

Theology on the Web.org.uk

Making Biblical Scholarship Accessible

This document was supplied for free educational purposes. Unless it is in the public domain, it may not be sold for profit or hosted on a webserver without the permission of the copyright holder.

If you find it of help to you and would like to support the ministry of Theology on the Web, please consider using the links below:



Buy me a coffee

<https://www.buymeacoffee.com/theology>



PATREON

<https://patreon.com/theologyontheweb>

[PayPal](#)

<https://paypal.me/robbradshaw>

A table of contents for *Bibliotheca Sacra* can be found here:

https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_bib-sacra_01.php

ARTICLE IX.

THE BOOK OF ENLIGHTENMENT.

BY JACOB, THE SON OF AARON, SAMARITAN HIGH PRIEST,
NABLUS, PALESTINE.¹

INTRODUCTORY NOTE.

The following work was prepared, at the request of the editor, by the Samaritan High Priest, and is designed to answer the questions which are most frequently asked of the Samaritan priests, both by strangers and by some of their own communion. He has entitled the book "The Book of Enlightenment for the Enlightening of the Inquirer." It is written in Arabic in neat manuscript, the quotations from Scripture being in the Samaritan Hebrew, and written in red ink.

It cannot be pretended that the questions are in every case those that the average American scholar is most eager to propose. But the book as a whole is not only interesting but instructive. It is a succinct statement of the present tenets of the Samaritans, and a fine example of their dialectic. The attention of scholars is increasingly directed to the Samaritans for the valuable side light which their customs throw on many questions of Jewish practice. The editor believes that this is a permanently valuable document.

The questions which the High Priest undertakes to answer are the following:—

1. Concerning *the duration of the plagues of Egypt*.—His answer is, that the whole time covered by the plagues, including the intervals between them, was two months and a half.
2. Concerning *the number and classification of the miracles*.—He counts the number as eleven, holding that the sign of the rod in the hand of Moses should be counted a sign in itself, in addition to the specific miracles wrought by it, in the plagues. He classifies the miracles as those wrought by God alone, those

¹Translated from the Arabic by Professor Abdullah Ben Kori, of Pacific University, Forest Grove, Oregon; edited by Rev. William E. Barton, D.D., Oak Park, Illinois.

wrought by God through Moses, those wrought through Aaron, and those in which both Moses and Aaron were employed.

3. Concerning *the origin and significance of the ceremonial year*.—He holds that the new calendar established at the time of the Exodus was really the reestablishment of the calendar begun at the creation.

4. Concerning *the time of the institution of the Passover*.—This leads him into a full discussion of all that is involved in the Passover, and incidentally brings in the condemnation of a heretic who taught that the prohibition of fire which belongs to the Sabbath does not apply to the Passover. This heretic, who is nameless here, lived in 1753 A.D. But he did not succeed in gaining converts, even his own wife deserting his teaching; and the priest offers a prayer for his restoration, though he would appear to have been long dead.

5. Concerning *the Passover when the date falls on the Sabbath*.—The answer is, that, in this case, the sacrifice must take place on Friday, after sunset. To this answer he appends proof that Mount Gerizim is the one place where this sacrifice should be offered.

6. Concerning *the forty years in the wilderness*.—The answer is, that the ordinances of the Passover, Circumcision, and the Shek-nah were faithfully observed.

7. Concerning *the fasts of Moses*.—The answer is, that Moses fasted for three periods of forty days each, and not merely two such periods.

8. Concerning *the writing of the Commandments*.—The answer is, that the Commandments were written for the sake of verbal accuracy and permanent preservation, and the greater reverence paid to a certain word of God, which might have been lost or corrupted if transmitted orally.

9. Concerning *the revelation of the Torah*.—The answer, given at great length and with wide variety of proof, is, that the complete Torah was written in a single roll by the hand of God, and came down to Moses complete. The apparent exceptions are noted, and the main proposition is established by seven proofs.

10. Concerning *the two stone tablets*.—The answer is, that the first set of two tablets was created by God on the third day of creation. The inscription was in horizontal lines and in uncial characters. The writing miraculously disappeared when Moses broke the stones; the breaking of them if the writing had remained would have been either impossible or a great sin. The second set Moses hewed out, but God wrote on them. The size was as follows: length, one and a half cubits; breadth, three fourths of a cubit,

combined thickness, two and one half cubits, completely filling the ark.

11. Concerning *the tablets of testimony*.—The answer is, that the stone tablets were called the tablets of testimony because they were a living testimony and covenant, testifying both the will of God and the promise of his people.

12. Concerning *the transcription of the Torah*.—The answer is, that the written Torah was given to Moses between the two sets of tablets containing the Commandments, and was copied by Moses and the priests. Whether the original copy, written directly by God, was ever taken out of the tent, where Joshua guarded it, is disputed. Some hold that it was exhibited once in seven years. The two copies made by Moses were all that were commonly seen.

13. Concerning *the Jordan*.—The answer is, that the Jordan is the river of Law. There the manna ceased, and the Law became fully operative.

14. Concerning *the shining of Moses' face*.—The answer is, that this phenomenon—the more remarkable because Moses had been fasting for forty days—was due to the effulgence of the angel Gabriel, who, without the knowledge of Moses, lent him his own presence and celestial brightness.

15. Concerning *the water at Rephidim*.—The answer is, that the smiting of the rock was an authentication of Moses, and a rebuke to those who complained.

16. Concerning *the battle with the Amalekites*.—The answer is, that this was a testimony to the nations of the favor of Jehovah for his people Israel.

17. Concerning *the reason for not destroying the Amalekites earlier*.—In order that Israel might know that its strength was in Jehovah. In this connection the High Priest goes outside the Torah, and, quoting from "the book attributed to Joshua," refers to the stopping of the sun as an event of this campaign. The battle occurred on Friday, he explains, and the standing of the sun was to preserve the Sabbath unbroken by the battle.

18. Concerning *the time of Jethro's visit*.—It occurred in the second year of the Exodus.

19. Concerning *the sons of Moses*.—They returned with their mother, and their descendants still live, nomads, but monotheists. In this connection the High Priest refutes the slander against Moses, that, after the departure of Zipporah, Moses married a negro. Against the Jews, to whom the priest attributes this slander, he cries, "May God fight them for this!" The woman, he

says, was none other than Zipporah herself, and the word does not mean "black" but "beautiful."

