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The Jew, the Gypsy and El Islam – Chapter 5

by Sir Richard F. Burton

THE CONTINUITY OF TRADITION IN THE EAST

OBVIOUSLY such cruel and vindictive teaching as that recounted in the previous chapter must bear fruit in crime and atrocities. The occurrence of such deeds explains much of what appears to have been the mere results of superstition and greed of gain amongst semi-barbarous peoples. From the earliest ages to these modern days, and not in one place, but all the world over, the hatred of the Jew against the non-Jew has been of the fiercest. Those who are so ready to admit and deplore the mighty provocations which roused a spirit of retaliation in the Rabbinical mind should equally make allowance for the natural feelings of the unfortunate Gentiles and heathens when the "People of the Synagogue" had their wicked will. In the fifth century the Hebrew colony, which, flying from Syria and Palestine after the wars of Titus and Hadrian, settled near Yathrib (Medina), was powerful enough to murder the Viceroy of the Tobbaa, or Himyarite King, and to convert to Judaism, Du-nawás (A.D. 480), one of the last of that dynasty. He acquired the title "Lord of the Fiery Pit," by burning alive, in a trench filled with combustibles, thousands of the Christians of Nejerán at the instigation of the Jews. In later times the "People of the Synagogue" brought upon themselves a war of extermination by insulting an Arab woman, and after the siege of Kheibar they attempted to poison Muhammad. In A.D. 614 the Hebrews of Galilee, according to Euty chius, joining the Persian army under Chosroes II., caused a great slaughter of the Nazarenes. When the Holy City was captured, they bought at a cheap rate those taken by the Persians, especially from the Greek monastery of Mar Saba, for the sole purpose of butchering them. Even in Abyssinia, when the Falashas, or black proselytes, established a powerful kingdom, this quasi-Jewish race, under their King Gideon and their Queen Judith, was a scourge to all the nations around. These are but a few instances of the many which would fill a volume. It is absurd to suppose with the "liberal" writers of the nineteenth century that whole colonies have been expelled, driven away half naked, from England and France, from Germany, Spain, Portugal, and other Christian kingdoms; that communities were imprisoned in Ghettos, and subjected to tumultuous and wholesale massacres; and that thousands of individual Jews and Jewesses, old men and children, were roasted with dogs over slow fires, were skinned alive, tortured, dismembered, and slain like savage beasts for the mere frenzy and the

ignorance of superstition, for simply diabolical barbarity, and for clipping coin or for claiming more than two shillings per week as interest on a loan of twenty shillings.

We must seek for a solid cause underlying these horrible acts of vengeance; we find ample motive in the fact that the Jew's hand was ever, like Ishmael's, against every man but those belonging to the Synagogue. His fierce passions and fiendish cunning, combined with abnormal powers of intellect, with intense vitality, and with a persistency of purpose which the world has rarely seen, and whetted moreover by a keen thirst for blood engendered by defeat and subjection, combined to make him the deadly enemy of all mankind, whilst his unsocial and iniquitous Oral Law contributed to inflame his wild lust of pelf, and to justify the crimes suggested by spite and superstition. Because under the present enlightened Governments of the West the Jews have lost much of their ancient rancour, and no longer perpetrate the atrocities of the Dark Ages, Europe is determined to believe that the race is, and ever has been, incapable of such atrocities. The conclusion is by no means logical. We have seen them even now repeated in the Holy Land, and presently we shall see that they are still not unknown to Western Europe, Asia Minor, and Persia.

Sir Richard F. Burton, 1821-1890

And what can we expect from a system which teaches men to believe and to act as follows?¹ A tradition of the Talmud says (Talmud, Book Baba Kama, Chapter Haggazel) if an Israelite and a Gentile come before thee to judgment, if thou canst absolve the Israelite according to the Jewish Law, absolve him, and say, 'This is our way of judging.' But if thou canst absolve him by Gentile Law, absolve him, and say, 'This is your way of judging.' But if not, then they are to come upon him with cunning frauds. R. Samuel says the error of a Gentile is also lawful. For, behold, Samuel bought a piece of gold for four small coins, and added one more (that he might go away the sooner, and not perceive the fraud). Chahana bought a hundred and twenty casks of wine for the price of a hundred; he said, 'My trust is in thee.' So far the Talmud. From these and similar passages Jews infer that they may and ought to deceive Christians and others who are not Jews. Thus also from other passages they infer that they may and ought to kill Christians, of which the following example is found in the book Mechilta: Exod. xiv. 7, *And he took six hundred chosen chariots, and all the chariots of Egypt.* From whom did he take them? If you say from the Egyptians, is it not said already, Exod.

