

# HISTORICITY OF THE HAMANS MENTIONED IN THE QUR'AN AND THE BIBLE

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Controversy has prevailed since 1698 about historicity of the Haman who, according to the Quran, was associated with the court of the Pharaoh to whom Moses was deputed as a prophet by the Almighty Allah. Marraccio, George Sale, Rev. E.M. Wherry, Encyclopaedia Britannica, and Encyclopaedia of Islam are some of the noteworthy critics in this behalf. They were inspired by the biblical book of Esther in which a mythical Haman figured as a principal character. We propose to examine here various aspects of the controversy in the light of recent historical researches and archaeological discoveries in order to assess justifiability or otherwise of the criticism of the orientalisists.

## Mention of the Haman in the Qur'an

Let us first see what the Qur'an says about the Haman in question. He has been mentioned at six places in the Holy Qur'an. Reproduced below is Pickthall's translation of the verses containing reference to him with Arabic text appearing on the opposite page.

- (a) "Lo, Pharaoh exalted himself in the earth and made its people castes. A tribe among them he oppressed, killing their sons and sparing their women. Lo, he was of those who work corruption. And We desired to show favour unto those who were oppressed in the earth, and to make them the inheritors, and to establish them in the earth, and show Pharaoh and Haman and their hosts that which they feared from them."<sup>1</sup>
- (b) "And the family of Pharaoh took him up, that he might become for them an enemy and a sorrow. Lo, Pharaoh and Haman and their hosts were ever sinning."<sup>2</sup>
- (c) "And Pharaoh said : O Chiefs, I know not that ye have a god other than me, so kindle for me (a fire), O Haman, to bake the mud; and set up for me a lofty tower in order that I may survey the God of Moses; and Lo, I deem him of the liars".<sup>3</sup>
- (d) "And Korah, Pharaoh and Haman, Moses came unto them with clear proofs (of Allah's Sovereignty), but they were boastful in the land. And they were not winners (in the race)."<sup>4</sup>
- (e) "And verily We sent Moses with Our revelations and a clear warrant Unto Pharaoh and Haman and Korah, but they said; a lying sorcerer."

"And when he brought them the Truth from Our presence, they said: Slay the sons of those who believe with him, and spare their women. But the plot of the disbelievers is in naught but error."<sup>5</sup>

- (f) "And Pharaoh said : O Haman, Build for me a tower that haply I may reach the roads, the roads of the heavens, and may look upon the God of Moses, though verily I think him a liar. Thus was the evil that he did made fairseeming unto Pharaoh, and he was debarred from the (right) way. The plot of Pharaoh ended but in ruin"<sup>6</sup>

### Criticism of Western Scholars

Some prominent orientalist have not been able to identify correctly the Haman of the Quran and hence their criticism about his historicity. The first critic to enter the lists in this behalf was Marraccio, Confessor of Pope Innocent XI. Criticism of other orientalist is by and large based on his critical note. We reproduce hereunder their critical observations:-

- (a) English rendering of critical note appearing at page 256 of Marraccio's Latin translation of the Qur'an.

"Mahumet has mixed up sacred stories. He took Haman as an adviser of Pharaoh whereas in reality he was adviser of Ahaseurus, King of Persia. He also thought that the pharaoh ordered construction for him of a lofty tower from the top of which he could see the god of Moses which if true would be inferior to him. There is not doubt that he borrowed the story of this tower from the story of the Tower of Babel. It is certain that in the Sacred Scriptures there is no such story of the Pharaoh. Be that as it may, Mahumet has related a most incredible story"<sup>7</sup>

- (b) George Sale and Wherry have stated :-

"Haman : This name is given to pharaoh's Chief Minister, from which it is generally inferred that Muhammad has here made Haman the favourite of Ahaseurus, King of Persia, and who indisputably lived many ages after Moses, to be that prophet's (Moses') contemporary. But how-so-ever this mistake may seem to us, it will be very hard, if not impossible, to convince a Muhammadan of it".<sup>8</sup>

- (c) Professor Torrey has indulged in criticism to the effect that the Prophet Muhammad drew upon Rabbinic legend of Esther and even adapted the story of the Tower of Babel.<sup>9</sup>