20. Concerning *the heir of an adulteress*.—The high priest, who condemns her to death, inherits her property.

21. Concerning *the face of Laban*.—Jacob read the heart of Laban in his face, and knew that he was in disfavor. The face reveals the heart.

22. Concerning *Oaths*.—The High Priest classifies these, with some elaboration, into oaths permissible and prohibited; the prohibited oaths are of three kinds—those of falsehood, conjecture, or triviality; and the permissible, those that affirm truthfully and reverently.

23. Concerning *the inheritance of a woman who marries outside the tribe*.—Her inheritance remains to her heirs within the tribe. It is forfeited so far as she, her husband, and her children are concerned.

24. Concerning *the use of rennet*.—The prohibition of seething a kid in its mother's milk had not been carried, so far as the High Priest knows, to the point of forbidding the use of the kid's stomach in the making of cheese. When attention was called to this, however, he investigated the matter; and while he could find no question of this particular in the literature of his people, it seemed to him clear that the use of rennet was a violation of the Law, so he has prohibited it, establishing a new precedent. In this, however, he does not condemn those who preceded him, as what they did in violation of the Law in this regard was done inadvertently.

25. Concerning *the abridgment by laymen of the authority of the priesthood*.—Some laymen having insisted that there should be a group of lay associates with the priests to pass upon questions where the rights of the priesthood are involved, the High Priest refutes their claim, showing that the laity have no right to intermeddle in matters of this character, and incidentally showing with how great respect the high priest himself ought to be treated.

The High Priest closes by hurling two questions at those who oppose him. The first is, that they will explain the command not to remove the ancient landmark. The second is, that they explain the command "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." With these two arguments—one against the method, and the other against the spirit, of those who oppose him—the High Priest closes the book.

WILLIAM E. BARTON.

IN THE NAME OF THE MOST MERCIFUL GOD, IN WHOM IS MY TRUST. At some previous times, on many occasions, members of my own tribe have asked me questions, the solution of which was hidden from them, because of the scarcity of books to guide them. I have answered these inquiries from time to time in accordance with the best efforts of my weak mind and poor understanding. I have wished also to record the substance of these answers, both for safekeeping, and for the benefit of following generations. *I pray God for his help. Amen.*

Praise be to God, the quintessence of Unity; the indivisible and eternal;

To him who is far above either mother or son;

To the forgiver of sins to every one that repents with purity of conscience;

To him who overlooks shortcomings, and consoles the disconsolate hearts;

To him who alone is perfect and eternal, and liable neither to malady nor disease.

He is eternal and immutable, far above destruction, or any possible damage.

He is the Everlasting, who is too exalted to be represented either by image or likeness,

And is far above measurement or drawing.

He is described by the most exalted names;

To him belongs the ineffable name "AHIH ASHR AHIH."

He is the one who hears and beholds all things.

Verily he hears the flowing of water in the most parched wilderness,

And sees the black ants in the darkest recesses of the rock.

There is no God but he;

None but he is worthy to be worshiped.
 He is invisible, eternal in his eternity,
 And Lord of all the heavens.
 Exalted and blessed be his Name!
 He is praised in the secret and in the open;
 In the conscience and by the tongue;
 Inwardly and outwardly.
 He is the only judge,
 Who will avenge himself on the rebellious on the last day.
Holy be his great name! Amen.

I. THE DURATION OF THE PLAGUES OF EGYPT.

I have been asked, concerning the wonders which took place with respect to Pharaoh and his people, How long did each and all of the plagues last? The answer is as follows:—

As to the period during which the wonders took place by the hand of our lord, the apostle Moses (upon whom be peace),¹ while he was in Egypt, it was that of two months and a half.

The first wonder took place in the eleventh month, and the last took place in the first. It is so affirmed by our traditions, handed down from father to son, and is so accepted and agreed upon by the people of Israel.

We believe that the wonder of the staff that turned into a serpent lasted less than a single day. As to the wonder of blood, it lasted seven days; for we read: "And seven days were fulfilled after Jehovah² had smitten the river." The period of the wonder of frogs lasted two days. That of the

¹The names Moses, Abraham, etc., are uniformly followed by an inscription similar to this; and all references to God by such ejaculations as "May He be exalted."

²The High Priest writes the name Jehovah, as in unpointed Hebrew, IHWH.

plague of lice is not mentioned. Some assert that the plague has continued on Egypt ever since that day.¹

The plague of flies lasted only one day, and left them on the day following. The miracle of the destruction of the cattle lasted only one hour. As to the wonder of the boils with blains, it lasted a whole week. The miracle of the hail lasted one day; likewise lasted the plague of locusts. The miracle of darkness lasted three days, as we read: "For a period of three days no man saw his brother." The period of the killing of the first-born lasted one single hour. To one who might make the statement that these periods would not make out the total time of two and one half months, as previously indicated, the answer is, that there transpired some intervals of time between one miracle and another. It is asserted that the time divisions were uniform, and that each was of seven days, including the period of each miracle and the interval; for, as soon as the miracle of blood ceased, the Nile let loose on them its frogs, and the whole earth was filled with them. However, a certain amount of space elapsed after each miracle, that the two apostles might have time to carry their message to Pharaoh and to receive his reply thereto, and act accordingly.

Thus the whole period of miracles amounted to two months and a half.

And God possesses the best knowledge of all things.

II. THE NUMBER AND CLASSIFICATION OF THE MIRACLES.

The next question is concerning the meaning of the words "Pharaoh shall not listen to you."

The first purpose of this prediction is in order that the words of God may be confirmed; namely, "Pharaoh shall

¹There is reason to agree with the High Priest in this opinion.

not listen to you, and I will produce my power upon the Egyptians." It was God's purpose that Pharaoh should know and feel, together with his people, these signs and wonders while he was still hardened in his unbelief.

