A wide-angle photograph of a desert landscape at sunset. The sky is a warm, golden-orange color, and the sun is low on the horizon, casting long shadows. In the foreground, a caravan of camels and people is gathered on the sand. The camels are some sitting and some standing, and there are several people, some wearing head coverings. The middle ground shows a vast, flat desert with scattered small bushes and tracks in the sand. In the background, there are low mountains and a large, dark rock formation on the left side.

# Missionary to the World

Adventures of Joseph Wolff Vol.1  
(b. 1795-1834)

Danutasn Brown

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## Introduction

Who is Joseph Wolff?

Joseph Wolff was a sincere convert from Judaism to Christianity living in the early 1800's, who is mentioned extensively in the chapter 'A Great Religious Awakening' of the book *The Great Controversy*. Wolff was famous all throughout Europe and America for doing what many thought impossible: reaching out to groups in the Middle East that no western European had attempted to reach in ages, namely Middle Eastern Jews. But his work was not limited to that. He had discussions and travels with missionaries of all denominations, and was willing to talk to anyone of Christ, whether they were members of a royal court, merchants, Bedouin nomads, harlots, or inquisitors- among the Druuz, the Sufis and Sunis of Persia, the Kurds, the Assyrian people, the Armenians, the Afghans, the Turkomens, the Greeks, Russians, Indians and many others. He was known in his time as "the missionary to the world."

Why Joseph Wolff?

No other individual missionary is so honoured in the Great Controversy; none other is even mentioned – not Henry Martyn, not Hudson Taylor, not David Livingstone, not Adoniram Judson (forgive my bias to English-speaking missionaries). Because Wolff is not connected to any denomination, his name has been forgotten, and unfairly so. I, living in the so-called "missionary's graveyard" of Thailand, hope to reclaim his importance to help future workers that feel called to work among peoples with cultures very different to their own. Now is, praise God, a time of renewed missionary work. Yet living in Thailand I see that many modern missionaries are poorly trained, are as "fish out of the water", having difficulty learning on the job. This Wolff never was. What better way to prepare ourselves for this work than to follow in the footsteps of Ellen White's archetypal missionary? Remember that Adventist universities were once "missionary colleges", giving training to reach the world – not the parochial institutions they have become that are too often trapped in the bubble of the surrounding Adventist neighbourhood. They have also been struck with same insular

disconnectedness that besets the rest of academia, generating literature that is read mainly only by other academics.

And then there is the misplaced zeal of missionaries like John Chau, who was killed by the Sentilese of the Andaman Islands, a people of whom no outsider knows their language nor has been allowed on their island in years. Missionaries come certain they have accurate doctrine; they focus only on methods, when God would first have us recognize our Laodicean state and then truly come to understand the 3<sup>rd</sup> Angel's Message. Truth must be the truth for this time for God to be with us. Wolff is also important in this regard in that he unites zeal with constant learning; He was on the cutting edge of light given on prophecy. He preached the 2<sup>nd</sup> coming in truth, and he knew how to place Muslims in the stream of prophecy. That is why he is in the same chapter as William Miller. Yet he was always listening and learning, and much of what he shares is anthropology from a Christian perspective. Let us heed Hosea 4:6.

As we replay the events leading to 1844, where people expected Jesus's advent as we do today, I believe Wolff's story becomes more relevant. We Adventists, like the Jews of old, are a self-righteous and rigid people. We are having to go through much soul-searching doctrinally and experientially to overcome the schizophrenia caused by the contradictory beliefs we have been holding as a result of rejecting the 1888 message and entering into a wilderness period. This includes misunderstanding on the relationship between the old and new covenant, the place of the Torah, what law is moral and what is ceremonial (confusing dichotomy between God's law and Moses' law), how we are to understand the judgment, how does God destroy, the relationship between God and His Son, our relationship to truth and our relationship to apostasy, dealing with issues of authority and submission, and so many others. But through the grace of God I think we are steadily coming into to a full understanding in Christ on these issues, and our faith is becoming much more stable. Now these truths must work on our hearts and minds, sanctifying us that we may go out and preach it to the world, particularly to the parts of the world more alien to us. In Wolff's time a missionary had to go to a far-off land to meet the "other", or those whose worldview was totally different from

us. But in our modern world the “other” can live next door to us; no longer are our communities made up of people of likeminded cultural history. Muslims, Buddhists, Hindus, Sikhs are people we meet everyday. How do we share with these people? It is difficult if the would-be evangelist has no preparation, no understanding of where the non-Christian is coming from, what their history is. I believe this is where Wolff’s experiences are so helpful to us. Many of his discussions are those that we would have today, and reading this book prepares us for the work we are told by Christ to do – while also grounding us in history, which is crucial for us to escape falling into mass-media mediated opinions that are based on fear and hate and shallow short-term research. Wolff was part of that original work leading to 1844, which is a rehearsal of the work for the end of time.

The angel who unites in the proclamation of the third angel’s message is to lighten the whole earth with his glory. A work of world-wide extent and unwonted power is here foretold. The advent movement of 1840-44 was a glorious manifestation of the power of God; the first angel’s message was carried to every missionary station in the world, and in some countries there was the greatest religious interest which has been witnessed in any land since the Reformation of the sixteenth century; but these are to be exceeded by the mighty movement under the last warning of the third angel. {GC 611.1}

Most of Wolff’s adventures happened prior to 1844. I open this book with his time in Rome, when he is 21 years old, which would be around 1816. William Miller has not even started teaching yet. I hope we can enter this unique period of history, after the French Revolution and the Enlightenment; America has just been born, and Britain was beginning its most glorious era of empire.

We can learn much from Wolff’s book about tact, as well as how to think creatively and appropriately to every situation so that we may “be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear”. <sup>1</sup> Peter 3:15. To do all this, I have quoted what I consider highlights from the book, *Travels and Adventures of the Rev. Joseph Wolff (1861)*. This is by no means

exhaustive, and by doing this project I also hope to encourage more readers to read the original book that I am quoting from, particularly if the reader has it in his heart to do soul-work with Muslims, Jews, and Christians of a very different culture to that of the west. All italics are in the original text.

Before I begin quoting from this fascinating book, I will quote a little from *The Great Controversy* to give us an introduction:

In 1821, three years after Miller had arrived at his exposition of the prophecies pointing to the time of the judgment, Dr. Joseph Wolff, "the missionary to the world," began to proclaim the Lord's soon coming. Wolff was born in Germany, of Hebrew parentage, his father being a Jewish rabbi. While very young he was convinced of the truth of the Christian religion. Of an active, inquiring mind, he had been an eager listener to the conversations that took place in his father's house as devout Hebrews daily assembled to recount the hopes and anticipations of their people, the glory of the coming Messiah, and the restoration of Israel. One day hearing Jesus of Nazareth mentioned, the boy inquired who He was. "A Jew of the greatest talent," was the answer; "but as He pretended to be the Messiah, the Jewish tribunal sentenced Him to death." "Why," rejoined the questioner, "is Jerusalem destroyed, and why are we in captivity?" "Alas, alas!" answered his father, "because the Jews murdered the prophets." The thought was at once suggested to the child: "Perhaps Jesus was also a prophet, and the Jews killed Him when He was innocent."-- *Travels and Adventures of the Rev. Joseph Wolff*, vol. 1, p. 6. So strong was this feeling that, though forbidden to enter a Christian church, he would often linger outside to listen to the preaching.

When only seven years old he was boasting to an aged Christian neighbor of the future triumph of Israel at the advent of the Messiah, when the old man said kindly: "Dear boy, I will tell you who the real Messiah was: He was Jesus of Nazareth, . . . whom your ancestors have crucified, as they did the prophets of old. Go home and read the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah, and you will be convinced that Jesus Christ is the Son of God."-- *Ibid.*, vol. 1, p. 7. Conviction at once fastened upon him. He went home and read the scripture, wondering to see how perfectly it had been fulfilled in

Jesus of Nazareth. Were the words of the Christian true? The boy asked of his father an explanation of the prophecy, but was met with a silence so stern that he never again dared to refer to the subject. This, however, only increased his desire to know more of the Christian religion.

The knowledge he sought was studiously kept from him in his Jewish home; but, when only eleven years old, he left his father's house and went out into the world to gain for himself an education, to choose his religion and his lifework. He found a home for a time with kinsmen, but was soon driven from them as an apostate, and alone and penniless he had to make his own way among strangers. He went from place to place, studying diligently and maintaining himself by teaching Hebrew. Through the influence of a Catholic instructor he was led to accept the Romish faith and formed the purpose of becoming a missionary to his own people. With this object he went, a few years later, to pursue his studies in the College of the Propaganda at Rome. Here his habit of independent thought and candid speech brought upon him the imputation of heresy. He openly attacked the abuses of the church and urged the necessity of reform. Though at first treated with special favor by the papal dignitaries, he was after a time removed from Rome. Under the surveillance of the church he went from place to place, until it became evident that he could never be brought to submit to the bondage of Romanism. He was declared to be incorrigible and was left at liberty to go where he pleased. He now made his way to England and, professing the Protestant faith, united with the English Church. After two years' study he set out, in 1821, upon his mission. Great Controversy, p. 357-359.

### Author's Preface

Writing this book has been tricky, and halfway through it I had a realization. The work I was embarking on was more than just a summary of events, it needed to be a reflection on memory and growth. This epiphany halfway through the work I actually wanted to keep as a surprise, but I wasn't sure if the reader would have the patience – so I will share what happened as I was researching this. Originally I thought to quote and do commentary on Wolff's *Travels and Adventures*, his

book from 1861, which was the first book of Wolff's quoted by Ellen White. But as I was going through the book, there were some things that seemed vague and forced. It wasn't until chapter 16 that I realized what it was. It was that Wolff had changed his doctrinal beliefs on certain things, and while I don't think he is intentionally being dishonest, a book written in 1861 would reflect his beliefs in 1861, not his beliefs prior to 1844, even if he was looking back on what he did 20-30 years earlier.

It is this fact that became clear in chapter 16, and I think it was there earlier also, but not as obviously. Wolff had written 4 books prior to this that I had found, the first published in 1824 when he was only 28, which is his *Missionary Journal and Memoir*, written by himself, which talked about his first big missionary trip that lasted 3 years. The 2<sup>nd</sup> is *Researches and Missionary Labours Among the Jews, Mohammedans, and other Sects*, published in 1835, detailing his travels from 1831-1834. The 3<sup>rd</sup> is *Journal of the Rev. Joseph Wolff: In a Series of Letters to Sir Thomas Baring*, published in 1839, containing an account of his missionary labours from 1827-1831 and 1835-1838. The 4<sup>th</sup> book is *Narrative of a Mission to Bokhara, in the Years 1843-1845, to Ascertain the Fate of Colonel Stoddart and Captain Connolly*. This was published in 1846.

By the time of 1861, Wolff had become a huge name and was, I believe, going over his legacy. He wants to correct some of the wrong impressions he had given in his youth, and it is his right to do that. Still, he is often over-praising the Jesuits (he always appreciated them somewhat for their missionary fervour, ex: Francis Xavier) and saying the Antichrist is in the future, which he makes seem like was always his belief, but on comparing to his older books this is not the case. He also had formerly set a date for the 2<sup>nd</sup> coming of Jesus, and I assume that he was disappointed and embarrassed just as the Adventists were. All of this is complicated to figure out, because he never wrote a book of his theological beliefs; it must be ascertained by going through his experiences and snippets of theology given here and there.

This makes my work as a curator of Wolff's life and work difficult. I think the best way to do this is to follow the trail that Ellen White laid out, and in her short amount of writing that she does on Wolff in the *Great Controversy* she actually cites 3 works. Looking more carefully at the books she cited, I noticed that Mrs. White only cited the

1861 book in regards to his early life as a child. Yet regarding Wolff's adventures, she cites *Researches and Missionary Labours* from 1835, and *Journal of the Rev. Joseph Wolff* from 1839. The 1861 book also recollects events from these adventures, but Mrs. White prefers the documentation done in these two books. Why? I think the reason is that they more accurately portrayed what he preached at that crucial pre-1844 time.