- (d) Professor Lammens has mentioned "the most glaring anachronism" and "the confusion between Haman, Minister of King Ahaseurus and the Minister of Moses' Pharaoh".<sup>10</sup>

It may be mentioned in passing that Professor Lammens, moreover, ruefully bewailed that even after the death of Prophet Muhammad, the scribes of the Quran dared NOT revise the 'qirava Mushhura' or textus receptus in order to remove interalia such 'a glaring anachronism' which he alleged to exist. Thus he indirectly admitted that unlike the text of the various books of the Bible including the Book of Esther which were significantly altered in later periods, the original text of the Quran as revealed remained in its pristine purity, which in fact, is a unique feature of this holy book as is also admitted by all its critics.

- (e) Raphael Patai in his book entitled "The Arab Mind" has talked of anachronism and "Koranic ahistoricity" which according to him displays lack of historical sequence.

In support of his contention, he has interalia given the example of Haman.<sup>11</sup>

- (f) Maxime Rodinson in his life of Muhammad has talked of 'astonishing anachronism' and of the book of Esther having been the source of the story of the Quranic Haman.<sup>12</sup>

- (g) In his History of the Arab's Hitti has sarcastically remarked: "Haman the favourite of Ahaseurus is himself the minister of Pharaoh."<sup>12</sup>

- (g2) Dr. Kaufmann has referred to 'confusions' about mixing up "the stories of Moses, Esther and the Tower of Babel by having Pharaoh ask Haman to build for him a tower."<sup>12b</sup>

- (h) Encyclopaedia Britannica (1929 and 1960 editions) also alleged that confusion existed in the Qur'an in respect of Haman.<sup>13</sup>

- (i) (i) The Encyclopaedia of Islam (1927 edition) states :-

"Haman, the Persian Minister hostile to the Jews in the Book of Esther, according to the Koran (XL 25 i.e. 'e' of para. 2 above) acted with Karun (Korah) on Firaun's council and filled the office of grand-vizier. These two learned of the approaching birth of Musa and advised that the boys should be slain and the girls allowed to live.

When Musa appeared as a prophet of God, they called him a liar. Firaun said: 'Haman build me a tower, on which I shall reach the paths, the paths to heaven, and ascend to the God of Musa (Sura XL 38 et seq - i.e. 'f' of 2 above.

That Muhammad placed Haman in this period betrays his confused knowledge of history".<sup>14</sup>

(ii) The Shorter Encyclopaedia of Islam re-echoes the above criticism!<sup>15</sup>

(iii) The latest edition of Encyclopaedia of Islam records : "Haman, name of a person whom the Koran associates with Pharaoh (Firaun) because of a still unexplained confusion with the minister of Ahaseurus in Biblical Book of Esther".<sup>16</sup>

Before proceeding further, we would like to emphasise that information given by Encyclopaedia of Islam as reproduced at (i) above is replete with grave blunders which are misleading.

In the first place, the Qu'ran does not at all describe Haman as 'Grand Vizier' or 'Chief Minister' of Pharaoh. Moreover, it has nowhere stated that Qarun (Korah) was his "minister". To both is applicable the Quranic term 'mala' of the Pharaoh. What is worst is verse 25 of Surah XL does NOT at all relate to the period preceding the birth of Musa as erroneously presumed. On the contrary, it relates to the period following Musa's presentation of his credentials as prophet to the Pharaoh, the Haman, and Korah whereupon the three rejected his commission, dubbing him a lying sorcerer. Not only that; they plotted also to kill sons of his followers, sparing their daughters. What immediately follows in verse 26 of the quoted Surah is obviously the considered proposal of the Pharaoh, to kill Musa himself. It is, moreover, significant to state that the Qu'ran does not support the statement to the effect that these two (namely the Haman & Qarun) learned of the approached birth of Musa and advised that the boys should be slain and girls allowed to live. Obviously realising the utter untenability of these statements made in the first edition of Encyclopaedia of Islam, its editors deleted them in the subsequent edition. The unfounded allegation of confusion relating to Haman is retained in the latest edition which we shall deal with hereafter.