Secondly, that these miracles might be a warning to those who should come later on. Otherwise it would have been possible for God to destroy Pharaoh with his people in the twinkling of an eye. In fact, God desired by this prediction and his delay to show the greatness of his apostle and the veracity of his statements; he therefore performed these astounding wonders through him as a memorial to all the generations, in order that the one who reads them, and meditates on them, may continue in his fidelity to him and consider and fear the treacherous unbeliever. He made us know, therefore, that the unwillingness of Pharaoh to hearken unto his two messengers resulted in what he said, "that my miracles may be multiplied in the land of Egypt." The genuineness of the mission of these two men was proved; for we read: "and Moses and Aaron performed all these miracles" (Ex. xi. 10). There exist among the learned men some who claim that these miracles amounted to ten in number, thus omitting from their reckoning the miracle of the staff which was turned into a serpent. Some say that the latter is only a sign, and not a miracle. But those who claim that the number of miracles is ten do unconsciously prove it to be twenty, for, according to them, the happening of the miracle is miraculous and its disappearance is also miraculous.

It is more correct, however, to count them as eleven miracles, for the matter of the staff was both a sign and a miracle, according to the statement of God: "Show me a sign," or a miracle (Ex. vii. 9); for a sign is in itself a miracle. This statement is proved by the words of God, which have already

been quoted (Ex. xi. 10), which verse includes all the miracles that have transpired. The same is affirmed by more than one of God's statements, as in the same chapter and verse, "and God hardened the heart of Pharaoh; he neither hearkened unto them nor let the people depart from his land."

These miracles include within themselves many others, the details of which are lengthy and numerous. Here are, however, some of the principal divisions.

(1) The bringing of the flies, murrain, and the killing of the first-born. These are the direct doings of God, without the instrumentality of the two apostles. It must be understood, however, that the message which accompanied these wonders was delivered by Moses, who, with his brother, knew about them.

(2) Those which were done by God by the hand of Moses alone, while Aaron had simply to notify Pharaoh with the words of his brother. They are the hail, the locusts, and the darkness. These were done simply by Moses, and Aaron had part only in the intercession which accompanied them.

(3) Those which God performed by the hand of Aaron, while Moses had only to give the command. They are the turning of the staff into a serpent, the miracle of frogs, and that of lice.

(4) Those in which both brothers took part. They are the turning of water into blood, and the boils.

But the real agent of them all was indeed God (who is highly exalted). He only used these two apostles to prove the truthfulness of their message, and to show forth their high character and standing, and that the rest of the world might know, as we have already stated. The line found in Ex. xi. 9 does simply indicate to us that there were per-

formed ten wonders on Pharaoh; and that, in spite of their bitterness and hardship, in spite of the tortures which he suffered therefrom, he did not let the children of Israel depart from his land except after the killing of the first-born, which wonder makes the eleventh. Compare Ex. vii. 3: "And I will . . . multiply my signs and my wonders in the land of Egypt. But Pharaoh will not hearken unto you until I lay my hand on Egypt, and bring out my hosts, my people the children of Israel, from the land of Egypt." The laying of his hand does not refer to the killing of the first-born: "And I will stretch forth my hand, and smite Egypt with all my wonders which I shall perform in the midst of it. Thereupon he shall let you depart" (Ex. iii. 20). This verse refers to the performance of all the wonders. *And to God belongs the best knowledge.*

III. THE ORIGIN AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE CEREMONIAL YEAR.

I have been asked, concerning the passage "This month shall be to you the beginning of months" (Ex. xii. 2), Did the Israelites know, previous to this statement, that this month was the first month of their year, or did they begin so to look on it afterwards? The following is in answer. *And my success comes from God.*

Yes; they knew it as the first month from ancient times; for, in the account of the deluge (Gen. viii. 13), we read: "In the six hundredth and first year and the first month, on the first day of the month," etc. The same mention is given in Ex. xii. 2, in order that the noble and exalted nature of the month might be shown, and that we might know that the delivery of the children of Israel from Egypt's bondage took place thereon. There is, however, a stronger reason. It is

called the first month of the year, that we may thereby find with exactness the various times of the year which we are commanded to observe, and as such they are called the days of fulfillment of righteousness. During the same, on well-known periods we have our festival days. Compare the reference given in Ex. xii. 3, "Speak to the congregation of Israel, saying, that on the tenth of this month, they shall take for themselves each a sheep," etc. Read as far as the sixth verse, wherein it is said, "and it shall be kept by you until the fourteenth of this month." From these references we conclude that this month was the first, and with it the year begins; that on the tenth day of the same month sacrificial offerings are to be chosen and kept till the close of the fourteenth day. The sacrifices should take place on the evening of the night of the fifteenth of the month. Beginning with that day up to the twenty-first, unleavened bread must be eaten for seven days; and that day, which is the twenty-first, must be spent in the service of God. In this manner the arrangement of festival days was made out, each according to his time and month, as their order is given in the Book of the Law; and that is why the month is called the first.

As to the command that the celebration of the Passover on its proper times should take place to the end of generations, it is because the offerings of Passover during the days of Darkness are equivalent to those of the entire year. They are equivalent to the peace offerings. To continue to celebrate the same will lead us to the days of the appearance of God's Pleasure and the coming of the second prophet. The mystery which affirms God's Pleasure, falling as it does in this month, will doubtless be approved to us that the return of God's Pleasure will be during the same month, namely, the first. As to the command of God in reference to the

celebration of the Passover in its time, one is referred to Ex. xii. 17: "Ye shall observe and fulfill this day in your generations as an eternal ordinance"; "Ye shall keep this command as an eternal ordinance to thee and to thy children" (ver. 24). Again: "Thou shalt keep this ordinance in its time from year to year" (Ex. xiii. 10). Compare also Deut. xvi. 1: "Keep the month of Abib." Thus it appears that the month of Abib is the first month, corresponding to April. The keeping of this month is simply for giving praise and thanks to God for having saved them from the servitude of the Egyptians. They should also continue to mention the reason for God's action in bringing them out of Egypt. See, therefore, Deut. xvi. 12: "and remember also that thou wert a slave in the land of Egypt." As to the usefulness of celebrating this ordinance from year to year as the ages pass, it consists in blotting out the sins of each year as long as it is kept on the first month, which is April, when occur the return of God's Pleasure and the reappearance and reestablishment of the Shekinah on Mount Gerizim. As to the time and place, both are proved by the word of God. The Shekinah was established in the wilderness by Moses on the first month, and when our lord Joshua (upon whom be peace) set it up on Mount Gerizim, it was on the first month. Its return will be by the will of God on the first month. And that is the reason why God commanded and declared the keeping of its season. As to the place, it shall be in the chosen place, the place whose selection was revealed after their entrance into the Holy Land. No other place shall be substituted for it; only in it and within its boundaries. In proof of the same, compare Deut. xvi. 5: "It shall not be lawful unto thee to sacrifice the Passover within any of the towns," etc.; and: "But it must be in the place which the Lord thy God has

chosen that his name may dwell there. There shalt thou sacrifice the Passover in the evening at sunset," etc. This place is Mount Gerizim. *And God knows all things.*

IV. THE TIME OF THE INSTITUTION OF THE PASSOVER.

Were the apostles Moses and Aaron given the ordinance of the Passover, and the manner of its performance, on the first day of the first month, or on some other of its days previous to the fourteenth?