This is not unlike what happen to the Millerites, particularly those that publicly declared their prophetic position and what events they expected to happen at a certain date. Many of the Adventists set the correct date Oct 22, 1844, but when Jesus did not come many of them set the dates later. So if we were to read their post-1844 works we would see many arguments saying that their earlier reasoning was wrong. So we need to be careful in how we study the history of those in the past, and learn from it. That is why the beginning part of his life up until 1830 is from the 1861 book, then from 1831-1834 I switch to *Researches and Missionary Labours*, then on to his *Journal* of 1839, and finally finishing off with an epilogue from the 1861 book again. (Note: This is vol.1 of his travels and will end with the book *Missionary Labours*. If there is interest I will continue from the *Journal* in 1839 to the end of his life in Vol.2)

The fact that Ellen White quoted from his 1861 book shows that there is merit to it, and I believe that the voice of the mature Wolff, telling his story, is valuable and insightful. But as we dig deeper into the story, we want to more fully understand the mind of the man who expects Jesus coming very soon, who is writing in his journal in the midst of his adventures, and it is therefore his two earlier works that become invaluable. So if the reader asks, why is it that I wrote this book in such a strange manner, I justify myself by saying I followed the path charted to me in how Ellen White quotes Wolff's works.

As you read this remember that Wolff did not accept many tenets of the 7<sup>th</sup> Day Adventist faith. Wolff died in 1862, a year before the official birth of 7<sup>th</sup> Day Adventism as an organized body. The first Adventist missionary to Europe, J.N. Andrews, would not leave to Switzerland until 1874. Instead, Wolf's Christianity is reminiscent of the highly idiosyncratic and eclectic non-creedal Christianity of the

Millerites and the Christian Connection; it is learned, curious and open; it doesn't have the systematic doctrinal foundation of God's remnant church through years of struggle and toil from our church's numerous pioneers. Wolff himself never wrote a book of doctrine, nor theology, his few published works are all of his experiences – and that is the purpose of this book, to look at his experiences and insights through the lens of what we have learned since his time. This is Jesus as “the way”, as missionary, because such a work requires constant closeness with Christ. Wolff's commitment to preaching to such a variety of different worldviews is truly commendable, and that is what we need to learn from if we are to take the message to “all nations, tongues, and peoples.”

Remember that this beginning section is his feelings looking back on his life. Potentially his younger self wouldn't agree with some of his later sentiments. I think that the strength of his later work is maturity, tact, greater understanding of history and learning, and reflection; but the weaknesses are excessive name-dropping, excessively appeasing of different factions, and giving up of some of his prophetic understanding. Hopefully by doing this we may understand some of the psychology of men in general (Wolff as the corporate missionary, representing us all). With that in mind, it is from his time in Rome that I would first like to start. Dear reader, please be patient, for soon we will get to the interesting travels in the orient, but first we need get through this part – for don't we all go through a period of wrestling with Rome before we can preach the gospel in spirit and truth?

## In Rome Studying Before Becoming a Missionary

(From Chapter 4 of Wolff's Travels and Adventures)

Joseph Wolff studied with many of Europe's greatest minds before setting off on his travels, picking up many languages along the way. Being a converted Jew of such high potential, he was a jewel that every denomination wanted to have. Coming from such a unique background makes his thoughts on the variations of Christianity highly interesting, and the recognition of his own special place in Christendom played into his vanity in ways that Wolff, looking back on his youth,

analyses with elderly wisdom. Early in the Christian walk it is often our own carnal glory that we strive for, to serve God in a way we think is best, but not necessarily how *God* thinks is best. Wolff knew that a Jewish convert was rare, and he knew it was causing him to be proud. This was the same for me, as it is rare for a Marxist/activist to be converted, and I'm sure the same for many others (J.H. Waggoner comes to mind). "Knowledge puffeth up, but agape-love edifieth." 1 Cor 8:1. These issues all are brought out into the light in his time in Rome, and he needed to deal with it as much as he could before he could go and reach those outside the faith.

Wolff also lived in a time of much confusion in the church, with deism, higher criticism, and spiritualism rife. Especially in his younger, more hot-headed years, much of the unbelief and denigration of scripture among higher-criticism espousing Protestants really sickened him. His experiences with many of the Protestant seminaries were negative because of what was taught there. I have not added any of these occurrences; I feel they are rather familiar to us and similar to our time, and would like to get to the highly interesting parts of his travels.

But before that I find of deep interest Wolff's time in Rome. Wolff came to a significant understanding of a need and recognition for authority, and he struggled to figure out how it is to be done in Christ while staying faithful to truth. As this is early in his career (university-age), he realized his impassioned defences of truth were mixed with arrogance and ambition.

When the lectures at the Collegio Romano commenced, Piatti, professor of dogmatics, opened the course, and gave the first on the subject of predestination. Wolff sat near him, at his right hand, when Piatti dictated the following words: "My dear hearers: This is a most perplexing subject, I therefore must give you a precautionary warning. **The question of predestination is a very difficult one, therefore you must neither take the Scripture, nor the Fathers as your guide, but the infallible decision of the Roman Pontiffs.** For Pius V has declared, in one of his Bulls, that if any one should say that the opinion of St. Augustine on predestination has the same authority as the decision of the Popes, he shall be Anathema." Wolff at once took fire, and said, before

them all, "Do you believe the infallibility of the Pope?" The professor said, "Yes." Wolff said, "I do not."

He was at once surrounded by the whole college; Bonelli was especially indignant, and exclaimed, "Bad and impious people seldom do believe the infallibility of the Pope; but if you want to stay at Rome, drive away these iniquitous thoughts! - 'Scacciate questipensieri cattim!' "Wolff became furious, but has since confessed that he did not show the real spirit of Christianity in the opposition which he offered. Nay, he owns that it argued a great deal vanity in him as a young man, to attempt to be a Reformer. For, what would they have said in Cambridge, if Wolff, during a lecture delivered by the Religious Professor, had got up and protested against the sentiments of the Professor? Would he not have been stopped by the Professor and the whole audience at once?



The Building that was formerly the Collegio Romano (Roman College). Founded by Ignatius Loyola in 1551, 15 years after founding the Society of Jesus (Jesuits), it became a centre of academia over many years. The school was taken over by the forces of the Roman Republic in 1870, and now one wing is the Ministry of Heritage and Culture, the other a high school. Only its

theology and philosophy faculties live on in another building nearby, the 3,800 student-strong Pontifical Gregorian University.

I hope to show through events in Wolff's life that, as he matures, his fire and passion for Christ and truth is tempered by respect and courtesy. This is one of the main lessons I learned from this book, that to be a truly effective missionary one must be able to have empathy for fellow men, showing love and sympathy, yet while declaring the truth that is right for them. Wolff is highly gracious to the Roman Catholic Church, and he has dialogues in different countries with members of that church who hold a range of opinions. Notice in this next passage how it is the meek spirit of the priest that convicts Wolff, though he still thinks he is right doctrinally.

When Wolff came to him in the rector's room, His Eminence treated him with great condescension, and asked him 'his views respecting the Church of Rome, of which Wolff still spoke with the highest enthusiasm. He asked him, among other things, what branch of study he most liked? Wolff answered, "The study of the Bible in the original tongue." Cardinal Della Solmaglia replied, "You must not rely upon that; and you must never forget that the Church is the interpreter of scripture. I will give you an instance. There is a word," His Eminence continued, "in one of the Prophets (he knew not which), which is translated, 'A virgin shall conceive and bear a son.' There was long dispute about it, whether it means 'Virgin,' or not; and people could not agree, until the Pope was asked; and the Pope decided that it meant 'Virgin,' and then the dispute was at an end. So, you see, the Hebrew language is an ornament for a priest, but no necessity; for the Pope at last must decide everything."

**Wolff replied with a most unpardonable sneer, 'How *can* the Pope decide, if he does not know Hebrew!** "Upon which Della Somaglia rose, and said, "Wolff, I am afraid for you, that you will become a heresiarch [the founder of a heresy or the leader of a heretical sect]!" And Ostini repeated the very words to Wolff afterwards, "His Eminence, Cardinal Della Somaglia, is afraid that you will become a heresiarch!" Although Wolff at this moment believes that his reasoning was correct, yet he was so much struck by the meekness of Cardinal Della Somaglia, that on returning to

his own room he said to himself, Cardinal Della Somaglia has, after all, shown a more Christian spirit than I have done," and he burst into tears.

When Wolff was able to overcome this need to be the greatest disciple, his motivation for serving Christ changes, and he is ready to meet with any manner of man. Here is another passage to illustrate this point. The following occurrence became part of Wolff's legend. But Wolff looks back on it as misplaced passion, though he still believes his words true.

But in spite of the respect which was shown him [by the catholics in Rome], he was often very unhappy, for his continual disputes destroyed all devotional feeling and Christian meekness; and yet he could not resist engaging in them, although his best friends counseled him otherwise. **The painter Overbeck said one day, with much justice, "We should bear the prejudices of other men with gentleness and humility, because we are all more or less prejudiced."**

But Wolff could not see this properly then. On the contrary, he argued with Overbeck; "The Protestants of Germany believe me to be a hypocrite in entering the Roman Catholic Church; and I should be such if I were to consent to their abuses." Overbeck's answer to which was, "You are not yet able to check such things as these: you must wait as Christ did, till you are thirty years of age. Nay you will surely fall into the same error, and embrace the doctrines you now abhor, if you will not hear the voice of your friends." Nevertheless, Overbeck spoke for the time in vain, as will be seen.

One day, indeed, matters became quite boisterous at table in Collegio Romano. **One of the pupils said, "Wolff, how could you pat the Pope's shoulders? Are you not aware that the Pope is God?" Wolff became as red as a turkey cock, and said, "How can you dare to say such a thing? The Pope is the dust of the earth, *polvere della terra*. If he was God, I could not have touched him."** All the collegians, and the professors, and rectors, and vice-rectors, rose from their seats, and exclaimed, "Wolff, what are you saying?" Wolff said, "This fellow called the Pope God; and I say he is dust of the earth; who is right?" One answered; "Is it not

said, ye are gods?" Wolff said, "Yes, which may be broken to pieces." Another said, "He is God on earth, for he has all power in heaven and, and on earth, and in purgatory." And, again, another said, "One may call him God, in a large sense." Wolff replied, "I shall not call the Pope god either in a large or a small sense: he is dust of the earth." Another said, "He may be called God in a most pious sense." **And to Wolff's utter surprise, every one of the most learned men belonging to the Court of Rome defended and supported the expression.**

But here one frank confession must be made. It may well be asked, Why did Wolff always attack the abuses and irrelevant points of the Church of Rome, when he was only a pupil in the place for a particular object? Protestants, as well as Roman Catholics, advised him not to do so. Niebuhr, Stolberg, and Cardinal Litta, as well as many others, all agreed on the point. They said, "You, Wolff, are only a pupil; you are neither bishop nor priest; be quiet till you have heard more, and have a position."

Wolff answers frankly, that **although he hopes that love for Divine truth has been one of his ruling motives from his youth upwards, yet his great enemies all through life have been – vanity and ambition; cherished and encouraged alike by injudicious friends and covert foes. He owns that during his life at Rome, his vanity made him believe that he knew everything better than those by whom he was surrounded; and as people told him that he was like Luther in outward appearance, he resolved, if possible, to be a Luther also in his stormy and wild career; while, at the same time, his insatiable ambition made him wish and aim at becoming Pope, as he once openly avowed in the College. And, being then an admirer of Gregory VII, he said he wished to be like him in daring and firmness, but to do exactly the contrary to what he did, and to signalize himself by abolishing celibacy, and the worship of the Saints. He even told his fellow-pupils of the name he intended to assume when Pope, namely, Hildebrandus I.**

It takes bravery to admit such outlandish ambition! I hope that we also can use lessons from our past self-deprecatingly to share important points of wisdom. It makes a powerful mark on the listener,

particularly those not in agreement with us, when we share experiences that we repent of and have learned from. It allows others to do likewise, and also admit their faults, and thus be cleansed. But if we all pretend that we did nothing wrong ever, then there remains a distance between us as brethren, as we are not comfortable enough with each other to share fully. Remember that repentance is a gift of the Spirit. Acts 5:31.