#### Identification of the Haman of the Qur'an.

A. We give hereunder extracts from works of famous historians and eminent archaeologists of ancient Egypt to establish identity of the Haman who was contemporary of the Pharaoh and Moses :-

(a) Professor Sir Flinders Petrie writes :

"The dispersion of worship of Amen is noted above as pointing to its coming through the (Libyan) Oases; and there seems no reason to question that the primitive Oasis worship of Ammon or Hammon, was the origin on the one hand of the Egyptian Amen or Amun, and on the other of the Carthaginian Ball Haman."<sup>17</sup>

(b) Impersonation of the god Amon, which is the same as Haman is clear from (a) above, is also a well established fact. That the high priest of Amon used to impersonate the god Amon is clear from the following quotation from a world famous authority. Professor (late Sir) Flinders Petrie states in "The Religion of Ancient Egypt: "Possibly the combination arose from priests wearing the heads of animals when personating the god, as the high priest wore the ram's skin when personating Amon."

(b) An important question that arises is :- Was it only the supreme god Amon (Haman) whose high priest impersonated that god?

The answer is that priests and priestesses of ancient Egypt as a rule actually impersonated their respective gods and goddesses. Not only that; they also exercised their function.<sup>19</sup> This is evidenced by researches of eminent Egyptologists like Sir Wallis Budge and Professor Jaroslav Cerny whom we quote below :-

(a) In his 'Egyptian Religion' Sir Wallis Budge has stated :-

This chapter may be fittingly ended by a few extracts from the songs of Isis and Nephthys which were sung in the temple of Amen-Ra at Thebes by two priestesses who personified the two goddesses".<sup>20</sup>

(i.e, Isis and Nephthys.)

(b) According to Professor Jurslay Cerny the practice of impersonation of divinities was, in earlier times prerogative of the Pharaoh, but with passage of time it spread to priests and later even to other mortals who officiated for the priests at the rites. This is established by the following quotation from Cerny's 'Ancient Egyptian Religion'.

After the end of the Old Kingdom a vast wave of democratization passed through Egyptian religious and funerary ideas and conceptions and all those privileges which had formerly been the prerogatives of the king were now transferred to other mortals, every dead person was now identified with Osiris, and his son or any officiant performing the rites in his stead was regarded as Harus".<sup>21</sup>

In short, god Amon's (Haman's) high priest, who was a contemporary of Moses and the then pharaoh, was the Haman of the Quran. Identity of the Haman of the Quran having thus been established beyond any doubt, it is absolutely clear that the mythical Haman, of the romantic fable of the Book of Esther, of a much later age has nothing whatsoever to do with the Haman of the Quran. We fail to understand how and why a class of Western critics have confounded the two despite knowing full well that there was a gap of many centuries between the age of the Pharaoh and Moses on the one hand and on the other

the age of a mythical Persian King Ahaseurus and his unhistorical minister Haman. Rodinson's suggestion that the story of the Haman of the Quran was drawn from the Book of Esther which was distorted in transmission and his astonishment at the supposed anachronism are quite unjustifiable.

### Variants of the name Amon

It should be borne in mind that just as pharaoh was the generic title of the kings of ancient Egypt and not the proper name of any particular king, so exactly Amon or Haman was the generic title of the high priest when impersonating the god Amon. Amon is variously spelt as Aman, Amen, Amon, Ammon, Amun, Haman, Hammon, etc., as mentioned at A (a & b above).<sup>22</sup>

It was through Haman, the high priest of Amon at Siwa that Alexander received the oracle legitimatizing his claim to the Egyptian throne.

### Sacerdotal and Political Status of the Haman (Amon)

Identity of the Haman having been established, it is now appropriate to examine what independent and impartial authorities have stated as to his status, titles and functions. That Amon (or Haman) was a very powerful and influential god whose high priest, impersonating him as described above, wielded great power and pelf, will be clear from a perusal of the following extracts from the works of world famous historians and archaeologists :-

(a) Professor Dr. Breasted remarked :

"He was regarded by the people as their great protector and no higher praise could be proffered to Amon when addressed by a worshiper higher praise could be proffered to Amon when addressed by a worshiper than to call him 'the poor man's vizier' who does not accept the bribe of the guilty"<sup>23</sup>

(b) Professor Breasted adds :

"The High priest (of Amon) appears as 'Viceroy of Kush'.