There is a variety of opinions given by the learned men. Some claim that the probability is that the command was given on the first of the month, with the provision that on the tenth they should choose the offerings and keep them under surveillance until the evening of the fourteenth. During these days the offerings would have been washed daily, and cleansed and purified from all the blemishes and forms of animal filth until the Egyptians were assured that Israel was ready to offer them to his God. Their intention was revealed during this period of four days, and the Egyptians could not pretend that the Israelites had sacrificed their offerings in a concealed manner. There are others who claim that the command was given by God only on the fourteenth of April, on the day known to us as Alfajool. In proof of the same compare Ex. xi. 4: "In the midst of the night I will go out into the midst of the land of Egypt." Pharaoh, who realized that every threatening made to him by the apostle Moses (upon whom be peace) would be fulfilled, placed guards around his own first-born prince, lest he should perish with the first-born of the Egyptians. Naturally he commanded them to watch over his son without remittance, and not to sleep throughout the whole night. The guards were probably men of trust, famous for their courage and daring, and they

obeyed the command of Pharaoh with all diligence. While they were in the most careful act of watchfulness over the first-born of Pharaoh, behold the latter was dead in the midst of them, while they were around him and without having noticed any one entering among them. These words belong to the high priest Merkah (may God's pleasure be upon him). Amen.

Now if any one should say that, if God's command was given on the fourteenth of the month, he would not have said, also, "on the tenth of this month," in reply to this question it must be said that the words of God here form a part of the ordinance of the Passover, and they were a command to those of the coming generations, for he said also: "That which remaineth of it until morning shall be burned in fire" (Ex. xii. 10); while they did not remain in Egypt, but rather got up early and left in all haste.

Now the reconciliation of this command of the Passover in a year when it shall fall on the Sabbath will be given in its time, if God will help.

The learned elder, of blessed memory, Ishmael Arrabjee, mentioned in his book named "Hitoroth,"—that is to say, Legislation,—informs us that the command of the Lord to the two apostles took place on the day known to us as the day of Alfajool, while they were still in Egypt on the night of the Passover.

Thus our learned men differ. *And God possesses the best knowledge.*

This book became extinct in the twelfth century, because none took care of it in those days. Part of it is still with the writer, and another part with some of the Samaritan people. If God will grant me the required years I shall gather what can be found according to my ability. It contains Toroot

and Mosoot, and possesses some fine interpretations. These words belong to my uncle, the generous and literary sheik Shamsu—Deen Sadkah. May God grant him forgiveness; for it is a very interesting book. *And the knowledge of the unknown belongs to God.*

Remarks concerning the Ordinance of the Passover.

Our people who dwell in the villages and countries which are more or less remote from the Chosen Place used to sacrifice the offerings of the Passover where they lived. We know also, from verified reports, that in those days a party that belonged to the Chosen Place used to burn large fires upon the top of Mount Gerizim, that those living in the adjacent countries, such as Askelon, and Cæsarea, and other towns, might see the same and act accordingly. Those who came and sacrificed in the Chosen Place were permitted to sacrifice either sheep or oxen, but those who sacrificed in other places were not permitted to sacrifice, except sheep. But in our generation, and in past ones beginning from a period of three hundred years ago, it has been agreed that offerings shall be made nowhere except on the Chosen Place, or if the mountain itself should ever become impossible, then on its slope or in places as near to it as practicable.

This is to harmonize with the saying of God in Deut. xvi. 5: "It shall not be lawful unto thee to sacrifice the Passover within any of thy gates, [that is, in towns,] which the Lord thy God has given thee, but only in the Place which the Lord thy God has chosen, that his name might dwell therein. There shalt thou sacrifice the Passover."

Again, the custom has not varied from ancient times until the present (that is, from the period of two hundred years ago until now), that only sheep, and none else, shall

be used for sacrifices. In our days it has been agreed to choose only the sheep of white color, because that is the color of the best and the noblest of the sheep. He who lives in any other place beyond the boundaries of the Chosen Place must hasten to the Chosen Place, and there sacrifice the Passover. Should he be late in coming without having any legal cause to delay him, he commits a great sin, and becomes liable to what God ordered in Num. ix. 13: "If a man be clean, and does not make a journey, and has failed to sacrifice the Passover, that soul shall be cut off from among the people; for he has not sacrificed to God in season. That man shall bear his own sins." If a man asks, How can a man bear his own sins if he has been cut off from his own people? and, Did he not pay for his sins by having been killed? the answer is, that since his action was intentional, his sins will be counted against him till the day of vengeance, when, in the day of judgment and account, he shall be compelled to render an account of his sins and shall be punished for them. His killing became necessary both because he has offended his Lord, and also in order that others in this world may be led to consider and not transgress likewise.

Questions of this character are numerous in the Law. Among the conditions of the Passover is that the sacrifices shall be chosen on the tenth of the month and kept with diligence until the time of their offering, according to the command of God in Ex. xii. 3, etc.: "On the tenth of this month they shall take for themselves every man a lamb according to the houses of their fathers, a lamb for every house; and if the house be too small for a lamb, the family shall join in company with its neighbor who lives nearest to his house according to the numbers of souls," etc., to the line where it is said, "the same shall be kept until the fourteenth day of

the month." During these five days the sacrifices must be examined, and the condition of the animals found out, lest they have some of the objections to disqualify them, such as blisters, which is characteristic of the sheep, or a redness of eye, or a possibly fatal disease. Their hoofs must be cleansed; especially those parts which grow within the hoofs, for they are liable to much dirt, and whatever defects they may be found to possess disqualify them from being sacrificed. A sheep is particularly disqualified by such a blemish as a break in the leg or defect in sight. All their members should be cleansed from dirt; for they tread upon the defiled things while walking in the streets and highways. Occasionally there grow between their hoofs diseased parts which disqualify them.