Next is a passage showing the logic of tradition and security leading one to accept killing another human.

At another time, the question was proposed, whether Jansenius was a heretic? The rector said, "One cannot exactly say that, for he says at the end of his work, that he submits everything he wrote to the decree of the Church. **But if the Church had burnt him, she would have done well.**" Whereupon Wolff exclaimed, "**The Church has no right to burn.**" The rector said, "**How do you prove that?**" Wolff said, "**It is clear - it is not allowed to murder. Thou shalt not kill!**" The rector said, "May a shepherd kill a *wolf*, when he enters the flock?" Wolff replied, "A man is not a beast." The rector replied, "Seventeen Popes have done it." Joseph Wolff replied, "Seventeen Popes have done wrong."

While we know there is much confusion in Roman Catholic doctrine, just like there is everywhere else, I would not want to end this section on Rome with the above quote. Wolff is "anxious to have his opinion of the Roman Colleges thoroughly understood," and it would not be right of me to just quote the critical passages. Though differing in opinions, "he must yet uphold to admiration the moral and religious training he witnessed in those establishments." He praises the Catholic Church's treatment and patronage of missionaries, which Wolff felt much better than the English. He admired Rome's acceptance of learned men, and "is convinced of the liberality shown there to strangers, travellers, and savan[sic] of every sort...Wolff himself has heard, in the Café Greco, unbelievers discussing the merits of revelation with believers, perfectly unmolested." It shows the spirit of the time, that the world was ready for new light, according to Daniel 12:4. The students were very kind to Wolff, and the professors took him seriously. Eventually Wolff's positions make it impossible for him to stay at Rome,

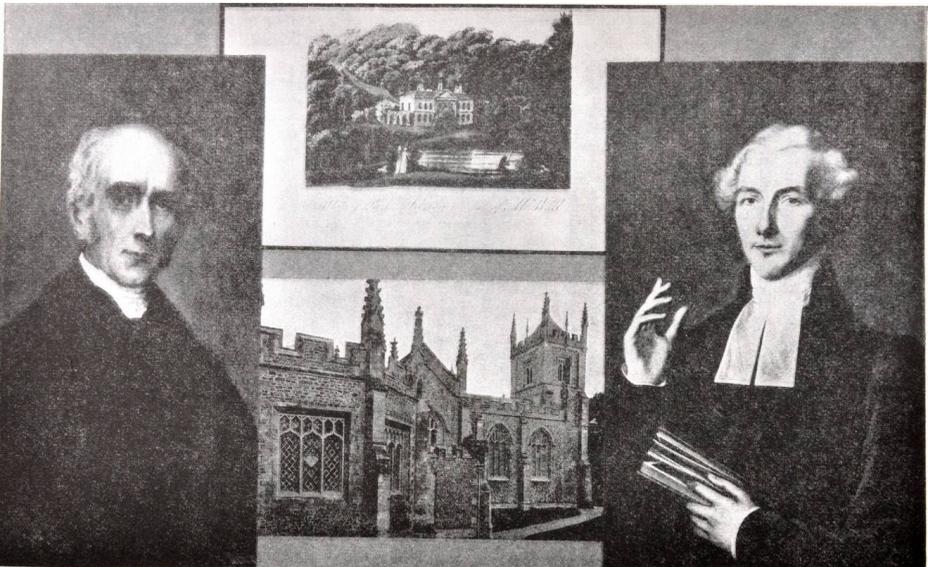
and he is asked to leave. But here is one last story from his time in Rome. Notice the point on “hell fire” – that the Church Fathers from first centuries of Christianity also argued that it was metaphorical.

Wolff’s stay at the Propaganda had now become very critical; yet, amidst all these controversies, the pupils and professors behaved very amiably towards him, as their constant joking with him showed. Observing that he was very fond of tarts, they all one day sent their tarts on a plate to him, which he carried upstairs to his room. He then invited for the next day, all his friends, the German artists, Protestants, and Roman Catholics, to his room, and gave them a dinner; whilst the pupils and professors standing outside, shouted, in a laughing and not angry way, - “Here, look! Wolff has assembled all the heretics of the place in his room, and is giving them a dinner,” – the dinner consisting chiefly of the tarts which had been given up in his favour by themselves.

Thus Wolff spent his days, notwithstanding all controversial quarrels, most agreeably in the Propaganda; and had frequently occasion to admire, amidst the intolerance and bigotry of some priests of the lower order, the highly liberal-minded principles of Pope Pius VII. And even the bigotry he witnessed forced his respect at times, as being the development of undoubted piety. Wolff recalls now a young man, who often provoked him by entreating him not to eat more than eight ounces of food upon a fast day, because the theologians had ruled that that was the proper quantity; but whose countenance as he spoke was nothing short of heavenly in expression. **With this youth, Pedrucci by name, from Perugia, Wolff had a dispute one day about the nature of hell fire; Wolff maintaining that it could not be a material fire, which so offended Pedrucci’s stern faith, that he called him “beast.”** Wolff then became incensed, and appealed to authorities, and Menocchio looked up the matter in the theological dictionary, and found that most of them, and among them St. Johannes Damascenus [John of Damascus], contended for a metaphorical interpretation. Whereupon, poor Pedrucci wept for his undue zeal, and begged Wolff’s pardon like a child.

## Wolff leaves Rome, studies in England briefly, then begins his travels

Henry Drummond, a famous politician, banker, and writer of that era, was at Rome when Wolff was there, and they become close friends. Drummond, predicting that Wolff will have troubles at Rome, invites Wolff to come to England to get some backing for his missionary work. Wolff spends some time studying in Cambridge, working with the Society for Promoting Christianity among the Jews. Drummond is eager for Wolff to get out in the field as a missionary. In a letter to Wolff he writes, “What knowledge of the world can you learn in Stansted Park [with Lewis Way, pioneer in evangelism to the Jews]. Knowledge of the world can only be gained in the world.” Drummond sees the zeal that Wolff has to go to foreign lands, and doesn’t want Wolff to lose that zeal by spending too much time studying without ever putting it into practice!



Banker Henry Drummond (left), in whose spacious Albury park Villa the first prophetic conference was held (upper center). The presiding officer was Hugh McNeile (right). Below (center) is the catholic apostolic church later erected by

Drummond's funds. Drummond was key in encouraging interest in the study of prophecy.

I will move ahead in the story, skipping Gibraltar and Malta, and going to Alexandria, the first truly "eastern/oriental" place Wolff has ever visited. Here Wolff meets a striking old man and what he says is touching and tragic, and for Father-Son believers it should give us a sense of mission:

One day, an old Polish Jew, seventy years of age at least, of a tall stature, and with a white beard, called at the Consulate, bringing with him his Bible, and the Commentary of Rabbi Solomon Isaac; and with him Wolff was really delighted. Nor can he forget to this day the impression which this man made upon him; for he was in appearance like Abraham of old times, and had left his country in order to spend the remainder of his days in Jerusalem, and there await the arrival of the Messiah.

Wolff began by asking him to write down his name upon a piece of paper which he gave him; and the old man, after saying that he felt honoured that such a great man should pay him so much attention, wrote as follows, in Jewish-German characters: "Yehiel, the son of Feibish, from the land of Russia, from the Government of Mohilev, from the city of Sklov. He resides now at Jerusalem, waiting for the coming of the Messiah."

Yehiel then told Wolff he had heard that a Jew who had been converted, was going to Jerusalem to prove the Messiah was come. Wolff answered, "I am going to Jerusalem!" Yehiel replied, "Sir, none will be converted; for we have been scattered now for more than 1,700 years among all nations; persecuted and despised; our holy city destroyed, and the 1,700 years have been passed in constant and continual endeavor by the Gentiles to persuade us that Jesus was the Messiah; but, at the end of the 1,700 years, we disbelieve it still!" **He added, "Centuries and centuries have passed, since Christians have tried to convert us, by pouring out our blood, and by persecuting us. And centuries and centuries have passed, and yet we stand a people separated from the nations, and exclaim every day, 'Hear, Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord.'"**

Good, mistaken, old man, upon Wolff's speaking to him of the signs and miracles of our blessed Lord, he said, **"Yes, Jesus performed wonders and signs, but remember the words of Moses** – the peace of God be upon him! – in **Deuteronomy 13:1-5**, 'If there arise among you a prophet, or a dreamer of dreams, and giveth thee a sign or a wonder, and the sign or the wonder come to pass, whereof he spake unto thee, saying, Let us go after other gods, which thou hast not known, and let us serve them; thou shalt not hearken unto the words of that prophet, or that dreamer of dreams: for the Lord your God proveth you, to know whether ye love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul. Ye shall walk after the Lord your God, and fear him, and keep his commandments, and obey his voice, and ye shall serve him, and cleave unto him. And that prophet, or that dreamer of dreams, shall be put to death; because he hath spoken to turn you away from the Lord your God.'" &c [etc]. Here he wept awhile, but then continued, "Jesus of Nazareth came and performed wonders and signs, and said unto our ancestors, **'Let us go after three Gods whom our fathers knew not; and therefore He was put to death by our forefathers justly, with all his wonders and signs.'**" He said this with the greatest animation, and Wolff then, in order to prove to him that Christ never advised any such things as the worship of three Gods, told him that Jesus had taught his disciples to address themselves in prayer to Jehovah as "Our Father, which art in heaven; Hallowed be (not the name of other gods, but) Thy name; Thy kingdom come." And he also showed him the passage in Matthew, where it is said, "think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets; I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill." After further conversation Yehiel left him, promising to call again.

Personally I had not made this connection of Deuteronomy 13 to the Trinity, and it is a powerful one. To think that we have made an extra-biblical doctrine a test of fellowship, shutting out (or at least desperately confusing) sincere Jews (and Muslims), and then using the sword to try to convert them! I think this quote by one of the greatest theologians among our pioneers may be relevant here:

“The doctrine of the Trinity which was established in the church by the council of Nice, A.D. 325. This doctrine destroys the personality of God, and his Son Jesus Christ our Lord. The infamous measures by which it was forced upon the church, which appear upon the pages of ecclesiastical history, might well cause every believer in that doctrine to blush.” J.N. Andrews, *The Third Angels Message* (1855)

And just as Andrews made the connection of imposed belief by force to the Trinity, so did this Jew Yehiel. Even those who see merit in the Trinity must admit that it is highly confusing, being built upon terms not in the Bible, and gained widespread acceptance only because Constantine and successor emperors required citizens to believe it. History seems to teach us that to create unity in this mystery requires force, manipulation, and as Yehiel put it, “the pouring out of blood”. The Bible offers a different way, one that is more palatable to Jews and Muslims: That “there is but one God, the Father, *of* whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, *by* whom are all things, and we by him.” 1 Cor 8:6. God, the Father as the source of whom are all things, and His begotten Son Jesus, the Word of God, *by*, or *through*, whom all things are made. “God [meaning the Father], who created all things by Jesus Christ...” Eph 3:9. Please see the booklet [\*The Wisdom of God\*](#) to really understand the importance of this Father-Son relationship and the individual roles they each have.

