

A Christian's Guide to the Koran, Lesson 15, **The REVISED ADAM and MOSES**

The Cow. Sura 2:1-61

This sura is called "the cow." You will see why later.

2:4. Another important word of non-Arabic origin shows up in 2:4. "Katab" simply means book. And in that verse, the author seems to be saying that he gives his approval to the book that is in existence at that time, the Hebrew and Christian Bible. "...there is no doubt in it... [it has] been sent down to you..." So the Scriptures of 600 A.D. are given approval here. The whole idea that they were somehow corrupted is set aside by the Koran itself. We'll see other verses later on this subject. By the way, this sura is from Medina. It is a later message, and can be considered current.

2:5 ff. The verses that follow seem to be an introduction to the Islamic version of Calvinism, or more likely, Augustinian thought. Apostates, it says, are never going to believe, so there is no use to deal with them. They are going to be tormented, and Allah "scoffs at them and keeps them long in their rebellion blindly."

Yes, we know of the warnings of Scripture about falling away from the Lord, too. Yet the Bible paints the picture of a God who is deeply hurt by all of this rejection, and wants all men to be saved. We have a weeping Saviour, not a scoffing one. Though apostasy is an awful thing, believers are told to restore, not condemn, whenever possible. Fallen-away Muslims are written off forever.

2:23 calls for unquestioning acceptance of Muhammad, and if not, punishment at the hands of other Muslims. "If you were in doubt [about what you are hearing]... call your witnesses... if you do not do it, fear the fire whose fuel is people..."

Does Jesus Christ call for such allegiance? Indeed He does. But has God ordained that believers are to mete out God's vengeance on the disobedient? Indeed He has not. This is the error into which Romanism sank deeply. Perhaps it was the knowledge of this brutal tactic rising in Rome that gave birth to the idea that religion must be advanced by the sword.

2:25, on the other hand, begins to spell out the reward for the faithful Muslim. Gardens with flowing rivers (sounds like Eden). Virgins that are ever-virgins (sounds like an add-on). Seven heavens.

2:30-39 is the first mention of Adam. Yes, the Bible's Adam. No, not the Bible's Adam. Here is a pattern that will continue throughout the book. A familiar name with a different twist. "Adam", by the way, is one of those many non-Arabic words I mentioned last time. Even "sura" or "portion", which we are rendering "chapter" for our purposes, is not Arabic.

These Bible-like stories seem to be planted in the book so that Christians will read and be drawn to Islam, but also so that they will see that there is *more revelation* than before. The church world we live in today seems especially willing to gravitate to some new "word." Beware! Islam has a lot of "new words", and the deal is, they all came under the supervision of an angel.

So Allah decides to place a ruler on the planet. He is challenged by angels who can see bad things coming. Allah assures them it is the right thing to do. Not long after Adam's appearance here, the angels are commanded to worship him. Oh my. We know from Matthew 4:10 and many other places, that only the Lord God is to be worshiped. In this strange tale, there is only one person who seems to understand that. *The devil refuses to worship the man!* He becomes proud "and was among the infidels."

Adam and his wife (who suddenly appears in the story) are assigned to the garden, and are assaulted by Satan, as in the Biblical account. It is not clear here whether the devil and Satan are the same person.

The section then closes with another warning to infidels: Those who "considered our [verses] to be lies, those are companions of the fire, they will abide in it forever." The author continues to impress upon his hearers that they have no choice but to follow Muhammad. Pretty strong motivation to be a Muslim, to "submit."

2:40ff records a message to the Jews. Allah tells them to fulfill God's covenant, as God intends to do the same. "And believe in what I have sent down, confirming what is with you." He seems to say here that his revelations to Muhammad confirm the Hebrew Bible. Yet another clue from the Koran that the Scriptures are intact as late as 610 A.D.

He then goes on to speak as though he were Jehovah of the Old Testament. We are supposed to believe that throughout, by the way. Remember that Islam does not purport to be a new religion, but a final reformation of the old one.

He recites Jewish history from the days of their deliverance from Pharaoh to the time of the worshiping of the calf in the wilderness to the time of the receiving of the law. And then, after the author has shown he knows the Bible fairly well, he adds his extra revelation. See if you can catch it.

"...you said, 'O Moses, we will not believe you until we see Allah openly,' ." Is that how it happened? Seems to me that the Israelites not only did not want to see God there in the wilderness, but that they did not even want to hear His voice. They had gotten just close enough, thank you. But in Muhammad's account, Allah rewarded their aggression with a thunderbolt from the heavens.

So the author has done it again. He has added to the Scriptures his own ideas for his own reasons. Sometimes though, it seems he just plain got confused and made mistakes as he poured out his story to the many listening ears that gathered. As in this next section:

Remember the Biblical account of Moses striking a rock, and water coming out? Well, actually, the first time he brought forth water it was merely by his word. The second time he was in disobedience. And there was this other time when water was needed, and the Israelites just showed up where there were twelve springs of water. You Bible scholars have surely got all that sorted out by now. Three separate events. Muhammad combined them all into one story:

2:60, "And when Moses gave drink for his people, so we said, 'Strike the rock with your rod,' so gushed from it twelve springs..."

In the following verses the author brings Israel's story quickly to more humiliating events, suggesting that they went back to Egypt, killed prophets, became disobedient, were transgressors, and of course, infidels. Well, so much for the covenant. So much for the weeping prophets of Israel, the tender heart of the Lord. This Allah, so far, seems to be pretty severe, don't you think? He is called merciful, but his mercy does not reach out and warm your heart like the true God of Israel. Maybe the fact that our God is a Father makes the difference.

Well, I told you chapter 2 is a long one. It's the longest in the Koran. We're going to stop here and continue the second sura next time.

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