Every Israelite must be taxed according to his share with the cost of those sacrifices to fulfill the command of the Lord, "According to their souls' price"; and this command includes all, the man and the woman and the child. Any one who is not taxed, and does not pay out of his own material substance, cannot have sacrifices. But he who is too poor, and does not possess anything in this world, may serve in the preparation of the sacrifices, and substitute his labor for money, and thus make up what he would have been taxed as his share. And if a man lives with a family, and has always been looked upon as a member of it, he may pay the taxes that will cover all its members, whether they be wife, child, or servants, in accordance with the words of God found in Ex. xii. 4: "If the house, however, has no one to pay the full price, it may join with its nearest neighbor, and the price be divided in accordance with the number of those who partake of the sacrifice." This, of course, was in the days of the large growth and multitude of the Israelites, but when their conditions

changed for the worse, and their number decreased exceedingly, a number of them, large or small, would agree and undertake to procure their sacrifices as they saw fit. But nowadays, on account of our present condition, and on account of our small number, we make a common fund of the little we possess. We all gather together into one company and have one furnace, and this has been done for nearly one hundred and twenty-five years. This we do because of our weakness and ill prosperity, and on account of the days of darkness. It is not permissible for any one to sacrifice except with his own relations. Of course the married woman, wherever she is, will sacrifice with her husband and will eat with him.

Among other ordinances is one that, on the fourteenth day, all the people of Israel should cleanse their houses and dwelling places, and clear them out entirely of leaven, according to Ex. xxiii. 18: "Do not offer thy sacrifices with leavened bread, and let no fat of the Passover remain until morning." Therefore, the people of Israel agreed not to eat leavened bread on that day. Moreover, in order that any leaven previously eaten may have been digested thoroughly in the body, they eat not leavened bread on the fourteenth, lest they may violate the words of the Lord by eating it for eight days. Compare Ex. xii. 18: "By an ordinance forever ye shall eat unleavened bread in the first month on the fourteenth day at even until the twenty-first at even." According to this command, seven days only must be completed.

Another condition is, that none of the people of Israel should offer sacrifices unless he be pure in body, void of all defilements and their causes. He must not have the least reason of being defiled.

Another condition is, that the whole people should gather

together, according to Ex. xii. 6: "And the whole company of the children of Israel should kill it at evening," that they all may witness the offerings of God, and all may remember his favors upon them and upon their forefathers, and the signs and wonders which he performed for them, their delivery from servitude.

This remembrance is necessary. Compare Ex. xii. 14: "It shall be a memorial unto you this day." Compare also what Moses said, "Remember also this day" (Ex. xiii. 3). Much can be said in reference to these commands.

During the celebration of the Passover the people must indulge greatly in praises, in exultations and glorifications, and must not cease doing so throughout the whole night; for it is called the Night of God. Compare, with others, Ex. xii. 42: "This night belongs to God; it shall be kept by the children of Israel in all their generations."

Another condition is, that the offering should be sacrificed at evening, not before and not after. It must be done as the sun goes under, that it may have a well-defined demarcation. As to our custom when the Passover falls on the Sabbath, it will be explained later on, by God's Word.

Another condition is, that the sacrifice which is offered must be examined internally, lest it may have broken bones, or weak lungs, or any internal disease.

Another condition is, that all its fat, including the two kidneys, must be taken away, for if any of these remain with it it cannot be offered. The right shoulder, together with the fat, must be removed, before it can be broiled with the meat.

Another condition is, that it must be broiled thoroughly in fire. There is no question about the verse in Deut. xvi. 7. It does not imply that the meat should be cooked with water,

for the command has already been given that it should not be eaten raw or boiled. See Ex. xii. 8 and 9: "Do not eat any part of it raw or cooked with water."

Another condition is, that it must be salted according to the common taste. It must not be eaten without salt. Compare Lev. ii. 13: "With all thine oblations thou shalt offer salt."

Another condition is, that it must be eaten in the middle of the night, and all those who partake of it must do so in the guise of men who are about to go on a journey and are prepared for travel. They must be girded in the middle; must have their leather shoes on their feet, and their staves in their hands, according to Ex. xii. 11: "Thus shall ye eat it. Your loins must be girded, your sandals must be on your feet and your staves in your hands." In other words, in eating it the triumph and joy of the Exodus may be celebrated, for it is a Passover and a salvation from the oppression in which our forefathers found themselves: "Ye shall eat it greedily, for it is a Passover to God." Thus they would remember the departure of the forefathers from Egypt. They ate it while on the point of departure, and they ate it with greediness, on account of the anxiety caused by the impending journey: "For haste hast thou left Egypt: that thou mayest remember thy departure out of the land of Egypt all the days of thy life" (Deut. xvi. 3).

Another condition is, that it must be eaten with unleavened bread and bitter herbs. As to the eating of it with unleavened bread, it is to remind them of the state of oppression and poverty and difficulty in which they were while in Egypt; for unleavened bread was called, in another place, *lehem eneh*, that is, "the bread of the poor." For often the poor, and those on the point of a long journey on account of their pov-

erty, haste, or hunger, would take the flour, and knead it and bake it all at once, and eat it in haste without waiting for it to be leavened. The traveler may do likewise from his haste or the anxiety which he feels. He may become impatient should he wait until it becomes leavened. *But God possesses the best knowledge.*

As to the eating of bitter herbs, it is that they may remember also the bitter lives which their forefathers lived, the oppressive servitude and the excessive tasks with which they were cumbered. As to the making of unleavened bread, it must be done with all carefulness lest any foreign matter be mixed with it. It must be selected from the whole amount of wheat chosen for the season. It must be cleansed, especially at its grinding at the mill; it must not be gathered up out of the wheat which has been threshed by oxen, for while they are drawing the threshing instrument they might defile it by their urine and dung. Compare Lev. xxii. 25: "Neither from the hand of a foreigner shall ye offer the bread of your God of any of these, because their corruption is in them; there is a blemish in them; they shall not be accepted for you." Now if there is no wheat of which the conditioned portion can be taken; if there be no Israelitish farmers from whom the required amount can be taken, ears of wheat must be picked at the time of harvest and preserved until it can be prepared for the making of unleavened bread.

Another condition is, that the lamb must be roasted entirely as a whole, with its head and its legs, without any part being cut off, except the right shoulder, which is removed that the same may be eaten afterward, being the property of the priests, the sons of Levi. Compare Ex. xii. 9: "Its head with its legs and the inwards thereof."