The conglomeration of 3 individuals as 1 God make God into what is more akin to a corporate entity – God Inc. A corporation/conglomerate being referred to with the singular pronoun “He” is no doubt mysterious, but the idea fits the times we live, because corporations have been granted personhood and 1<sup>st</sup> amendment rights in the 2010 U.S. Supreme Court Case *Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission*. A corporation is now recognized as a person. Therefore, it’s no stretch that a corporate amorphous Triune-God would be recognized as a singular person that can be referred to as “He”. Infamously, 2012 Republican Presidential Candidate Mitt Romney stated in 2011, “corporations are people, my friend”! But for the Adventist pioneers, God, the “Ancient of Days”, was the Father of Christ, a being with a form, whom Christ goes to see in Daniel 7:9-14. God’s personhood was

more straightforward, He is the Father, and He has a begotten Son who is the Prince of Heaven, who is deity like His Father is deity. I believe this is much more palatable and sensible to the non-sophisticated Western mind; I say that in praise of the primitive mind and as a critique of our pedantic reasoning which refuses to acknowledge its kowtowing to tradition (For I too am steeped in Western rationalism, and know how easy it is to get caught up in *seemingly* rigorous systems of philosophy – for me it was a certainty of belief in naturalistic evolution, from Big Bang to Ubermensch)

This is not to say that *all* Trinitarians believe in using force to make others agree with them! God forbid. Wolff himself is a Trinitarian (how strict of one he is is not clear). He is forced to be so, because of the liberal stance of the Unitarians, who quickly went from questioning the Trinity, to questioning the pre-existence of Christ, to questioning miracles, the virgin birth, and the inspiration of scripture. We see once again the Devil's use of man's natural tendency to fall into black and white oppositional thinking and guilt by association. We see this distinction of the pioneer position in James White's statement:

“The inexplicable Trinity that makes the Godhead three in one and one in three is bad enough; but that ultra Unitarianism that makes Christ inferior to the Father is worse. Did God say to an inferior, ‘Let us make man in our image?’” (James White, November 1877, Review & Herald)”

If anybody reading this is a Trinitarian (or Sunday-keeper, or Muslim, or anything else) I hope he will forgive me my openness in sharing. The doctrine of the Trinity may seem clear to you, but it is “inexplicable” to many others, including James White, and regardless of anything else I would plead with the reader not to dismiss our forefathers as silly biased men. To us keeping the Sabbath is clear, but to many others keeping Sunday is clear. May we be openminded about these things, and if we disagree may we not persecute each other.

Wolff also was not a Sabbath keeper; he had given it up as Jewish. God was still in the process of constructing His end-time system of theology, a process leading up to 1888 where it was halted, and, God willing, we will continue to build upon that platform now that 3-4

generations have passed from then. And, though Christ remains an offense to the carnal pride, we need not offend people unnecessarily, like telling Jews that the law is done away with and that if they want to be a Christian they must give up their Sabbath and their Feasts and come to Sunday and Easter/Christmas – or forcing them to accept confusing concepts like the Trinity.

Wolff himself later in his debates with Rabbi Mendel, chief Rabbi in Jerusalem, uses a profession of faith that does not mention the Trinity. It may be fair for the rabbi to ask whether Wolff is trying to please both sides.

“...but I [Wolff] believe, 'Hear *O* Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord,' and I firmly believe that Jesus of Nazareth was the Messiah, the Son of God, and that He came to suffer for our iniquities, and that He shall come again, and be the Redeemer of Israel.”  
(p 157)

My point is that his missionary work could be made easier using a different foundation for the relationship between God and Jesus that seems to uphold the oneness of the Father while establishing the sonship of Christ. For the remnant church given the task of repairing the breach, it seems that originally God’s plan for the Adventist pioneers was to avoid the mystical reasoning that the Trinity so often leads to. But I digress.

We will proceed past his trip in Sinai to Cairo. Here is a snippet of a conversation he had with the Consul-General, Mr. Salt, on the doctrine of the resurrection in the Old Testament. We see here Wolff starting to put the pieces together of what happens at the 2<sup>nd</sup> Advent from the Bible. Also of note is Wolff’s assertions, not mentioned in the passage, that all throughout his travels, whenever he was in trouble, God would send a British officer to help him. Britain was the great superpower at the time, having defeated Napoleon and the French at Waterloo, and many of the Arabs would ask questions of Wolff like “Who is the sultan of England?” In our era the United States plays this role of superpower, and the US also has many good men who love God – or at least are committed to law and order – and I believe that when times get tough we may well see American officers protecting us, just as

Romans protected Paul and the British protected Wolff. Also notice Wolff's deep understanding of the Book of Daniel and his emphasis on the resurrection, as well as his understanding of the prophecy of the 70 weeks in Daniel 9.

The last discussion that took place between Wolff and Mr. Salt is too interesting to be omitted. They were talking at night about Cicero, and **Mr. Salt remarked that all the ancient philosophers were in doubt or darkness about the resurrection of the dead. Wolff was delighted with the observation, and they agreed that the doctrine was at that very time clearly revealed by God to the Jews, through the mouths of the prophets.** Thus, the Lord alluded to it by Moses (Deut. 22), "I kill, and make alive." And Hannah rejoiced in the Lord, and said, "He bringeth down to the grave, and bringeth up" (1 Sam 2:6). And again (Hosea 6:2), "After two days will he revive us: in the third day he will raise us up, and we shall live in his sight." And hear what Job saith, "For I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins be consumed within me" (Job 19:25). Hear, too, what Ezekiel saith (37:5), "Thus saith the Lord God unto these bones; Behold, I will cause breath to enter into you, and ye shall live. And I will lay sinews upon you, and will bring up flesh upon you, and cover you with skin, and put breath in you, and ye shall live; and ye shall know that I am the Lord." And also Daniel (12:2), "And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt. And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever." And thus, likewise, the Psalmist, "Oh thou that hearest prayer, unto thee shall all flesh come." And so, again, the Prophet Isaiah (26:19), "Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust: for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead."

There are people who try to undervalue Revelation, by saying, that the Jews were indebted to the Chaldeans for their belief in the

resurrection of the dead, and that Daniel received this knowledge in Chaldea. Now Wolff asks whether God, in his wisdom, cannot impart a revelation to a chosen servant, in the mountains of Chaldea as well as upon Mount Sinai and Zion? And he insists that men have to adore the wisdom as well as goodness of God in the distribution of his will. **Wolff himself is perfectly convinced that, among all the inspired writers of the Old Testament, Daniel the prophet has set forth the doctrine of the Resurrection with the greatest clearness, Moses even not excepted.** And, oh, what wisdom is in that very fact! For it was Daniel also who was the first, as we read (Dan 9:3-20), to set his face to the Lord God by prayer and supplication, that He might make known to him the final destiny of Jerusalem; and that very angel, Gabriel by name, who announced, **in the fullness of time, to the Virgin Mary the wonderful birth of her Son and her Lord, he, the same angel, made known to Daniel (Dan 9:26) that the Messiah should be cut off**, but not for Himself; and he, then (Dan 12:2-3), caught by the Spirit of the Lord, predicted that that Messiah, who was to be cut off, was to bring life and immortality to light through the Gospel; so that he bursts sublimely forth in these words, “Many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt. And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever!” (Chapter 6)

## Wolff on his way from Egypt to Jerusalem

(Chapter 7 of Wolff's Travels and Adventures)

As Joseph Wolff travels through the desert from Egypt to Jerusalem, he encounters a caravan. What he notices strikes him, and is a valuable lesson for us; as he states: “every missionary ought to respect the customs of ancient times, whenever he goes to any of those countries.”

A Jew was in the caravan, and when Friday evening approached, (the commencement of his Sabbath,) the whole caravan, composed chiefly of Muhammadans and Eastern Christians, remained in the Desert, in order that the Jew might be able to celebrate his Sabbath, according to his law. Wolff purposely asked the Arabs, why they showed so much respect to that Jew, since the Jews are universally despised, and even tortured? They replied, "This is ancient custom; for Abraham – the peace of God upon him! – observed the Jewish Sabbath; and nobody ventures to disturb the Jew in the observance of the Sabbath; and the Jew himself would be killed if he did not observe it." Ancient custom seems to be observed and respected by all nations; but how especially remarkable is its power among these ruder people! Wolff remarked the same on his arrival at Jerusalem, when he saw the Jew allowed to go where the ancient temple formerly stood; whilst the Christian was not permitted to come near the spot; and this was in conformity with ancient custom; or, as the Arab expresses it, *Aada men Kadeem*, which means, "Custom from ancient times." **And every missionary ought to respect the customs of ancient times, whenever he goes to any of those countries.**

A remarkable piece of history is here spoken of. Wolff meets an Armenian gentleman – Armenia being one of the most ancient of nations, with people suggesting its language is the oldest in the world, which would make sense, seeing as Armenia is near Ararat where Noah landed – who was travelling to Jerusalem to "perform his devotion."

He [the Armenian] came every evening to Wolff's tent, and related stories to him of the children of Hayk – namely, the Armenian nation; and of the holiness of Melchizedek, who blessed Abraham. He talked too of Abgar (or Agbar), one of the ancient kings of Edessa, who lived in the time of our Lord Jesus Christ, and was said to have been cured by our Lord himself; after which Abgar became a faithful believer, and invited our Lord to become his guest in the city of Edessa, where he offered to give him every protection against the persecution of the Jews. But our blessed Lord declined the invitation, because He was now to proclaim good tidings among the lost sheep of the house of Israel. The

correspondence between Christ and Abgar is to be found in Eusebius' Ecclesiastical History.

*Copy of the Letter written by King Abgarus to Jesus, and sent to Him at Jerusalem, by Ananias the courier.*

Abgarus, prince of Edessa, sends greeting to Jesus the excellent Saviour, who has appeared in the borders of Jerusalem. I have heard the reports respecting thee and thy cures, as performed by thee without medicines, and without the use of herbs. For as it is said, thou causest the blind to see again, the lame to walk, and thou cleansest the lepers, and thou castest out impure spirits and demons, and thou healest those that are tormented by long disease, and thou raisest the dead. And hearing all these things of thee, I concluded in my mind one of two things; either that thou art GOD, and having descended from heaven, doest these things, or else doing them, thou art the son of GOD. Therefore now I have written and besought thee to visit me, and to heal the disease with which I am afflicted. I have also heard that the Jews murmur against thee, and are plotting to injure thee; I have, however, a very small but noble state, which is sufficient for us both."

*The Answer of Jesus to King Abgarus, by the courier Ananias: -*

"Blessed art thou, O Abgarus, who, without seeing, hast believed in me. For it is written concerning me, that they who have seen me will not believe, that they who have not seen, may believe and live. But in regard to what thou hast written, that I should come to thee, it is necessary that I should fulfil all things here, for which I have been sent. And after this fulfilment, thus to be received again by Him that sent me. And after I have been received up, I will send to thee a certain one of my disciples, that he may heal thy affliction, and give life to thee and to those who are with thee."



Khor Virap Monastery with Mount Ararat in the background, in Armenia. This ancient Christian nation had a merchant network that crisscrossed Asia. Wolff meets Armenian communities almost everywhere he goes, and sometimes they are the only Christians in the land.

Beyond relating this, Wolff doesn't discuss it any further. Now the reader may be sceptical, but I have done some sleuthing and suggest not dismissing this immediately. The Armenians (Armenia which was the first officially Christian nation) take the story very seriously, having this king on their currency. The early Christians believed he was the first monarch to be converted, and there is much evidence that Thomas the Apostle sent Thaddeus/Addai, one of the 70, to go to Edessa, now Urfa (in modern-day Turkey), to preach there. On looking through Google the main hits are from catholic sources, who are threatened by Edessa's status as an intellectual hub of Christian activity outside or against the Nicene Creed. For such a legacy to be true would establish Edessa's apostolic origins, which raises possibility of threats to orthodoxy.