Already.....Amon had gained possession of the Nubian gold country; the High Priest has now gone a step further and seized the whole of the great province of the Upper Nile. The same inscription calls him also 'Overseer of the double granary', who.....was the most important fiscal officer in the State, next the Chief Treasurer himself.

There is now nothing left in the way of authority and power for the High Priest to absorb, he is commander of all the armies, viceroy of Kush, holds the treasury in his hands, and executes the buildings of the gods."<sup>24</sup>

(c) Professor Steindorff has written :

"Thus the 'First Prophet' or the high priest of Amon was at the same time the 'Great Superintendent of Works', and in this capacity was required to take under his charge the extensive building operations connected with the temple, and 'to provide splendour in his sanctuary'. As 'General of the Troops of the God' he commanded the military forces of the temple, like a medieval archbishop and as 'Prefect of the Treasury' had under his control the by no means simple administration of the finance. Nor did his authority extend only over the Amon temple and its priesthood,

He was also 'Prefect of the Prophets of the Gods of the Thebes' and 'Prefect of the Prophets of all Gods of the South and North'. This can mean nothing else than that all the priests of the country were subordinate to him and that he was the supreme spiritual authority of the realm. Of this power he knew how to make good use; and it not frequently happened that the office of high priest in other temples, for example, that of the sun-god of Heliopolis, together with his special subordinate members of the college of Amon, were filled in accordance with his choice. In this manner not only was great political power concentrated in the hands of the Theban priesthood but real material advantages accrued to it as well, since the rich revenues of the old temple lands flowed into the chest of a single body of priests."<sup>25</sup>

History does not mention that the Pharaoh appointed the then Haman as his Vizir (That).

(d) We would like to add the following extract from Professor Sir. Flinders Petrie's "Religious Life in Ancient Egypt":-

"The priesthood of Amen received a seventh of the cultivated land of Egypt, a fiftieth of the population as foreign slaves, and half a million of cattle. This was in addition to all that previous kings had bestowed. As all this property was free of taxes the strain on the rest of the country must have been very heavy. It is no wonder that the high priests seized the office as an hereditary possession, and that they ruled Upper Egypt. There was practically no independent king after Ramessu-III, the rest of the family were increasingly in the hands of a dominant hereditary priesthood, which was the wealthiest force in the land".<sup>26</sup> Later the High Priests (i.e., the Haman first became Pharaoh-makers and then themselves usurped the Pharaohship.

#### Creed of The Ladder To The Sky

(A) Let us now proceed to examine the significance of the command of the Pharaoh to the Haman to burn the (mud) bricks and to erect therewith a skyhigh tower with a

(a) "The majority of scholars, however, regard the book as a romance reflecting the customs of later times, and given an ancient setting to avoid giving offence. They point out that the 127 provinces mentioned are in strange contrast to the historical twenty Persian satrapies; that it is astonishing that while Mordecai is known to be a Jew, his ward and cousin, Esther, can conceal the fact that she is a Jewess; that the known queen of Xerxes (AMESTRIS) can be identified with neither Vashti nor Esther; that it would have been impossible for a non-Persian person to be appointed prime minister, or for a queen to be selected except from the seven highest noble families; that Mordecai's ready access to the palaces is not in consonance with the strictness with which the Persian harems were guarded; that the laws of the Medes and the Persians were never irrevocable; and that the state of affairs in the book, amounting practically to civil war, could not have passed unnoticed by historians if this had actually occurred. The very tone of the book itself, its literary craftsmanship and the aptness of its situations, point rather to a romantic story than a historical chronicle. "Some scholars even trace it to a non-Jewish origin entirely; it is, in their opinion, either a reworking of a triumph of the Babylonian god Marduk (Mordecia) and Istar (Esther) over the Elamite god Human (Haman) and Mashti (Vashti), or the suppression of the Magians by Darius I or even of the resistance of the Babylonians to the decree of Artaxerxes II.