¹ The passage is from the Pugio Fidei (Part III., c. xxii., § 22) of the learned Raymund Martin (A.D. 1284), quoted in a pamphlet, of which more presently.

ix. 6, *And all the cattle of Egypt died?* If you say Pharaoh, then there is a difficulty; for it is said already, ix. 3, *Behold, the hand of the Lord shall be upon thy cattle.* But if you say they were from the Israelites, it is said already, x. 26, *Our cattle shall go with us.* From whom then were they? It is plain that they must have been from those who feared the word of the Lord. Hence we learn that those of the servants of Pharaoh who feared the word of the Lord were a stumbling-block to Israel, and hence R. Simeon ben Jochai says, 'Slay thou the best amongst the Gentiles, and of the best of serpents bruise the head.'¹ Thus far the Talmud; and by this they mean to say, that as of serpents he especially is to be killed that is the greatest and best of its kind, so Christians are to be dealt with in the same way. For killing Christians and throwing their children into pits, and even for killing them when they can do it secretly, they derive an argument from that which is said in the book Abodah Zarah, Chapter En Maamidin: 'As to Gentiles and robbers, and those that tend small cattle, they are neither to be helped out of a well nor to be thrown into it. But heretics and informers and apostates are to be thrown in, but not to be helped out.' The commentary of Rashi says: 'Heretics mean the priests of idols; informers mean calumniators who betray the wealth of their brethren into the hands of the Gentiles.' R. Shesheth says: 'If there be a step in the pit, let him find an excuse, and say, Lest an evil beast descend upon him.' Rabba and R. Joseph both say: 'If there be a stone upon the mouth of the well, he is to cover it, and say, I do it that the beasts may pass over it.' R. Nachman says: 'If there be a ladder in the well, he is to take it away, and say, I wish to get down my son from the roof.' Thus far the Talmud. Thy prudence, O reader, may perceive that the Talmud, which so perniciously teaches them to lie and to kill Christians, is not the law of God, but the figment of the devil."

¹ This has passed into an Arabic proverb.

We can hardly be surprised, after reading such atrocious doctrines, at what history tells us concerning the Jews, their crimes, and their condemnations. For instance:

In A.D. 419, according to Socrates (*Eccles. Hist.*, Lib. VII., chap. xvi.), some Jews of Inmestar, between Chalcis and Antioch, as a drunken frolic, tied a Christian child¹ upon a cross and mocked it, and that, hurried on in their wickedness, they afterwards scourged it until it died.

In A.D. 560 a Jew was stoned for carrying away and profaning an image of the Saviour. The same happened at Odessa in A.D. 1871, where the

¹ The annals of the world are full of reports concerning children being kidnapped, crowned with thorns, flogged, crucified, and pierced with sharp instruments. Of course the child is chosen because it is more easily mastered than a man.

Hebrews were charged with stealing the image of the "miraculous Madonna of Kutperova."

About A.D. 787 the Jews of Beyrut repeated the offence. The result was the conversion of almost all their number, and the consecration of their synagogue by the bishop.

A.D. 1010. Massacre of the Jews in France.

A.D. 1017. Certain Jews beheaded by order of Pope Benedict at Rome.

A.D. 1135. The Jews crucified a boy at Norwich. According to the general report, they hired a Christian lad aged twelve as a leather-sewer, and converted him into a Paschal offering; they placed a bit in his mouth, and after a thousand outrages they crucified him, and pierced his side in order to mock the Redeemer's death. The corpse was borne in a sack to be burned outside the town gates; but a surprise caused the murderers to fly, leaving the remains hanging upon a tree.

A.D. 1166. The Jews at Ponthosa crucified a lad aged twelve.

A.D. 1185. For similar outrage upon a girl and others, King Philip Augustus confiscated the goods of the Jews, and banished them from his realms in the April of the following year.

A.D. 1189. The Jews were massacred at London and in other parts of England.

A.D. 1190. The Jews were massacred at York.

A.D. 1250. The Jews of Saragossa nailed a child named Dominic to the wall in the form of a cross, and then pierced his side with a spear. During the same century those of Toledo also killed a Christian youth. According to the *Cronica Serafica* (della Vita di S. Francesco d'Assisi, Opera del Padre Damiano Cornejo, 1721, Lib. I., chap. i.), the Jews superstitiously used the blood of Christians in childbirth, and sent it in a dried state to China and other places, where they had synagogues, but where worshippers of Christ¹ are not to be found. Hence the Jews were eventually expelled from Spain and Portugal.

A.D. 1255. "Jappen," one of the chief Jews of Lincoln, and others of his faith, kidnapped a lad eleven years old (August 27), beat him with rods, cut off his nose and upper lip,

broke some of his teeth, and pierced his side. King Henry III. and his Parliament at Reading condemned the murderers to be dragged to death at horses' heels, and gibbeted their carcasses.