A good argument against the letter is that the following quote – “For it is written concerning me; that they who have seen me will not believe, that they who have not seen, may believe and live” – is not in the

Old Testament, but is only in John 20:29 about Thomas – “Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed.” But on closer inspection, it is similar to this saying in 2 Esdras 1; a book considered by the pioneers as inspired and well-preserved. I quote at length from verse 30-37, seeing that it is so remarkably reminiscent of what Jesus spoke over Israel during His incarnation:

[30](#) I gathered you together, as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings [Deut 32:11, Matt 23:37]: but now, what shall I do unto you? I will cast you out from my face. [31](#) When ye offer unto me, I will turn my face from you: for your solemn feasts, your new moons, and your circumcisions, have I forsaken. [32](#) I sent unto you my servants the prophets, whom ye have taken and slain, and torn their bodies in pieces, whose blood I will require of your hands, saith the Lord. [33](#) Thus saith the Almighty Lord, Your house is desolate, I will cast you out as the wind doth stubble. [34](#) And your children shall not be fruitful; for they have despised my commandment, and done the thing that is an evil before me. [35](#) Your houses will I give to a people that shall come; which not having heard of me yet shall believe me; to whom I have shewed no signs, yet they shall do that I have commanded them. [36](#) They have seen no prophets, yet they shall call their sins to remembrance, and acknowledge them. [37](#) I take to witness the grace of the people to come, whose little ones rejoice in gladness: and though they have not seen me with bodily eyes, yet in spirit they believe the thing that I say.

To me this is close enough to the answer of Jesus in the letter. I lean to believing this tradition, but I also recognize that I am by nature a highly credulous person in obscure matters. In this regard I am similar to Wolff.

In Jerusalem  
(Chapter 8 of Wolff's Travels and Adventures)

Wolff had the financial support of backers associated with Henry Drummond, Lewis Way, and the Church of England, and travelled distributing Bibles of many different languages everywhere. This next passage is chosen to give a glimpse of the erudite and fascinating interactions that occurred when Wolff came into town, as peoples of all cultures came to discuss. The following quote is on his arrival to Jerusalem. Before Jesus comes the likes of this will happen again.

And very soon Wolff's room was crowded by Jews, Armenians, Roman Catholics, and Turks, to whom he proclaimed the Gospel of Christ in Italian, Hebrew, Arabic, German, and English. He went with Gethin and [John] Carne to the Greek monastery to pay a visit to the Bishop Daniel Nazareth, Vicar-General to the Patriarch, because the Patriarch himself resided in Constantinople, on account of the persecution which the Greeks had to suffer from the Turks. And surprised, indeed, was Dr. Wolff to find in this Greek monastery, that Procopius, one of the monks, was furnished with Arabic, Greek, and Hebrew Bibles and Testaments, which had been left to him by a missionary of the Church Missionary Society, Connor by name, and by Levi Parsons, the American missionary. Procopius circulated these among the inhabitants of Jerusalem. There also came to Joseph Wolff, at the Armenian monastery, Papas Isa Petrus, a man of great talents, who spoke Arabic, Greek, Persian, Turkish, Italian, and French with the greatest facility. **Gethin observed that such an interesting sight had never been seen at Jerusalem before, and the Armenians themselves said the same thing, for there had never been so many persons of different nations assembled in their monastery since the monastery of Mar-Yakoob (which mean "the Holy James;" namely, the Apostle, who was the first Bishop of Jerusalem) existed, as Joseph Wolff had now brought together there.**

Footnote here that is of interest: John Carne (famous traveller and writer, not a missionary, around 32 years old in 1821; Wolff is around 26 years old) wrote of Wolff to his brother at this time: - "His manners are agreeable, but, like all others engaged in this cause, perhaps, rather enthusiastic. He is, I believe, from all that can be judged on so short an acquaintance, a sincerely pious man. Considering the delicate

ground he here treads upon, he has certainly met with more success than could have been anticipated. A number of the Jews, among whom are a few of the chief, have accepted Testaments of him, and there is a general impulse excited among them. He once had fifty at a time in his chamber. The rabbi, rather alarmed at this, has interfered a little, and is to have a dispute with Mr. Wolff.”

It is amazing the variety of cultures found here, and the great emphasis on handing out Bibles in native languages. Wolff does some sightseeing of Biblical sights, and then he meets the different factions of the Jews. The mentioning of the Karaites, or “Coraeem”, is of interest to all students of Samuel Snow’s *Midnight Cry*, and how the Adventist Movement came to October 22, 1844 as the correct date for the Day of Atonement.

There are four parties of Jews in Jerusalem; the one party, who are the most powerful and richest, are the Sephardim; these Jews are descended from the Spanish Jews, who were expelled from Spain by King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella. They are the richest, but they are not the most learned. Another party are the Ashkenazim, who are chiefly the descendants of the German and Polish Jews; the word Ashkenazim means people of the land of Germany; for Germany is called by the Jews Ashkenaz, from a man called Ashkenaz, who was a descendant of Togarmah, who again was a descendant of Japhet. (Genesis 10:3) The Ashkenazim are again divided into two parties – the Pharisees, i.e. the strict literal observers of the law, and the traditions of the Elders; and the Haseedim, who also observe the law and the traditions of the Elders, but still they say this is not the chief thing: the chief thing of all, being the intention of the heart. These are the Puritans of the Jewish synagogue. Besides these two divisions of the Ashkenazim, there is another, viz., **that of the Coraeem, or B’nee Mikra, i.e. those who believe in those things which they can actually read in Moses and the Prophets. The name Coraeem means *reading*, and B’nee Mikra means *the children of the book*.** The latter are not natives of Jerusalem, but come from the place called Hit, near Bagdad, a beautiful oasis in the Desert. They also come from the Crimea, especially from the place called Jufut-Kaleh (Jew-Castle),

situated upon a high mountain, near the Tartar town, called Bakhtshe-Seray, which means *the Gardener of the Palace*. Dr. McCaul says, in his pamphlet upon Marriage with a deceased Wife's Sister, that the Coraeem had their origin in the twelfth century after Christ, in which statement Wolff considers him to be entirely wrong; for, by their own account, they had their origin in the Babylonish captivity; but separated themselves from the Jews, when that people mixed up Chaldean notions with the law of Moses, and under their Rabbi Annan, formed a separate community.

I want to continue quoting from this section because I find it fascinating. The hymns that Wolff sings together with the Jews of Jerusalem have a spiritual significance for us today, for are not the people of God His temple? And the temple needs to be fully built before Jesus can receive us again.

Wolff went with the Sephardim and Ashkenazim Jews to the wall of the west side of the temple, and sang with them the following hymn: -

“The mighty shall build the City of Zion,  
And give her to Thee.  
Then shall he raise from the dust the needy,  
And from the dunghill the poor.  
The blessed One shall build the City of Zion,  
And give her to Thee,” &c., &c.

They also sang the following hymn: -

“Thou art mighty to build thy temple speedily,  
Lord, build, build thy temple speedily -  
In haste, in haste, in haste, in haste,  
Even in our days -  
Build thy temple speedily.”



Jews praying at the Wailing Wall in 1929. The Wailing Wall is supposedly the only remaining structure left of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Temple.

On his return home, he called on Saadiah and Solomon, two Jews of the Coraem nation. Their wives were very beautiful, and cleanliness reigns in their houses, which is not, as a rule, the case among other Jews. He copies from their liturgy a hymn...Here Wolff again recites the hymn.

**Rabbi.** On account of the palace which is laid waste,  
**People.** We sit lonely and weep.

**Rabbi.** On account of the temple which is destroyed,  
**People.** We sit lonely and weep.

**Rabbi.** On account of the walls which are pulled down,  
**People.** We sit lonely and weep.

**Rabbi.** On account of our majesty which is gone,  
**People.** We sit lonely and weep.

**Rabbi.** On account of our great men who have been cast down,  
**People.** We sit lonely and weep.

**Rabbi.** On account of the precious stones which are burned,  
**People.** We sit lonely and weep.

**Rabbi.** On account of the priests who have stumbled,

**People.** We sit lonely and weep.

**Rabbi.** On account of our kings who have despised Him,

**People.** We sit lonely and weep.

Wolff asked Saadiah whether the Coraeem in the Crimea offered up sacrifices. Saadiah took hold of Wolff's arm, and went with him to the window, opposite Omar's Mosque, and then said, "Do you see the Mosque of the Mussulmans? There our temple stood, on that very spot [note: I think he means the Dome of the Rock, but if not, then this is interesting. Needs more research]. It is destroyed, alas! alas! alas! and ever since has Israel been many days without sacrifice, without ephod, and without Teraphim." Wolff afterwards preached before Saadiah and others, on Isaiah 53, and from other portions of scripture.

We see how attached the Jews are to their temple, and how they associate their glory and the Messiah with a material structure. They are thinking physically, and have difficulty seeing the spiritual mission of Christ and His work building the spiritual temple, which is His character manifested in His people. Even now the Jews await their Messiah to save them *in* this world, when He is soon to come to save us *from* this world! Jewish tradition states that a third and final temple will be built. The problem is that the Al-Aqsa Mosque, containing the Dome of the Rock, is the third holiest site in all Islam, and no Jewish 3<sup>rd</sup> Temple can be built without tearing down the mosque – because of the Jews' own reasoning that the Temple must be in that specific location. Inside the Dome of the Rock is the Foundation Stone, considered the location of the Holy of Holies. Just outside this is where the Jews gather to worship at the 'Wailing Wall'. This is a major flashpoint in the Jewish-Palestinian conflict and in the end time events.

# The Dome of the Rock



Built on the ruins of the Ancient Temple, this mosque is a major holy site for Muslims because Mohammed ascended briefly to heaven from here – the Mi'raj.

## Debate with Jews in Jerusalem

(Chapter 8 of Wolff's Travels and Adventures continued)

Wolff goes on to discuss with the leading rabbis in Jerusalem, and the people he meets are such interesting characters. One Rabbi would give texts from the Talmud that argued in favor of Christ being the Messiah to help Wolff against another Rabbi, just for his own amusement. There is an excellent story given of a young rabbi in training who uses an extremely silly argument to attack Wolff, and Wolff wisely doesn't laugh in his face. I relate it here that we may learn how to win over our enemies. Rabbi Markowiz is the troublemaking Rabbi who helps Wolff with texts supporting Christ as the Messiah.

Young Rabbi Isaac, son of Solomon, the engraver, who was about fifteen years old, of a most beautiful countenance, and already married, was so angry with Rabbi Joseph Markowiz, that he said, "I shall go and tear out the beard of that old hypocrite; but, first of all, I will go to Joseph Wolff, and will show to him the beauty of the Talmud, and how much he will be a loser, when the Messiah shall come, by having embraced the Christian religion." So this youth came to Joseph Wolff, and showed to him in the Talmud, the following passage: -

"Rabbi Ellazar was wandering in the desert, when he saw two geese who were so fat, that their grease dropped from them, and ran through the desert, and formed a river. Now, Ellazar knew that these geese were to be kept for the feast, which the Messiah will give to the Jews when he comes, so said he to one of them, 'Oh, thou goose! what part shall I eat of thee?' - and the goose showed him one leg: then he asked the same question of the other goose, and the other goose showed him one wing. Ellazar then began to sigh, and exclaimed, 'Oh, that Israel may soon cease from sinning, in order that I may enjoy the wing from the one goose and the leg from the other!'"

**Wolff, who never laughed at anything which was told him seriously,** maintained a perfectly grave face, and said, "I thank you very much, Rabbi, for this passage - a most interesting passage it is!"

Rabbi Isaac, son of Solomon, was delighted at this; and, running at once to Rabbi Joseph Markowiz, said to him, "Now, I have shown to Rabbi Wolff a passage as an antidote to those you have pointed out to him; and he told him the passage, whereupon, the old fellow burst into a fit of laughter, and said, "Oh, that thou may'st have a black year! [a Jewish curse] Wolff will now laugh the whole day, when he is by himself." To which Rabbi Isaac replied, "**Thou old epicurean! [so they commonly called the apostate Jews] Wolff had at least the decency not to laugh in my presence, but thou laughest already in my very face.**"

A huge aspect of Wolff's success in his missionary sharing of the gospel was his politeness, tact, and respect of everyone he met. In most cases people didn't accept the message right when they met him, but his

sincerity, his seriousness, and his dedication lingered with the listener for many days after. He took personal interest in the individual and listened seriously to their positions, causing them to in turn take seriously his positions. “For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again.” Matthew 7:2. Yet he melded this interest in the souls of those he met with a passionate directness and a stubbornness that was willing to dialogue with people for hours. The Holy Spirit was then able to work on the hearts of people that had long been shut away from the gospel.