According to this view, Purim is a Babylonian feast which was taken over by the Jews, and the story of which was given a Jewish coloring.

"The Book of Esther did not get into the Biblical canon without a struggle. The apocryphal additions to Esther, now combined in the Rest of Esther, seem to have been added by the Hellenistic Jews of Egypt to supply the lack of religion in the Biblical book of Esther which the rabbis of Palestine had noticed.... These additions are similar to the liberties which the Hellenistic Jews took with other books of the Hagiography, such as Daniel and the Chronicles. They represent attempts to round out the story and to give a more religious tone to the narrative."<sup>36</sup>

(b) "Comparatively few modern scholars of note consider the narrative of Esther to rest on an historical foundation. The vast majority of modern expositors have reached the conclusion that the book is a piece of pure fiction, although some writers qualify their criticism by an attempt to treat it as an historical romance. Most of the proper names in Esther which are



stairway. The question arises ; was the suggestion to ascend to the sky to survey if there really existed Allah of Moses made by way of sarcasm or it conformed to the prevailing Egyptian religious notions of that hoary past?

(a) The idea of the Pharaoh going up the ladder to reach the sky to see the God of Moses, is in consonance with the mythology of ancient Egypt. "The ladder leading to the sky, was originally an element of the Solar faith."<sup>27</sup>

(b) "The desire to ascend to the gods in the sky"<sup>28</sup> was an article of ancient Egyptian religion.

(B) A critical reader would naturally ask the question :

Were mud bricks made and burnt in Egypt in those remote times? It is a well-known fact borne out by archaeological research that mud bricks and baked bricks were manufactured in those remotes ages in Egypt and Babylon as is clear from the following facts culled from the works of well-known authorities:

(a) When Moses accompanied by Aaron (Harun) confronted the Pharaoh with the Divine message, he (the Pharaoh) dismissed them with the sharp phrase : "Get you unto your burdens' implying thereby that they "ought to be at work at the kilns or in the brick fields."<sup>29</sup>

(b) Burned bricks, no doubt, had already been produced simply by containing a fire with mud bricks. In Ur the potters discovered the principle of the closed kiln, in which heat could be controlled.<sup>30</sup> That there existed inter-communication between UR and Ancient Egypt is borne out by the travels of Abraham and his tribesmen to and back from Egypt much earlier than the times of Moses.

(c) "The elements which Egypt borrowed from her eastern neighbour (Mesopotamia) are quite clear.....There was monumental architecture, using bricks in a decorative panelling, a technique which can be traced back to its origins in Mesopotamia but which appeared fully developed in Egypt at this final pre-dynastic period."<sup>31</sup>

(d) "Several most unusual occurrences of burnt bricks in buildings of the 19th and 20th dynasty"<sup>32</sup> were discovered at Nabeshah and Defenneh by Sir Flinders Petrie. It is thus in the very nature of things for the Pharaoh to have commanded the Haman, i.e. the High Priest of Amen, who as mentioned in preceding Paragraph 5 (c) was the "Great Superintendent of Works" to prepare mud bricks and then to bake them so as to build a sky-high tower with a ladder in order to enable him to go up into the sky to see of there really was the God

of Moses, though in his heart of hearts he (the Pharaoh) believed that Moses was a lying sorcerer.

### Confrontation Between The Pharaoh And Moses

The next question that arises is : Why did the Pharaoh and the Haman reject the Divine message of Moses?

- (a) "It is an indisputable fact of history that by the long usage of the country, the Pharaoh was looked upon as a 'god upon earth' - *netar nefer*, 'the good god', and *netar aa*, 'the great god' - 'son of the sun', 'The living *Horus*', who inherited from his father the idea that he was actually on a par with the greatest of the recognised divinities, with *Re* and *Tum*, with *Phthah*, and *Ammon* and *Horus*.....No pure monotheism (as preached by Moses) would for a moment have been compatible with such an intense exaltation",<sup>33</sup> and with the number of gods and goddesses included into "the pantheon running over two thousand".<sup>34</sup>
- (b) The high priest of Amon (i.e, Haman) himself impersonated the most influential god (Amon) and often deputised for the Pharaoh (who was in fact the chief priest). The Divine message of Moses from the one and only Allah, the Sole Creator and Sustainer of the whole universe, therefore, was a threat to the authority of the two who marshalled all their stratagem and stupendous resources to defeat it.

