truth. This is why Muhammad is being sent to them.

142ff. Muslims pray toward Mecca. This practice stems directly from the Koran. Though "we have seen you turning your face toward the heaven," Allah desires a more earth-centered remembrance. To be specific, an Arabian one. The prayers of Islamists are thus to turn to (v. 144) the "forbidden" mosque, known historically as Masjid ul Haraam. Sacred. But forbidden.

We have actually passed over some verses that already spoke of this mysterious house. V. 125: "We made the house as a resort for people and a haven." And indeed it is such a place to this day. A resort. And if you happen to be a Muslim, a very safe place. Unfortunately, that safety does not apply to non-Muslims, for infidels are not permitted anywhere near it. Hence the "forbidden" mosque.

A little research on this special place gets into some murky traditions, but perhaps enlightening for our purposes. It is believed that angels first built a house in this spot, to reflect a house in heaven. Shades of the Biblical Temple here. Everything Moses and Solomon created was a picture of the true, indeed. So here in Mecca is a competing picture.

This heavenly Meccan site was damaged by a storm and rebuilt by no less than Abraham and Ishmael. More competition. We know that the House of God, in terms of people, was begun by Abraham and Isaac. And Jacob. And Judah. And David. And Jesus.

Deeper still we must dig. For, inside the mosque, Abraham also began the Kaaba, a roughly cubic structure about 40 feet in all directions. There the great patriarch placed a stone he had received from Heaven, black, 12 inches in diameter, and today surrounded by a silver frame. Pilgrims either kiss or point to it in reverential awe. As their Catholic counterparts, they deny that their acts should be interpreted as worship.

Rulers of the earth are enjoined by my Bible to kiss *the Son of God*. In this context, kissing is a sign of allegiance and recognition of ultimate power. Muslims kiss the rock. For, five times a day they kneel facing not only Mecca, not only the Kaaba, but a rock purported to have come from heaven.

We shall speak of this place again as the Koran has more to say about it. For now let it be noted that this Kaaba became the center of idolatry in the days leading up to Muhammad's take-over. One of the idols worshiped in that building was Allah, the moon god. One line of thought is that Muhammad specifically chose that god to elevate to the headship of his new religion, as he entered the Kaaba and destroyed all the others. After all, they say, his father was an Allah-worshiper. To this day the moon is represented as the official symbol of Islam. I do not offer this as hard evidence of the idolatrous background of this religion, only as one possibility. There is enough in the Koran and the study of Islam that is clearly anti-Christ and false, that there is no need to create arguments based on speculation.

One other bit of Biblical light, and then we must move on. Daniel prayed regular prayers also. Praying regular prayers is not forbidden in Scripture. He also faced a holy city, Jerusalem, where the Hope of Israel and the Hope of the world shall one day reside. Students of the Lord know that it is not the Mecca of Muhammad, or the Rome of the Popes and Caesars, or the Babylon of Nebuchadnezzar and Saddam Hussein that shall be the eternal city. That issue has been resolved long ago, as our Lord says, "Yet have I set my King on my holy hill of Zion."

Jerusalem. The city of peace shall one day know the rule of the Prince of Peace. Truly our God "makes Jerusalem a praise in the earth (Isaiah 62:7)."

I close the lesson this time with one more smack in the face of Christians and Jews. Verse 146. While admitting up front that people of the book "know it as they know their sons," Muhammad goes from there to saying that "surely a group of them will hide the truth." You see? Some people know the Bible so well that they know how to manipulate it in such a way as to keep you from knowing it. He seems desperate to explain to those listening to him now that all which has come before is not to be trusted. Only he, Muhammad the Prophet, should have that privilege. We will spare you the comments made about the "doubters" this time.

Next time, jihad!