The leading Jews in Jerusalem in the time that Wolff is there are a fascinating cast of characters, and Wolff’s depictions of his interactions with them and theirs among themselves are some of the most interesting and amusing in the book. The lead rabbi was the highly respected Rabbi Mendel, who was the best student of a rabbi that was so famous stories of his miracles were told among the Jewish community all throughout Europe, which Wolff had heard growing up. Wolff would have long discussions on scripture with Rabbi Mendel. Another lead rabbi, Rabbi Markowiz, mentioned above, would give Wolff arguments to use against Rabbi Mendel, much to Rabbi Mendel’s annoyance. I share one such passage next:

Another time, Rabbi Joseph Markowiz read with Wolff the cabalistic exposition of Genesis xlix. 10, in the remarkable book called *Zohar*, when his wife entered the room, and exclaimed, “Oh Rabbi, may you live, oh my love, a hundred years! I am afraid that by your spending the whole night with Rabbi Joseph Wolff, the whole congregation of Israel in Jerusalem (may it soon be established and built again!) will talk about it.” Rabbi Joseph Markowiz replied to his wife, “Go home, and sleep sweetly, and live a hundred years, and let the whole congregation of Israel talk about it; for I am Rabbi Joseph Markowiz, and surely one word of mine will silence the whole congregation of Israel.” They then proceeded with their book, which was composed by Rabbi Simon Ben Yohay, where, in the explanation of the word “Shiloh,” it says, “This the Messiah, and it is spelt, not like Shiloh the city, with the letters of Jod and Vau, but with the letters JOD and HE, which compose the name of God; and this is so, because the fullness of the

Godhead is bodily in the Messiah.” On perusing this with Rabbi Joseph Markowiz, the old fox remarked, “This will make Rabbi Mendel dance!”

Next day, Wolff came to Rabbi Mendel, and read the passage to him, together with those words of St. Paul, “The fullness of the Godhead dwelt in him bodily.” Rabbi Mendel said at once, “Here, again, I smell Rabbi Joseph Markowiz!” And, in the midst of the anger which he and others felt, in came Rabbi Joseph Markowiz himself again; and the whole party of Jews fell upon him, and called “An old rascal.” Markowiz, as was his custom, sat all the while in a chair, leaning on his stick, and swinging to and fro, and he said, “Why am I a rascal? Ought we not to prepare Wolff for defending himself? Will it make us Christians if we do so? The passage has stood for ages in our books, and yet we are still Jews.”

They shouted out, “You shall be excommunicated.” “What use will this be to you?” cried he. “Your name and remembrance shall be blotted out from the book of life!” they rejoined; whereupon Rabbi Joseph Markowiz walked off, his shoulders shaking with laughter; and, said he to Wolff, “See how I support you!”

It should be remarked that this conduct of Rabbi Joseph Markowiz taught Wolff a very valuable lesson, for it caused him to study the Rabbinical writings with all possible earnestness and attention.

It must be stated here that studying the Rabbinical writings may have been of use for Wolff, but only because he was a Jew who knew Hebrew who argued as a Jew with Jews. Joseph Wolff was much younger than these rabbis he argued with, and though he believed himself right and they wrong, he still debated from a position of deference and humility, having less experience and knowledge than his elders. So he listened carefully to what they said so whatever God would have him learn, he learnt. There are 2-3 other arguments that Markowiz teaches Wolff from the Rabbinic writings in favor of Christianity, but I find them unpersuasive; and they did little to convince the others, who knew right away that Markowiz was the one behind it. I don’t suggest for the reader to go through the rabbinic writings. But what is of interest is the different viewpoints in a group, and how God can play them against

each other to make people think. Regarding the proper way to use the Talmud against the Jews, Wolff says this on page 129-130 of *Missionary Labours*.

[Speaking of the Sufi-Jews in Mashhad] They read with their Moorsheed (guru, teacher) the Koran, and other religious books, to find a confirmation of the truth of their systems; for like infidels in Germany, France, and England, they inconsistently try to prove the truth of their tenets, from books, the authority of which they are studying to undermine. This mistake, however, is often committed by those who try to convince Jews of the Christian religion by producing arguments from the Talmud. (Arguments drawn from the Talmud may be used for the purpose of shewing that there are contradictions in the Talmud; also that the ancient Jews differed from the modern Jews).

(Chapter 9 of Wolff's 1861 Travels and Adventures)

It is not easy to get the measure of a man's character from reading a book, nor the true atmosphere of a recollected interaction. But I can definitely say that there are times when Wolff speaks bluntly. This next passage is one of them, as he dialogues with some Jews in Alexandria. Wolff adjusted himself depending on his audience, whether they were of high or low upbringing, and I think he was most comfortable talking to Jews – and as they were his own people he was more direct with them. In my personal travels in the Middle East I found those peoples much more candid and willing to talk about religious matters than men of other nations, such as Thailand, where I live now. Numerous times I would enter taxis in Jordan where the taxi driver would ask me, with little preliminary small talk, what my religion was and then suggest why I should consider becoming Muslim. And they in turn were keen to hear me out and were ok with straight talk. So as you read these discussions, please take into consideration the culture, the time period, the status of those he was talking to, and what language they are speaking in. And if you yourself are to have such interactions,

please pray before, during, and after, particularly if you are in a foreign land.

And when they arrived at Alexandria, neither Mr. Lee, the British consul, nor any other of Wolff's friends happened to be there, for they had all gone to Cairo, so that Wolff and his fellow missionaries could not get a room in the house of the consulate. Therefore, Signor Vedova, the *cancelliere* to the English consulate, advised them to go and stay in the house of a Jewess, Miss Stella by name. Soon after their arrival at her house, Wolff and his companions, Fisk and King, sat down on a divan, and they began to smoke the Turkish pipe, according to Eastern custom, when several Jews and Jewesses came in, and sat down at the missionaries' feet. Wolff then began to speak to them of Jesus the Son of David; and he read to them several chapters out of the Hebrew Bible, which proved that Jesus of Nazareth was He of whom Moses and the Prophets did write. Among them was a very intelligent Jew, and Stella was an intelligent Jewess; both understood the Hebrew, and they asked Wolff, "What do you believe?" Wolff replied, I believe in Moses and the Prophets, who say that Jesus Christ is the Messiah, the Son of God, the Holy One – blessed be He, and blessed be His name!" Wolff continued, "And now I will ask you, what is your belief?" All the Jews at once exclaimed, "We believe that the Holy One – blessed be He, He who is blessed in Himself – is truth; and Moses is truth; and the Prophets are truth!"

Wolff replied, "You do neither believe in the Holy One – blessed be He – nor in Moses, nor in the Prophets." The Jews answered, in a stormy manner, "God forbid that we should not believe in Moses and the Prophets." Wolff replied, opening his Bible, "I will prove by this very book that you do not believe." Miss Stella, the Jewess, with a dignified, bold, and determined face, acted as moderator; and exclaimed with a thundering voice, to the Jews, "Oh, ye cursed, be quiet that Wolff may prove it."

Wolff then opened his bible, and read, "I will raise them up a prophet from among their brethren like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth, and he shall speak unto them that I shall command him; and it shall come to pass that whosoever will not

hearken unto my words which he shall speak in my name, I will require of him." [Deut 18:18] Then Wolff spoke for two hours, proving that Jesus of Nazareth had been that prophet like unto Moses. The Jew replied, "I must refer to the Talmud."

**Wolff answered, "The Talmud is a lie;" and then he continued, "The Talmud is a lie! A lie!! A lie!! A lie!!!" He then showed them the passage in Zechariah 12:10, "And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem the spirit of grace and of supplication, and they shall look upon him whom they have pierced, and mourn;" and then Wolff proved to them that Jesus was He whom they had pierced.** The Jewess, in a rage, said to the rest, "Oh, you cursed fellows, you have not been able to answer him; why do you not answer him." Thus Wolff and his two missionary companions spent a most delightful night, conversing with the Jews... The behaviour of the hostess, and all the party, was very proper; and they showed the highest respect to Wolff and his missionary friends.

"A most delightful night," the book says! Those were surely different times and a different culture than our modern western culture, where such a discussion would raise such a furore that it would be unimaginable that it could be called "a most delightful night". I continue on from the above paragraph without a break in the text so the reader can get a clearer picture of the circumstances surrounding the previous discussion.

The next morning, other rabbis, who had come from Poland; arrived at the house, and attempted to argue, but they said at last, "My Lord Joseph Wolf, we are come from a distant land, and we have been sea-sick with great sea-sickness, and our mind is therefore confused with great confusion. So we cannot speak to-day great words of wisdom, and understanding, and skill; for you must know, my lord, that we are wise with wisdom, and we are beautiful men, and we are honoured with great honour, and we sit in the first set at the tables of the rich. We will return unto you, and open our mouth with wisdom, and speak about the Holy One – blessed be He, and blessed be His name!" They then left Wolff, but

before they departed, he wrote down their names in Hebrew characters. When they saw how quickly he wrote, they said, "My lord, you are very strong in the pen." Here the conversation ended. The behaviour of the hostess, and all the party, was very proper; and they showed the highest respect to Wolff and his missionary friends.

The next morning, Wolff called on his great friend Mr. Dumreicher, the Danish Consul-General of Alexandria. He received him with the greatest kindness, and then asked Wolff, in the presence of about twenty Europeans, "Where do you lodge?" Wolff replied "At Miss Stella's the Jewess;" when the whole party burst into a fit of laughter, and Dumreicher said, "Ah! This is a fine thing. Do you know who Miss Stella is?" Wolff asked, "Who is she?" In short, she was a Rahab. Wolff said, "It is not my fault. It is the fault of the English *cancelliere*, Signor Vedova: for it was he who sent us there."

Wolff immediately went home, and informed his friends Fisk and King. But Fisk was a most determined fellow, and said, "We are missionaries; and to whom are missionaries sent but to sinners? God has sent us here, and here we will remain until we leave Alexandria; and if the devil will make a fuss about it, let him do so. And so they remained. The first people in the place called on them. Wolff performed Divine Service in the house, and preached in Arabic, German, Hebrew, and Italian; Fisk in English and modern Greek; and King in French. The French and Italian consuls were among the congregation; and Stella and all the Jews behaved with the greatest propriety; and Wolff will surprise the public in England when he states, that throughout his journey in Arabia Felix, he found such houses to be almost the only inns in existence.

I share these passages to show the high society that Wolff kept, the interest of the civil powers in his affairs and their willingness to help him, and the influence on all levels of society that he had. As a missionary in a foreign land, one must be humble enough to accept that there will be times when you will be embarrassed because it is not your own home and you are a stranger to its customs.

On the way to Damascus, Syria, Wolff met Rev. Lewis Way at a monastery in Aintoura, Lebanon. Lewis Way was a pioneer in the work

of evangelizing the Jews, and met with much hardship in his endeavours. He wrote this beautiful passage about Joseph Wolff in a letter back to England, and I share it not to inflate our opinion of the man, for we know that all that is good is by the grace of God, but to give a picture of how the people of his era were struck by him.