But wonderous are the ways of Allah who worked miracles to smash the designs of the Pharaoh and the Haman and ultimately drowned them both with their hosts. The corpse of the former was, however, recovered and mummified, and this mummy which was excavated in 1881 A.D. is now exhibited in the Cairo Museum, fulfilling the revelation made fourteen centuries ago in verse 92 of Surah. *Al-Yunus (X)*<sup>35</sup>.

Unlike the Bible, the Quran is surely the greatest miracle of all time.

### Critical Examination of (i) The Controversy Raised by Orientalists

#### And (ii) Historicity Of the Haman Of The Bible

- A. We hope we have adduced impartial corroborative evidence to establish historicity of the Haman as mentioned in the Qur'an. Let us now proceed to examine historicity of the sources of information of our worthy orientalist with a view to assessing the validity of their criticism which draws its inspiration only from the Book of Esther as incorporated in the Old Testament. We cite below the comments of well-known Jewish and Christian authorities on its spurious historicity which unfortunately our critics adopted as their model of historicity (their gospel truth).

given as Persian appear to be rather Semitic than of Persian origin....In view of all the evidence the authority of the Book of Esther as a historical record must be definitely rejected."<sup>37</sup>

(c) "Various historical and chronological inaccuracies and improbabilities lead to the conclusion that the book is something less than dependable history....Significant also is the fact that as yet no fragment of the book has been found among the Dead Sea Scrolls, produced by the Qumrah community that existed ca 150 B.C - A.D. 70, nor is there any quotation or allusion to it in the N.T."<sup>38</sup>

(d) "Neither Jews nor Christians, however, have been happy with the presence of the book in the canon of the holy scripture. Its status was hotly debated by the rabbis all through the first two centuries A.D. and they obviously accepted it only because of the demand by the masses. Among Christians also there was question about its status. Martin Luther declared that he wished it did not exist. It must be admitted that without the popularity of the festival of Purim the book would have had little to recommend it for a place in the canon."<sup>39</sup> This is too profane a criterion for determining canonicity of a sacred book like Esther of the Bible.

(e) "The story as such has not been confirmed by any Persian records, and it is often supposed that it cannot be fitted into what is known of Persian History".<sup>40</sup>

(f) Above all the story of the Book of Esther has been adjudged as a "tissue of improbabilities and impossibilities....." Further, notwithstanding the dates which he gives us, the author had in reality no notion of chronology,....That the Book of Esther cannot be regarded as a genuine historical work is avowed even by many ecclesiastical traditionalists....The most essential parts of the story.....are altogether unhistorical and we are forced to the conclusion that the whole narrative is fictitious".<sup>41</sup>

B. (a) From the foregoing quotations it is quite clear that no historian can place any reliance on the fable of the Book of Esther and no scholar can say that its characters, particularly the Haman of Esther, had any historical existence. The scene of the romantic fable of Esther was laid in the reign of the so-called king named Ahasuerus. There is wide divergence of opinion among the authorities as to the correct identity even of this allegedly Persian king. Some authorities are of the opinion that he was Artaxerxes others assert with much confidence that he was Artaxerxes I, while still others would have us believe that it was Artaxerxes II,

Artaxerxes III, Cambyses, or even Darius I. Hoshiander has made elaborate argument in favour of Artaxerxes II (404 - 309 B.C.E.) suggesting that the other name was used because the Jews did not want to offend the Greeks whom Artaxerxes had assisted.<sup>42</sup> This is a concrete case of deliberate anachronism and ahistoricity.

- (b) Webster's Biographical Dictionary contains the following note on Ahashuerus : "Name, as used in the Bible, of two unidentified kings of Persia : (i) the great king whose capital was at Shushan, modern Susa, sometimes identified with Xerxes the Great, but chronological and other data conflict ; (ii) the father of Darius the Mede."<sup>43</sup>

There is thus no denying the facts that :

- (i) the integrity of the text of the Book of Esther was violated by subsequent additions,
- (ii) Our worthy critics unjustifiably adopted the fictitious Haman of this Book of Esther as their model of historicity to adjudge historicity of the Haman of the Quran. And no wonder their judgement was grossly erroneous not only in the context of historicity but also of chronology.