¹ The Chronicles are right in believing that the Jew hates the Christian more than he does the Muhammadan. "As to those Gentiles, who, like the Ishmaelites, are not idolaters, their wine is unlawful to drink, but is lawful for purpose of profit, as is taught by all the Gaons; but Christians are idolaters, and their wine, even such as has not been used as wine of libation, is unlawful even for purposes of profit" (Hilchoth Maakhaloth Asuroth, c. xi. 7). "Statuimus," says the Talmud (Order I., Dissert. 4, quoted by Lucio Ferraris), "ut quilibet Judæus ter in die omnem Christianorum gentem ac Deum precetur ut confundat, interimatque ipsam cum regibus et principibus suis; atque hoc maximè faciant sacerdotes Judæorum in synagoga ter quotidie orantes in odium Jesu Nazareni." This curse is not ordered against Muhammadans.

A.D. 1271. The Jews of Pforzheim murdered a girl seven years old.

A.D. 1287. The Jews of Wesel murdered a boy named Werner.

A.D. 1288. The Jews of Pacherat [?] (Würtzburg) murdered a Christian, and extracted his blood "as it were with a winepress, and which they are said to use as a medicine." About the same time the Jews of Munich murdered a Christian child.

A.D. 1290. A Jew was burnt in Paris for insulting a consecrated wafer. In the same year, during the reign of Edward I., fifteen to sixteen thousand Jews were banished from England; nor were they allowed to return till the days of Cromwell, the first Liberal (A.D. 1660).

A.D. 1299. Many Jews were put to death for insulting a consecrated wafer at Roettingen of Franconia.

A.D. 1303. The Jews of Thüringen murdered a child, and were slain in numbers.

A.D. 1306. King Philip of France was induced by a multitude of accusations, involving magic, sacrilege, and murder, to expel the Jews from his country, to confiscate all their goods except what was wanted for the journey, and to forbid their return under pain of death—all were arrested on the same day, July 22.

A.D. 1330. The Jews of Gustow in Vandalia [Pomerania] insulted a Host.

A.D. 1348 — 1350. The Jews were accused of poisoning the wells and rivers, and of causing the plague which then devastated Europe. Many were slain and thousands were driven away from Germany, where the cry of "Hep" was first raised. At length the Papal

power was compelled to defend their lives by threats of excommunicating their destroyers.

A.D. 1379. The Jews of Belgium insulted a consecrated Host.

A.D. 1399. The same was done by the Jews of Poland.

A.D. 1468. The Jews of Toledo in Spain crucified a Christian boy.

A.D. 1475. The Jews again insulted the Host, and were expelled the territories of the Bishop of Passau.

A.D. 1492—1498. The Jews were expelled from Spain, in consequence of popular clamour, by Isabel the Catholic. Many retired to Portugal, where asylum was granted to them under the conditions, first, that each should pay a certain sum of gold for admission, and, secondly, that if found in Portugal after a certain day, they should either consent to be baptized or be sold for slaves. At the expiration of the appointed time many remained. "The King therefore gave orders to take away all their children under fourteen years of age, to distribute them amongst Christians, to send them to the newly discovered islands, and thus to pluck up Judaism by the roots." This expulsion, which has been strongly commented upon by modern historians, is still fresh in the memory of the Jews, and an Eastern Rabbi can hardly conceal the hatred with which even in these days he regards a Spanish official.

A.D. 1495. The Jews of Trent, by means of one of their number, a physician, decoyed to his house, whilst the Christians were at church, it being Maunday Thursday, a boy two years and a half old, by name Simeon, the son of a tanner. Before the Paschal festival commenced, the principal Jews collected in a room near their synagogue. The child, gagged with a kerchief, was extended in the form of a cross, and was held down by his murderers. The blood, pouring from heavy gashes, was collected in a basin, and when death drew near the victim was placed upon his legs by the two men, and the others pierced his body with sharp instruments, all vying in brutality and enjoying the torture. The corpse having been found in the Etsch river, which flows through the city, led to the detection of the crime; the murderers were put to death, the synagogue was razed to the ground, and a church was built over the place where the horrid deed was done. A sculpture was put on the Bridge Tower in Frankfort-on-the-Maine, and a picture of a "Christian Infant murdered by the Jews" was placed in one of the galleries in the Hôtel de Ville. Of late years it has been removed, in deference to the feelings of the Hebrew community, which, of late years, has formed a large and important section of the commercial population. This murder has been abundantly commented upon. Dr. John Matthias Tiberinus, in Trent at the time, and Jacobus Philippus Bergamensis, of the Order of the Hermits of St. Augustine, who was then living at the neighbouring town of Bergamo, gave accounts of it; whilst an engraving was produced in the *Chronicles* of John Louis Gottfried, edited by Matthæus Merianus. On the other

hand, Pietro Mocenigo, the Doge of Venice, and his Senate asserted: "Credimus certe rumorem ipsum de puero necato commentum esse et artem; ad quem finem, viderint et interpretentur alii."