“Wolff is so extraordinary a creature, there is no calculating *a priori* concerning his motions. He appears to me to be a comet without any perihelion, and capable of setting a whole system on fire. When I should have addressed him in Syria, I heard of him at Malta; and when I supposed he was gone to England, he was riding like a ruling angel in the whirlwinds of Antioch, or standing unappalled among the crumbling towers of Aleppo [sandstorm and earthquake]. A man who at Rome calls the Pope ‘the dust of the earth,’ and tells the Jews at Jerusalem that ‘the Gemara is a lie;’ who passes his days in disputation, and his nights in digging the Talmud, to whom a floor of brick is a feather-bed, and a box a bolster; who makes or finds a friend alike in the persecutor of his former or present faith; who can conciliate a Pacha [Pasha], or confute a patriarch; who travels without a guide; speaks without an interpreter; can live without food, and pay without money; forgiving all the insult he meets with, and forgetting all the flattery he receives; who knows little of worldly conduct, and yet accommodates himself to all men, without giving offence to any! Such a man (and such and more is Wolff) must excite no ordinary degree of attention in a country and among a people, whose monotony of manners and habits has remained undisturbed for centuries.

“As a pioneer, I deem him matchless, ‘*aut inveniet viam; aut faciet;*’ but, if order is to be established, or arrangements made, trouble not Wolff. He knows of no church but his own heart; no calling, but that of zeal; no dispensation, but that of preaching. He is devoid of enmity towards man, and full of the love of God. By such an instrument, whom no school hath taught – whom no college could hold, **is the way of the Judean wilderness preparing.** Thus is Providence, showing the nothingness of the wisdom of the wise, and bringing to nought the understanding of the prudent. Thus are his brethren provoked to emulation, and

stirred up to inquiry. They all perceive, as every one must, that *whatever* he is, he is *in earnest*: they acknowledge him to be *a sincere believer in Jesus of Nazareth*; and that is a great point gained with them; for, as you know, the mass of the ignorant and unconverted deny the *possibility of real conversion from Judaism*. In this they are right, in another sense, since Abraham is *the father of us all*: and if we be Christ's, then are we Abraham's seed, and kept by the power of God, through faith, unto salvation, and none shall pluck us out of his hand."

It is a truly remarkable testimony, and writing of the highest quality. I am repeatedly struck by the high standard of letters shown by those in the 1800s. My favorite part is he "makes or finds a friend alike in the persecutor of his former or present faith; who can conciliate a Pacha, or confute a patriarch." God willing, we will have such grace.

Also notice this statement: "Such a man [Wolff] must excite no ordinary degree of attention in a country and among a people, whose monotony of manners and habits has remained undisturbed for centuries." This is not the case now. There are remarkable stories of tribes that Wolff meets who trace their heritage back to obscure tribes in the Old Testament, such as the Rechabites whose patriarch made a vow not to drink wine (Jer 35), which they still continued to do up to Wolff's day. They and many other groups still lived in the same areas, in the same ways, as they had for thousands of years. This is now mostly lost, due partly to the turning and overturning of nations, but more particularly to the forces of economics and technology and modern media culture. People are losing track of their heritage in the urgency of modern life.



Photography by  
Daniel Demeter  
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Madrasa Abdullah al-Azem Religious school constructed in 1779, located in the old city of Damascus, From the eastern end of Souq [Market] al-Hamidiyeh

But let us continue. Wolff is now in Damascus, which, according to him “was at that time – namely, the year 1823 – as it is now [date of publishing, 1861], the most fanatical town in the Turkish Empire, for it was called the “Gate of Mecca.” This next passage is a short disputation with a Spanish friar, for the friars of a Spanish monastery had invited him for a visit. By showing this passage I don’t mean to say that all the friars there agreed with this man’s opinion. It is just interesting how the man’s argument is “might is right.”

An elderly, tall, stout-looking friar entered into an argument with Wolff, who thought at once to take the bull by the horns, and asked the friar, “Reverend father, can you prove to me the propriety of an Inquisition?” He replied, “My argument is very short. You think that it is not proper to have an Inquisition?”

Wolf replied, “Certainly, I think so.”

The friar answered, "Then don't go to Spain." (*Dunque non andate in Spagna!*)

Wolff – "But this does not appear to me to be an argument!"

Friar – "You don't think this to be an argument?"

Wolff – "Certainly, no argument."

Friar – "*Dunque non andate in Spagna.*"

Wolff – "But I wish to be convinced!"

Friar – "Will not this convince you?"

Wolff – "No!"

Friar – "*Dunque non andate in Spagna.*"

Wolff – "Show me Scriptural proof for the propriety of the Inquisition."

Friar – "You want Scriptural proof for the propriety of the Inquisition?"

Wolff – "Yes, certainly!"

Friar – "*Dunque non andate in Spagna.*"

Wolff – "Then you leave me to die in my hatred of the Inquisition."

Friar – "Shall I?"

Wolff – "Yes!"

Friar – "*Dunque non andate in Spagna.*"

Reading this it becomes all too easy to bash the Catholic Church. I myself came into the Christian faith through a political study of the Reformation, and wrote my thesis on the Jesuit Order, so I know much of its dark history. Earlier in the book Wolff spends some time defending the Jesuit Order, admiring Robert Bellarmine, and on his title page he quotes Francis Xavier, 1<sup>st</sup> Jesuit Missionary to India and China: "*Who would not travel over sea and land, to be instrumental in the salvation of one soul!*" To be honest such quotations make me uncomfortable, because with Xavier and the Jesuits to India came the Inquisition. But I guess I understand the sentiment – at a time when Christianity was somewhat navel-gazing and fighting doctrinal wars amongst themselves in Europe, Xavier went abroad to preach. With that in mind I share this quote, which regards the same Spanish friars as the friar who kept saying "don't go to Spain if you don't agree with the Inquisition":

Wolff visited the school of the Spanish friars, where, to his utter astonishment, he found that the pupils (several hundred of them) had Arabic Testaments and Arabic Psalters, **printed by the British and Foreign Bible Society**; and a Spanish friar, who superintended the school, said to Joseph Wolff, "Thus we promote, and have ever promoted, the faith of the Holy Catholic Apostolic Church."

And if Protestant missionaries would content themselves with giving the word of God, without entering into controversies with the missionaries of the Church of Rome, a beautiful union might possibly be established between the missions of both Churches, without their irritating one another. And one would not hear so much of the burning of Bibles, printed at the expense of the British and Foreign Bible Society. For they are the same as those translated and printed by the Roman Catholics in the College of the Propaganda of Rome. The best translation of foreign Bibles issued by our [England's] Bible Society are reprints from those made by the Propaganda at Rome. For example, the Italian version, is a translation by Archbishop Martini.

It is a pity that the spirit of the great secretaries of the Bible Society – the Reverent John Owen, rector of Fulham, and Brandram, and of their excellent agent, the Reverend Henry Leeves, of Athens – has not been followed up in that Society, and that the Trinitarian Bible Society has marred the operations of the great Bible Society. However, enough of this.

A few things should be stated here. Firstly, Wolff is astonished because he did not think he would see the Spanish Friars using Arabic Bibles printed by the Protestants, considering he had just had a discussion with one of those friars who was such a fanatic on the subject of the Inquisition. This shows that humans and the organizations they are in are contradictory and multi-faceted, and that, once again, we should not judge.

We also remember that the close relations between Protestants and Catholics that exists in current times didn't really begin until WWII and after the 2<sup>nd</sup> Vatican Council of 1965. It can be hard to imagine how

vehemently they formerly attacked, opposed, and argued with each other about everything. What would destroy friendships in our sensitive times was a normal conversation in their time. This doesn't mean their time was better or worse than ours. When we get into disputations, which are necessary, let us remember Ecclesiastes 7:9 – *“Be not hasty in your spirit to be angry: for anger rests in the bosom of fools.”* And regarding our idealizing the past, let us remember the next verse: *“Say not, ‘why were the former days better than these?’ For it is not from wisdom that you ask this.”* (ESV) But in my walk with God I have come to agree with Wolff that there are enough people attacking others of heresy; let us focus more on sharing the loving character of our Father.

Finally in the 3<sup>rd</sup> paragraph Wolff talks of the great Bible societies of that time. The French Revolution and its atheistic terrors had woken up Europe, and it was the great age of the missionary in the early 1800s, with much more emphasis on evangelism, translating the Bible, and getting it out all over the world. May such glorious endeavours be restored... but I wonder if we are going to need something dramatic like the French Revolution for it to happen, like they did.

## To Mesopotamia

(Chapter 10 of Wolff's Travels and Adventures)

Wolff now goes deeper inland, farther east from where he had been before. His first stop is Ur of the Chaldees, now called Urfa or Sanliurfa, which I had the opportunity to visit. It is located on the southwest border of Turkey, very close to the border of Syria. I had been travelling in Turkey, had just visited Cappadocia (a beautiful area where Christians built cities underground to hide from persecution...persecution from other christians), and still had a good amount of time left and was not sure where to go. I was at that time reading “Truth Triumphant” by B.J. Wilkinson, that great classic on the Church in the Wilderness, and he had an extended section on Urfa, which was formerly called Edessa and was one of the great centres of learning of the Syriac Church. Thus I wanted to see this city, and I was

much surprised to see I was maybe one of the only foreign tourists in the whole city (there were still Turkish tourists), as I learned later that nobody goes there anymore because of its close proximity to Syria and to ISIS (at that time, maybe 3 years ago, 2015; ISIS territory has much decreased now in 2018). Still it was an intriguing place, people were kind, and my only small problem was I found it difficult to find vegetarian food as I had no knowledge of the language. But I found a place that had premade food laid out, and I went to the same place multiple times as I could select the food I wanted. Turkish food is excellent.

“Abraham’s Lake”, mentioned by Wolff below, is still there and has been made into a beautiful park which attracts many visitors and locals. I can also say that there are still lots of fish. And from Urfa I also took a short ride to Haran, another town where Abraham was (Genesis 11:31), which is a tiny tourist village now compared to Urfa which is a small city. In Urfa I also visited the well-done Sanliurfa Museum, whose recoveries of ancient Greek mosaics are particularly impressive, including the famous Orpheus mosaic from the area (The name Urfa comes from the legendary Greek figure Orpheus, the poet, musician, and prophet, of whom Wolff has some interesting ideas).

Eastern and Western Turkey are extremely different, with Western Turkey being much more European. Dominating Western Turkey is the magnificent city Istanbul (formerly Constantinople, which fell to the Muslim Ottomans in 1453, causing the many ancient manuscripts that had been hoarded there to flood into Europe, one of the instigators of the Reformation), straddling Asia and Europe, which I consider the most beautiful city I have ever been to, the center of all economic and political activity in Turkey and seat of the Ottoman Empire for centuries. It is western Turkey where all the tourists go, particularly the ruins of Ephesus. But eastern Turkey was in a way more memorable as it felt much more untouched by the modern world. Overall this was a very special trip to me, and seeing as it is not an easy place to get to I thought I’d share some of my memories.

Wolff cannot express the feelings which he had on entering the town of his Father Abraham. He must now try exactly to describe them, and says, “I felt just as if I had, after a long journey, been

brought back to the house of my Father; and that I saw him deeply engaged in prayer, and thought he said to me, 'At last thou art come, where the Holy One (blessed be He) called me; and I crossed the Euphrates, just where thou thyself didst cross.' I thought I looked at him [Abraham] with astonishment, and wept, and said, **"Thy children in my country have not that faith which thou hadst, and which made thee leave thy own country for one which thou didst not know."** In short, Dr. Wolff describes himself as feeling thoughts and sensations at that time which he never had before or afterwards experienced.

He then went to see the place where Abraham is said to have been born. It was a cave. The legend is, that Nimrod, the "mighty hunter," (which does not mean a hunter of wild beasts, but "a persecutor of the servants of God,") threw Abraham into a fiery furnace; when he prayed to God, and the furnace was changed into a beautiful lake, so that he came out untouched by the fire. And Wolff saw that lake, which is inside the town of Orpha [Urfa], and is called "Abraham's Lake." The fishes which live in it are so tame, that they approach the shore of it whenever a stranger comes, and throws bread in for them, and eat it with eagerness. It was at Orpha that Abraham preached against idolatry, and pointed to Jehovah as the only living God; and he went from thence to Haran, everywhere preaching the name of Jehovah; and from Haran he went to the land of Canaan, singing in melodious strains praises to the Lord as he travelled.