### CONCLUSIONS

In the light of recent historical researches and archaeological discoveries made by independent and impartial world-famous authorities quoted above, we hope we have convincingly established historicity of the Haman of the Qur'an who enjoyed an eminent position in the court of the Pharaoh who was confronted by Moses (peace be upon him). In this connection, there is no question of any anachronism or ahistoricity. Statement made in the Qur'an as far as fourteen centuries ago are thus quite unassailable. Of course, Muhammad, the Unlettered Prophet ('An-Nabi-ul-Ummi, peace be upon him) was not the author of the Qur'an, which was, of course, revealed to him by the Omniscient and Omnipotent Allah.

In this connection verse No:99 of Surah Ta Ha (xx) states : Thus do We related to thee (Muhammad) some stories of what happened before; We have sent thee a Message from our Presence".

It will not be out of place to add that some orientalist have been making groundless allegation about Jewish and Christian foundations of Islam or about the 'pretended inspiration' of the Prophet of Islam. This concrete instance of the Haman of the Qur'an as discussed above proves to the hilt the utter untenability of all such allegations. One is struck with wonder to find that the current Jewish and Christian Scriptures make not even a passing mention of the Haman in question, although he figures so prominently in the

'Oppression' of the Israelites in Egypt and also during their 'Exodus' from Egypt under the leadership of Moses. What is most remarkable is the fact that whereas the Old Testament makes mention of only the perishing of the Pharaoh by drawing, it is to the unique credit of the Qu'ran which revealed fourteen centuries ago that the Almighty Allah had that fateful day ordained the recovery of his corpse, its mummification and exhibition in Cairo Museum about thirty-one centuries after the memorable event. Of course, no human author of the Bible could have foretold so numerous centuries in advance as the revealed Qur'an did, about this significant event which is in fact most striking. Evidently, to say nothing of the rabbis or monks of old whose knowledge was confined to their scriptures, even the present day learned editors of the relevant articles on the subject appearing in Encyclopaedia Britannica as well as Encyclopaedia of Islam, and even eminent historians like Hitti have blundered in this respect.

It is remarkable that what the indefatigable labours of Western archaeologists of Egyptian antiquities and irrefutable researches of historians of ancient Egypt discovered in modern times, was already revealed in the Qu'ran fourteen centuries ago. That Christian and Jewish scholars or Scriptures had nothing of note to lend to or to teach Muhammad or Islam in this behalf, is absolutely clear as stated by Dr. Bunsen and Carlyle. We reproduce hereunder their views on the subject which form an interesting and enlightening reading :

- (a) "We cannot accept the vague and contradictory traditions about Mohammad having been instructed by a Christian monk alternatively called Bahira, Sergius, Georgius, and Nestor, or by a slave Jabr."<sup>44</sup>
- (b) "I know not what to make of that Sergious, the Nestorian monk whom Abu Thaleb and he (Mahomet) are said to have lodged with; or how much any monk could have taught one still so young."<sup>45</sup>
- (c) "The lies which well-meaning zeal has heaped round this man (Mahomet) are disgraceful to ourselves only. When Pococke inquired of Grotious, where the proof was of that story of the Pigeon, trained to pick peas from Mahomet's ear and pass for an angel dictating to him, Grotious answered that there was no proof. It is really time to dismiss all that."<sup>46</sup>

Thus is fully established historical proof of the genuineness of the Revelation of the by the All-Merciful Allah to His Prophet Muhammad. It would no doubt be appreciated that the Qur'an has been revealed essentially not as a book of history or a story book but as a religious Guide to mankind, and that whenever it makes mention of an historical event or person, the objective is to bring home to mankind religious teachings and articles of the Universal Faith, Al-Islam.

## NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. Verses 4 - 6 of Surah Al-Qasas (XXVIII) of the Qur'an
2. Verse 8 of Surah Al-Qasas (XXVIII) of the Qur'an
3. Verse 38 of Surah Al-Qasas (XXVIII) of the Qur'an
4. Verse 39 of Al-Ankabut (XXIX) Qur'an
5. Verses 23 - 25 of Al-Mu'min (XL) Qur'an
6. Verses 36 - 37 of Al-Mu'min (XL) Qur'an
7. Rev. Ludovico Marraccio, Arabic Text with Latin Translation of the Qur'an together with Refutations, Padua (Italy), 1698, p. 526. Rev. Marraccio was Confessor of Pope Innocent XI.
8. George Sale, Translation of the Qur'an London, 1825, p. 239 of Vol. II, and Rev. Wherry's Commentary, p. 154 of Vol. III, London, 1896.
9. Prof. Charles Cutler Torrey, *The Jewish Foundation of Islam*, New York, 1933, pp. 117 & 119.
10. Prof. H. Lammens, *Islam : Beliefs and Institutions*, translated into English from French by Sir S. Denison Ross, London, 1929, pp. 38 & 39.
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22. The variants of the name Amen as Aman, Amon, Amun, Ammon have appeared in quotations given by authorities mentioned at 17 & 18 above. The initial vowel i.e. "A" in these names is interchangeable into 'Ha' so as to give the variants Hamen, Hamon, Hamun, Hammon, etc., as per illustrations given on pp.100, 101 of Wall's 'Proofs of the Interpolation of the Vowel Letters in the Text of the Hebrew Bible' published in 1857 in London indicating how Habel first became 'Habel' and ultimately 'Abel'. 'Harun' is similarly a variant of 'Aaron'. Page 223 of the Westminster Dictionary of the Bible, 1944, gives also the variants Humman and Humban. p.44 of Smith's Classical Dictionary, London, 1858 may also be referred to.
23. Prof. James Breasted. *A History of Egypt*, New York, 1950, p.244.
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28. Prof. Sir Flinders Petrie, *Religious Life in Ancient Egypt*, London, 1924, pp. 84, 208, 209.
29. Prof. George Rawlinson, *Moses : His Life & Times*, New York, 1887, p.90.
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31. John A. Wilson, *The Burden of Egypt*, Chicago, 1951, p.37
32. A.Lucas, *Egyptian Materials and Industries*, London, 1948, pp.63, 64.
33. Prof. George Rawlinson, *Moses : His Life & Times*, New York, 1887, p.88

34. Manchip White, *Ancient Egypt*, London, 1970, p.21.
35. Ayat No. 92 of the tenth Surah (Al-Yunus) is noteworthy. It lays down the verdict of Allah : "But this day We save thee in the body that thou mayest be a portent (example) for those after thee." This Quranic statement was made fourteen centuries ago about the preservation by mummification of the corpse of Rameses II, the Pharaoh of the Exodus (who was drowned about thirteen centuries before Christ). His mummy was recovered in 1881 A.D., and exhibited in Cairo Museum as mentioned at p. 482 of the *Egyptian Antiquities* by Baikie (London, 1932). This furnishes a still further sure proof of the Quran being a revealed book as contrasted with the existing Bible. Verses 6,8,10,23 of Chapter 14 of its Book of Exodus read with verses 11 and 15 respectively of Psalms 106 and 136 clearly state that pharaoh and his hosts perished by drowning. Allah in His Inscrutable Wisdom revealed the ultimate fate of the pharaoh's body not to his contemporary, Moses, the leader of Exodus, but reserved this Revelation to Muhammad (peace be upon him), as his greatest living miracle.
36. *Universal Jewish Encyclopaedia*, New York, 1948, Vol. IV. p.170.
37. *Jewish Encyclopaedia*, London, 1903, Vol. V, pp. 235, 236.
38. *Interpreters One Volume Commentary on the Bible*, London, 1972, pp.239.
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43. Webster's Biographical Dictionary, Springfield, U.S.A, 1958, p.17.
44. De Bunsen, *Islam or True Christianity*, London, 1889, p131.
45. Thomas Carlyle, *Hero-worship*, London, 1889, p.48
46. Thomas Carlyle, *Hero-worship*, London, 1889, pp.40,41.