Another condition is, that it must not be taken out from the place where it is cooked; it must not be taken from one place to another: "Thou shalt not carry forth aught of the flesh 'brought out of the house'" (Ex. xii. 46), lest it may undergo some disqualification, or lest it may be changed. No bone of it shall be broken. "Neither shall ye break the bones thereof."

Another condition is, that no foreigner shall touch it, and no foreigner shall eat of it except him who possesses the religion of Israel and has been circumcised and purified. If a slave bought by money has been converted, and has taken up our religion and has been circumcised, he may eat of it; he may sacrifice it as any of the Israelites, according to Ex. xii. 44: "But every man's servant who is bought for money, when thou hast circumcised him, then shall he eat thereof."

Now as to strangers, our Law says (in the same chapter, ver. 48): "When a stranger shall sojourn with thee and will keep the Passover of Jehovah, if he be a male, let him be circumcised; then he shall be as one born in the land." This statement includes any one, whether he be stranger or not, who has taken up this religion and introduced himself under the ordinances of the Law. He who does that, let it be announced to him that his standing before God and in the house of the Lord is like the standing of the Israelite. For he said in the same chapter, "He shall be like a native in the land, for he has submitted himself and restrained his passions unto the will of God. Let him therefore be fruitful."

Another condition is, that its fat must be burned, and whatever fatness may be found in the head and in the shoulder, and whatever may remain of the flesh and bones and members, without leaving a particle of it, in accordance with

the command of God in Ex. xii. 10: "Leave nothing of it until the morning."

Every Israelite must cease working, that he may have a part in the offering of the sacrifice. The least work must not be done, and he who excludes the preparation of food in general, claiming that it can be done on the day of the Passover, he has surely ignored the word of God, for if any work were intended besides that of the Passover the word "only" or "singly" would not have been employed. For this work does surely refer to the Passover only, and therefore the taking part in the Passover is the only thing that can be done at the prescribed time, in accordance with the command of God. If, however, the objector of these explanations would suggest that God, in saying "for every soul," meant that whatever may be eaten may be prepared on the day of the Passover, but must not be eaten except by the Israelite who is pure, the answer is, that God had this command only for the children of Israel, and if he had simply said, "Whatever may be eaten by every soul may be prepared," we might be convinced. But since he added a conditional word, which is *lbdo*, namely, "only" or "singly," and concluded his saying by the word *lkm*, that is, "to you," it follows that he meant the Passover, and that they alone were responsible for its observance. *And to God belongs the highest wisdom.*

If, however, some one may say that the preparation of the Passover is simply limited to a day, but not the preparation of other food God meant for two days, namely, that day of the Passover and the day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, he is surely mistaken; for the saying of Jehovah referred only to the day of the Passover. Yes, God said that the least doing must not be done in them, namely, in those two days, but he made an additional remark in Ex. xii. 16, which

surely refers to the Passover only. The duty of every Israelite should be to be diligent and watchful lest something disqualifying might happen to his sacrifice.

Another condition is, that early in the morning the whole host shall rise and depart to their places and homes. Compare Deut. xvi. 7: "Then in the morning go to and leave for thy tents." The duty of every Israelite is, that he should make known the joy of the Passover in his home, and should bless God for the salvation of his forefathers from their enemies; and for the standing, the high standing, which is only his; and for the help by which he has been enabled to fulfill his Passover duty, especially in the days of darkness; for the absence of harm done him by his enemies; and for the liberty given him in preparing his sacrifice. Such things must be attributed to God's mercy and favor, and should be looked upon as the best guide to submission to this will. It is indeed a marvelous thing that, during the observance of the ordinance, none thinks of harming the Israelite, whether it be his body or his property. It is in assurance of the fulfillment of God's saying in Ex. xxxiv. 24: "No man shall desire thy land when thou goest up to appear before the Lord thy God." Let the Israelite watch over this holy day and cease from all works, in accordance with Ex. xii. 16: "And the first day there shall be to you a holy convocation, and on the seventh day a holy convocation; no manner of work shall be done in them." This command is, of course, to include the Passover and the seventh day, which is the first of unleavened bread, "Save that which every man may eat, that alone may be done of you." This exception is made, referring to the Passover sacrifice and its preparation; and whatever may be needed to attend to the same is allowable. No other labor is permissible, and the Jewish people are in

error in their claim, for they have taken this verse as intended for every feast in which they allow the cooking of all kinds of food. They have abandoned the ordinance, and perform things which are not mentioned in the holy Torah. They perform, however, the feast of unleavened bread, but only in part. The Gentiles claim that the Jews used blood, human blood, in their unleavened bread, which is, I believe, incorrect, and the report of a slanderer, for blood is a defiling thing with them as it is with us. *And to God belongs the best wisdom.*

But, as to the ordinance of the Passover, the Jews have entirely neglected it, although it is an ordinance given to all generations forever. Compare Ex. xii. 17: "Ye shall keep this ordinance, for on this very day I have brought your hosts out of the land of Egypt. Ye shall observe and fulfill this day throughout your generations." Let the reader answer, What other day than on the day of the Passover did God bring the children of Israel out of Egypt? And there can be no greater testimony of this fact than this line in Ex. xii. 17: "Ye shall observe this ordinance."

It is plain enough that the words above refer to the Passover, and that all works on that day are unlawful, with the exception of the work which concerns the preparation of the Passover. For the command as to the prohibition of work on these two days was given before that of the Sabbath; and as the praiseworthy and highly exalted God wished to arrange for the rest of the annual feasts, he began with the commands concerning the feast of the Passover and ended with that of the eighth feast. He informed us that the standing of these feasts is as high as that of the Sabbath; for he often implied the Sabbath in mentioning the other festival days. Compare Lev. xxiii. 2: "The festival days of the Lord, ye

shall call convocations of holiness, these are festival days." Such saying includes both the festival days and the Sabbath, for he has coupled the Sabbath with the festival days: "Six days shalt thou do work, but on the Sabbath there is a complete cessation of labor, a holy convocation. The least work ye shall not do; it is a rest day in your dwellings." Then he began mentioning the festival days in their order, and in the same manner the Sabbath; and as the Sabbath was devoted to God, likewise the rest of the festival days are devoted to him. Compare Lev. xxiii. 4: "These are the festivals of the Lord which ye shall call out in their seasons." Such a line is comprehensive, and the standing of the one festival is of equal importance.