A.D. 1518. The Jews ill-treated consecrated Hosts and murdered Christian children in the Electorate of Brandenburg.

A.D. 1669 (September 25). A child was barbarously slaughtered by one Raphael Levi, and the cause was publicly tried at Metz. The Nuremburg Chronicle produces, in the same year, three other cases of kidnapping—one in England and two at Fiesole. Baronio (*Raccolta delle Cause Celebri*, p. 288, etc.) supplies many similar instances of child stealing and murder.

M. Tustet, a Lazarist priest, used to relate what he had heard when living at Turin from the lady who nearly fell a victim to Jewish superstition, even in the early part of the present century. A certain Signor Antonio Gervalon, born at Castiglione d'Osta, and settled in business at Turin, happened, when walking with his wife Giulietta Bonnier, to enter the Jewish quarter. This Ghetto used to be closed at night, as in Hamburg and Frankfort. Whilst he was talking business with one of his Hebrew acquaintances, Madame Gervalon left him, and strolled on a short way. Suddenly she was mobbed by a crowd of Jews, who hustled her forwards, and at last forcibly thrust her into a *souterrain* closed by a trap-door. She was stripped to the waist, and presently visited by two Rabbis, who, after reading their books for about half an hour, retired, saying, *Voi dovete morire*. The husband, after the conversation ended, followed his wife, whom all the Ghetto folk denied having seen; and thinking that perhaps she had gone home, he returned there to seek her, but in vain. Thence he went to various houses, till a relative said to him in jest, "Have a care! You know how the Jews treat us Christians." The words struck him. He hurriedly collected a party of policemen, and whilst these searched the Ghetto he went about shouting, "La mia moglie! La mia moglie!" (My wife! my wife!). Though half dead with fear, the lady at length screamed a reply, and was saved. The affair was hushed up with money, which made the Jews as powerful at Turin as they are at Aleppo and Damascus; but the tale was long told by the children of Madame Gervalon. In this section of the nineteenth century the subject has passed into the domain of politics, and is no longer submitted to reason and judgment. The Italian Liberal denies and derides the charges, whilst the Conservatives or Retrogrades are almost ashamed to support them.

A.D. 1811. A Christian woman disappeared in the Jewish quarter of Aleppo.¹

A.D. 1821. The Jews sacrificed a man at Beyrut.

A.D. 1824. The Jews of Beyrut made away with Fatallah Sayegh, an Aleppine Muhammadan.

A.D. 1829. The Jews of Hamah murdered a Muhammadan girl, and were expelled the city.

A.D. 1834. The Jews of Tripoli were accused of murdering an Aleppine Christian.

A.D. 1838. The Jews of Jerusalem attempted to murder a Muhammadan.

A.D. 1839. A flask of blood passed through the Custom-house of Beyrut.

A.D. 1840. The Jews murdered Padre Tomaso and Ibrahím Amárah at Damascus. In the same year they made away with a Greek boy at Rhodes, a Greek boy disappeared from Corfu, and an attempt was made to murder a Muhammadan.

A.D. 1847. The Jews crucified a Christian boy in Mount Lebanon.

¹ This skeleton list is continued in order to show chronologically the continuity of tradition concerning atrocities and sacrilege practised by the Jews.

A.D. 1853. The Jews of Caiffa murdered the wife of an Algerine Jew.

A.D. 1865. The Jews of Safed put to death a Spanish Jewess.

Do not these things remind us of that "generation of vipers," certain of the Jews, who banded together and bound themselves by a curse, saying that they would neither eat nor drink till they had killed Paul? And was not the Apostle justified in asserting, "They please not God, and are contrary to all men"?

How vain it is, in presence of all these horrors, to quote the testimony of Grotius, who, speaking of the Jews since the Dispersion, says: "Et tamen tanto tempore Judæi, nec ad falsorum deorum cultus defluerunt, nec de adulteriis accusantur"; and, "Apud Batavos Judæi suspecti talium facinorum non sunt." Yet these men excommunicated Spinoza and attempted his life because he wrote the truth that was in him. Granting, however, that the Jews of Holland were like the mild and unoffending Karaïtes of the Crimea and Aden, it does not follow that all the widely parted families of the house of Israel deserve an equally favourable verdict. At any rate, sufficient has been advanced in these pages to open the eyes of the student and the ethnographer; it will stand on record "until Elijah."