The Condemnation of a Heresy as to the Use of Fire.

What is wonderful in short-sighted and ignorant people who know little of the fullest import of the holy law is, that they claim that the feast of the Passover has nothing to do with the Sabbath, and does not have the obligations of the Sabbath. Thus one Israelite living outside of our own town in the year 1171 of the Hegira¹ did adopt a disgusting custom, and resolved upon making fire in his home during the festival days, claiming that fire is prohibited only on the Sabbath; as if, according to this theory, joy cannot be obtained except by making fire! Such persons are indeed ignorant; for, if joy is not obtained except through fire, the Sabbath had been worthier, in which the prohibition of fire is commanded. These words are taken from the learned sheik Mossallam Almojan Addanafy, who erred therein, for the man who has given birth to such a deed is well nigh losing his religion. The reason for prohibiting the making of fire, on this, as on other festival days, is, that work need not be

¹This date (1753 A.D.) appears to be an error; for the following passages appear to indicate that the heretic is still living.

necessary. There is no exception which permits the making of fire in their homes. And that is why the revelation concerning the prohibition of fire was brought down just about the time the revelation concerning the building of the Shekinah was brought down. Before the apostle Moses (upon whom be peace) had given the tabernacle revelation, he gathered the whole people, and made them acquainted with the command of God concerning the keeping of the Sabbath and the prohibition of fire making. Compare Ex. xxxv. 3: "Do not make any fire in all your dwellings on the day of the Sabbath." We know well what is meant by the word "day," namely, "from sunset to sunset." Compare Gen. i. 15; also Lev. xxiii. 32: "From sunset to sunset ye shall cease from work." Thus we know that by "day" we understand twenty-four hours, without paying attention to those who claim that the meaning of the "day" here is intended to imply only the period from sunrise to sunset, and excludes the night. After that revelation the apostle gave them the instruction concerning the building of the tabernacle. His insistence upon the total abstinence from making fire on it should be observed. The man who took upon himself the license of making fire upon the festival day was induced by his action to commit greater offenses; for, as I have read that this same heretic prepared on the festival day coffee for himself and drank it; he also smoked tobacco, and as this commodity brought about one of the principal confessions, he committed a great offense and transgressed the command of the Lord concerning all festival days: "Ye shall not do any work" (Lev. xxiii. 3). The action of that man caused him to do exactly what might defile him; for on the festival days he visited, and sat in conversation with, people of lewd character in cafés and the like, and associated with people who differed with him in religion.

Like *Haggoyim* [the Gentiles] and others, instead of spending the day in the worship of God, he spent it in idleness, and in whatever might change and degrade the character of the day. He made himself like the Jews, who may justly be called by the aforesaid name for their deeds. All this was contrary to the sayings of God (whose Name is exalted) that on such days fulfillment of righteousness must be done. On such days our duties must be holy and pure; we must avoid all things that may reflect upon the day, and all defilements or anything that may have their shadows. We must be occupied in the worship of the exalted God, in reading his law and the like, which includes prayer, reading of appropriate portions, etc. This ignorant man, however, instead of sanctifying the day, defiled it. The elements of purity cannot be harmonized with those of impurity. Let it be known, therefore, that God (to whom be praise) prohibited us from doing any work on such days as are devoted to him, that he may fulfill righteousness on them by doing whatever is pure and holy, and by avoiding whatever may desecrate and defile us, that we who keep them may justly fulfill his sayings, "Ye shall be sanctified and be holy, for I am holy." Such days must be kept holy, and not defiled with works which may keep us away from worship, as is the case on the rest of the common days.

And thou, O ignorant and obstinate man, consider what great favor God bestowed upon his people Israel! He made them holy, set them apart, and preferred them above the rest, and gave them feasts which may claim a divine origin, and for a lawful purpose proceeding from the command of the Lord God (who is highly exalted) which sets definitely their times and seasons contrary to what may be found in another god. For no other god has instituted these festival days, nor is our God

their author, but rather the god who made these customs is himself made by hands. Woe unto thee if thou wilt persist in this obstinacy, and wilt refuse the heritage with which the Lord of Creation has endowed thee! Consider also what he has said about thee; about thy duty and about thy claim for him concerning the observance of his times, Lev. xix. 2: "Be ye holy for I am holy, the Lord your God"; also in chapter xxvi.: "Be ye holy unto me, I am the Lord God who hath set you apart from the nations, that ye may be mine."

A most surprising thing, indeed, that persons who are well acquainted with the purpose of these statements may act contrary to them. If the ignorant may say, "I have done nothing; I have done only things which are commanded in the law, and if the prohibitions of making fire during the festival days were mentioned I would not have made fire," such a statement would confirm his ignorance and his persistence therein. For the command was not given to prohibit the making of fire, except that no work, not even the least, may be done, and there is no festival day, but a command in regard to it was given as follows: "Every work that is to be done thou shalt not do." About some of them he gave the following command in Lev. xxiii. 21: "Ye shall call on that very day a holy convocation for yourselves. The least work ye shall not do. It shall be an ordinance in your dwellings forever and to all generations"; and if the festival days had something in addition to the days of the Sabbath, this day to which a reference is made by the same verse would be the most worthy of all, for God instituted the Sabbath as the day of "the short feast," and in that there is no difference between the Sabbath and the rest in so far as prohibiting work entirely; for he said about the Sabbath in Lev. xxiii. 3: "It

is a Sabbath for the Lord in all your dwellings." He also said in Lev. xxiii. 21, "An ordinance forever in all your dwellings unto all your generations." The reference in the word *Moshbotëkim* is to the making of fire, for works may take place either in the dwelling of man or outside of it, but the making of fire must necessarily take place within the dwelling. "Do not make fire in all your dwellings on the day of the Sabbath." In the references where the word *Moshbotëkim* occurs, it is always given before *Dorotikim*, in order that all generations may know that this command has been given them beforehand, handed down from father to son as the time goes by; and whenever a new generation rises up, its houses may be seen void of fire on all the festival days, as on the Sabbath. New generations should do as those who preceded them in obedience to the command of God in Deut. xxxii. 7: "Ask thy father, and he will inform thee; the elders, and they will speak unto thee." This is exactly to answer any one who might confide in the heresy referred to above, without heeding the righteous truth, and following those who preceded him according to what they had handed him and what they themselves practiced, believing that his mind and knowledge are better than those of his ancestors. Such thinking as this is an additional proof of his stupendous ignorance and lack of knowledge, and of the scarcity of his understanding; for we have a proverb which runs as follows: "The path of thy forefathers leads thy steps to safety and truth." It is also said, "He who follows his own way shall be led astray." If that man's mind was sane, others might have followed him, but there was none who did so, not even his own wife. Thus he was alone in his belief, and it is current among the rest of the nations that the voice of

the majority is the voice of truth, insomuch that they say, "The voice of the people is the voice of God."

This is indeed the general impression; for of the large number of learned teachers who are well known for their understanding of the hidden mysteries of the words of the Law, and who have left behind them several books, none did presume what this man has affirmed in his doings. There were, indeed, men who could support their claims with greater logic and in more charming style, but may God forbid that any teacher, whether it be in the days of God's favor or in these days of darkness, should do likewise. This man was led further by his ignorance, so much so that he set apart the day of fasting, from the rest of the festival days, and on it he claimed that no fire should be made. He lied twice in this statement; for he applied to this day a statement which was given particularly for the sake of the Sabbath. But if it applies to this day, why not to the rest of the festival days, which have, on the whole, the same general plan and regulations?

If one should say that, in regard to the past, the Torah has declared *Shebet Shebet*, namely, "A Sabbath to be kept," he could not infer from that that fire should not be made therein; for these same words were mentioned in reference to the year of rest. Compare Lev. xxv. 2, "Thou shalt keep a Sabbath unto the land"; and apparently, according to him, fire must not be made during that entire year! But, with all that, work was not prohibited. May God preserve us from doing after the manner of this ignorant heretic, who is trying to establish an ugly heritage. May he protect us from committing a similar error, and inspire us always with obedience to him, and faithfulness to his worship. May he bring us nearer to his pleasure. Verily he is a faithful hearer. May

he also bring to guidance this ignorant man, and take him off from his folly; for truly he is in the lowest depth of ignorance. May he examine his condition, and wake up in his soul, and combat himself and let folly alone, and repent of his deed, and return to God, to the supreme and exalted God with a repentance that is pure and unselfish. If he will do this, God may return to him, for he is merciful and gracious, for thus he spoke of himself to those who may seek him, in Deut. iv. 29: "Return to thy God, and he shall not forget thee, nor forget the covenant which he has made with thy forefathers."

End of the Condemnation.

Let us now return to what may be said concerning the fulfillment of the Passover ordinance. For our words have been, so far, quite brief in mentioning the conditions of its fulfillment.

There remains yet a condition—that the eating of the Passover is obligatory upon every Israelite, whether he be present or absent, and if he be *tameth*, namely, "defiled." The eating of unleavened bread must last seven days completely from sunset of the fourteenth of the first month; that is, from the beginning of the night of the fifteenth till sunset of the twenty-first up till beginning of the night of the twenty-second. In accordance with Ex. xii. 17-19, "an eternal ordinance. In the first month on the fourteenth day thereof at sunset ye shall eat unleavened bread until the twenty-first day of the month at sunset. Ye shall eat seven days," namely, seven complete days. This is an eternal ordinance. The fulfillment thereof is obligatory; for it is like circumcision; there is no escape therefrom. But at the beginning of night of the twenty-second day at sunset the end of these

seven days is declared without subtraction. And he who eats leavened bread in those seven days must perish in accordance with the command of God in Ex. xii. 19: "He who shall eat leavened bread shall be cut off from the people of Israel whether he be a stranger or a native of the land." The destroying of all leavened food in all the dwellings of Israel has been emphasized again and again even in the places where their works, whether the dwelling of man be in a vineyard or in a garden or in a field, even the instruments of plowing and planting, must not be defiled therewith, for thus God said in Deut. xvi. 4: "And there shall be no leaven seen with thee in all thy borders seven days." Some of our learned men went so far as to prohibit the keeping of *Burgol*, which is wheat boiled and coarsely ground, or even bran, or any kind of leaven. They advise that such be taken before the coming of the feast and be deposited in the houses of neighbors among *Haggoyim* [the Gentiles], and be returned after the passing of the feast, namely, the seven days of unleavened bread. I presume that this advice is due to the extremity to which our people may be reduced in destroying all leaven, for they indulge in those materials which have been mentioned. They (may God multiply them), at the approach of the feast, about the beginning of the first month, begin to clean up all their food receptacles by putting a new coating of white zinc on their brazen dishes and by buying new implements, such as china dishes and ware, glasses, water jars, cups, and water pitchers. They also clean their houses both in the interior and exterior. They wash all they have of carpets, rugs, counterpanes, and blankets, leaving nothing of household implements that may not be washed. All this is done before the arrival of the feast. Still we go in this generation to make our Passover

in the plains outside of the town on Mount Gerizim in the tents. We leave for that place two or three days before the feast, and remain there till the second feast, remaining several days on the mountain until the morning. We do according to the command given in Deut. xvi. 7, 8, namely, "In the morning direct thyself, and return to thy dwellings [tents]. Six days shalt thou eat unleavened food; and on the seventh day there shall be a solemn assembly to the Lord thy God. Thou shalt do no manner of work therein." And thus we do nowadays to the favor of the exalted God. We pass seven days in our tents; and the day of convocation, which is the seventh, we leave our tents for the holy dwelling, which is the place of the temple and altar, and there we perform our duties; and when the convocation has ended, each returns to his tent and attends to his needs. At sunset they gather about the high priest, each having in his hand some *hachamess*,—"unleavened bread,"—and the high priest reads, in company with those present, beginning with the words, "For in the day of Jehovah," and so on to the end of that surah.

After this, the surah beginning with the words "And the blood was," to the end of that surah. They receive three addresses, reciting everything in good order, and then they eat unleavened bread. On the morning of the following day they immediately descend the mountain, each going to his own business.

We have been brief in our words, avoiding lengthy and tiresome details, but the one who desires to read further concerning the subject may be well satisfied in reading the book called "Attabakh," attributed to the learned and wise sheik Hasam Assoory of Tyrus. May God grant him forgiveness, and gather us with him in the garden of delight. Amen. ۞ ۞ ۞