**Abraham is considered to have been the great Apostle of Jehovah among all the people of the East; and the words in Genesis 12:5, "And the souls that they had gotten," mean the infidels they had converted by melodious songs. Thus both Jews and Jacobite Christians in the East, understand the passage.**

Let us delay a little longer at Orpha, which is now inhabited by Turks, Kurds, Jacobite Christians, Armenians, and Arabs; while around it dwell Sabeans and Shamseea - *id est* [that is] - worshippers of the sun. Orpha is called by the Jews "Urkasdim;" by the Shamseea and by the Syrian Christians, "Orpha;" "Ruha" by the Arabs; "Edessa" by the Armenians; and the Arabs also call the place by the same name as they call Hebron in Palestine, namely,

“Khaleel Rahman,” which means, “The friend of the merciful God,” a name which Abraham has several times in Scripture. In Orpha, Abraham is called “Orpha-ee” - *id est*, “the Orphaite;” and if you translate this in to Greek, it is “Orpheos.” Wolff communicated this to Hookham Frere, who said to Coleridge [Samuel Coleridge, one of the most famous poets and writers of that time], “Wolff believes Abraham to be Orpheus;” and Coleridge replied, “Wolff is perfectly right.” Orpha is remarkable on account of other historical events which happened there; as, for instance, it is mentioned by Tasso, in his “Jerusalem Liberata,” that some of the Crusaders settled there.



Abraham's Lake, In Sanliurfa, Turkey, a city of 2 million

I will not get into the many interesting ideas introduced by Wolff here, but I encourage the reader to google and look at info and images of these places, and also follow along on a map. I know that the people of Urfa today continue to believe that story of Nimrod and Abraham; and until I had gone there I had not considered that the two of them might be contemporaries. On further research on the chronology, it turns out that it is possible. This book introduces much that is exotic, and I leave it up to the reader to follow a Wikipedia trail according to his own interest. Some of the names, particularly of the

locations, are either spelled or named differently now. I ask the reader to excuse me for not explaining the geography better.

## Into Iraq, and then Persia/Iran (Chapter 11 of Wolff's Travels and Adventures)



Continuing on, we find Wolff had been around Mosul, which is Nineveh of the Bible. It is Iraq's 2<sup>nd</sup> largest city, and it was the centre of ISIS operations. In 2016-2017 there was a terrible battle there and it was retaken by the Iraqi government. As I appreciate good reporting, I would like to link an article on this awful battle and the horrors of modern warfare before continuing on:

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2017/nov/21/after-the-liberation-of-mosul-an-orgy-of-killing>

From Kafti [a village near Mosul somewhere] Wolff proceeded to Arbeel (the Arbela of old [also called Gaugamela, now present day Erbil in Kurdistan]), where Alexander fought his first battle against Darius [III]. And from Arbeel to Kushta, and Kantara (called in Turkish *Altoon Koprî*); whence he [Wolff] intended to have gone by water [boat] to Bagdad, being extremely fatigued; but an

observation by a Syrian Turk (a soldier), induced him to change his mind. He said, "As you have gone so far with us, continue the journey with us by land; for at Karkook [Kirkuk] there is a considerable number of Jews, with whom you may make a *mejaadelah*" (i.e. enter into an argument). Such a suggestion from a Turk was remarkable enough, and Wolff acted upon it, tired as he was, and **so went on with the caravan to Karkook [Kirkuk], where Daniel was buried.** This place is still inhabited by Christians, Jews, and most amiable Kurds, who are hospitable and kind; for the image of God is not entirely defaced in any nation. Wolff has never seen but one individual in whom it seemed to be entirely defaced, and this was Abd-ul-Samut Khan, the instigator of the murder of [Charles] Stoddart and [Arthur] Conolly in Bokhara.

I quote this section to give the reader a sense of the geography. Wolff is moving steadily east. There are a few different places that claim to be the tomb of Daniel (showing how famous Daniel was in the Middle East, just like Abraham his influence is far-ranging), and the consensus seems to be that his tomb actually is in Susa, Iran, not Kirkuk, Iraq. Wolff visits many places, but the next event of interest in the book occurs in the city Shiraz, Iran; the 5<sup>th</sup> largest city in Iran with about 1.7 million people, called "the cultural capital of Iran". Later the book states that Shiraz is of the highest civilization, and if it is anything like the ancient grandeur of Istanbul then it is a city I would like to visit. Also note that books written prior to WWII tend to call believers in Islam Muhammadans, followers of Muhammad, rather than Muslims, which we call them today.



The next day, Wolff proceeded to Sheeraz [Shiraz], over a horrid mountainous road; and he arrived after a few days in the city, which is the most learned town in all Persia; and where the tombs of Hafez, the Anacreon [Greek poet, notable for writing about wine] of the Persians, and of Saadi, the great poet and author of Gulistan and Bustan, are outside the walls. They are both buried in a garden, which is kept by a dervish. Wolff first took up his abode in the house of a Persian, who acted as British agent, and who promised to invite the chiefs of the Shia religion to argue with him, for all the inhabitants of Persia are Shia.

**The whole Muhammadan [Muslim] nations are divided into two classes - the *Sheah* [Shia] and *Soonnee* [Sunni]...**The Shia of Sheeraz divide themselves into two parties...the Moollahs [Mullahs]...and Sooffee [Sufi].

Western New Age thought tends to idealize the Sufis, but Wolff is not a fan. The Sufis we can consider the mystics, “their principles rather liberal,” Wolff says. This is in contrast to the Mullahs, who we would term ‘fundamentalists.’ I will describe the Sufis in Shiraz first, and please forgive Wolff his blunt description.

They sit in their college, with their heads bowed down, wrapped up in prophet’s mantle and belch, because, they say, that they are filled with the mystical wine of truth; which, Wolff observed, consisted of the wine of the grape, which is produced in Sheeraz. They also intoxicate themselves by smoking Jars, which is a kind of opiate plant. Wolff dares say that there are some good men among them; but, in general, he trusted them less than the orthodox Moollahs (Muhammadans)

Their spirituality consists in sensuality of the most outrageous and unmentionable kind, and they are liars and cheats. Dear Henry Martyn [Anglican missionary to Persia and India who translated the NT into Persian and Urdu] seems to have been imposed upon by them; yet, by his writings, he has, after all, excited the attention and drawn the minds of people, not only in Shiraz and Persia, but in other parts of the Muhammadan empire, into inquiring after Christianity; so that, after all, he did not labour in vain, which is all that can be expected from a mission amongst Muhammadans.

The Sufis are divided into different classes: some, who try to excite themselves into devotion with musical instruments and the drum – so much so, that they fall down in ecstasies, until they fall into a trance, and are unconscious of what they say or do; and then they sometimes speak in a sublime manner.

That is the mystical party. Wolff is often blunt and outspoken in his beliefs (it is his book after all), and it is refreshing to hear someone speak directly their opinion, rather than tell it in a softened roundabout way. For example, he says:

It is distressing to record an awful truth, that civilization, without true religion, will never make a nation or an individual more humane. For the Persians, though by far more intellectual than the Turks, are also much more cruel, greater liars, and more

atrociously immoral in every respect. So that, in fact, increased civilization, without religion, only develops a greater amount of wickedness, and it is generally accompanied by hypocrisy.

Is it not true that as we become more cultured, we tend to become more selfish, and then societal morality decreases? We need only look at the lives of famous writers and poets to see that this is sadly too often the case. Persians were seen as the high culture of the Middle Eastern World, much as Greece was in the west. My Afghani friend told me that the upper-class Afghans speak Persian, and I learned in Turkey that the language of the Ottoman Palace was also Persian. That is why when you meet an Iranian they are always upset if you call them an "Arab". It is therefore annoying, whether they state it or not, that the language of Islam is Arabic, and all good Muslims must learn Arabic, Allah's language. But we proceed to the more interesting meetings Wolff has with the Mullahs:

Wolff also visited the colleges of the orthodox party; a proud people, full of arrogance, with whom wisdom has died out. Some young men, with whom he argued, asked him the day following, whether he had been able to sleep after having heard such powerful arguments as they had produced? Wolff replied, that arguments never disturbed his sleep. However, some of their arguments must be produced.

**Wolff said, "Christ converted the world by persuasion; by the sublimity of his doctrine, by prophecies, and by miracles. Muhammad converted the nations by the sword."** They replied, "There are two physicians: the one cures the sick by sweet medicine; he is a good physician. Other physicians give the sick bitter medicine, and they are cured. Thus, he is a good physician too. *Again, there are two generals; the one takes the city by storm, - he is a good general. Another takes the city by persuasion, - he is a good general too.*"

Wolff said, "**The sword cannot be a good medicine; for if it kills the enemy, he is prevented from being persuaded into the right faith. And if it frightens him into submitting against his belief, it makes a hypocrite of him.**" Then they said, as to

miracles: “The Koran itself is a miracle; for nobody was ever able to write such beautiful Arabic as the Koran is written in.” Wozlff said, “this cannot be proved, for it is a matter of taste.”

I admire the simplicity and directness which Wolff argues against converting men by the sword of carnal force, rather than the sword of the spiritual word. If the sword “kills the enemy, he is prevented from being persuaded into the right faith,” and if the sword “frightens him into submitting against his belief, it makes a hypocrite of him.” Powerful. I personally, when I studied Arabic in my 3<sup>rd</sup> year of university abroad at the University of Jordan, heard on many occasions the argument that the Koran is a miraculous book because of how beautifully it is written – that no human could write so beautifully. But it is true, “it is a matter of taste.”

The debate continues. I was considering whether to add this second part, because at this point the Mullahs use a very weak argument to show that Mohammed was prophesied by the Bible. I decided to keep it, because it is an argument that is still used today. This style of occult interpretation of scripture is common and thus would-be evangelists should be prepared to hear it. The Jews also use such obscure and convoluted techniques in their disputations with Wolff. Notice also the Muslim/Arab themselves claim descent from Ishmael, of whom the angel told Hagar: “*And he will be a wild man; his hand will be against every man, and every man's hand against him; and he shall dwell in the presence of all his brethren.*” Gen 16:12.

Then they came to prophecies, and said, “The name of Muhammad is predicted in the Bible. He is called in Hebrew, Bimod Mead.” Wolff could not imagine, for a long time, what on earth they meant, and only discovered at last by their calling for a renegade Jew, who showed Wolff, in Gen 27:20, “And as for Ishmael, I have heard thee: Behold, I have blessed him, and will make him fruitful, and will multiply him exceedingly.” Now the letters which compose this word *exceedingly*, i.e. Bimod Mead, viz. Beth, Mim, Aleph, Daleth, Mim, Aleph, Daleth, when considered as letters expressing *numbers*, which is their common use also, amount to ninety-two. And so, in like manner, the four letters of the name Muhammad,

viz. Mim, Kheth, Mim, Daleth, when summed together as numbers, amount also to ninety-two; and therefore, said the Muhammadans, *exceedingly* must mean *Muhammad!* An argument not very likely to have disturbed Wolff's rest. This ingenious argument, which the Muhammadans had learned from an apostate Jew, was further confirmed by the fact that Muhammad was a descendant of Ishmael, and *multiplied exceedingly*.

But there was another thing which they brought forward in the same verse; "Twelve princes shall he beget." These, said they, were the twelve Imams – the twelve successors of Muhammad (which only the Shia acknowledge [not the Sunnis]). Wolff said, "But the word *exceedingly* cannot beget. On the contrary, it is said that Ishmael shall beget twelve princes, and the names of these twelve princes are mentioned afterwards in Gen 25: 13-15, viz., Nebajoth, Kedar, Adbeel, Mibsam, Mishma, Dumah, Massa, Hadar, Tema, Jetur, Naphish, and Kedemah." **On hearing this, they said, "We must be candid; he has answered us completely."**

They then ask Wolff an interesting question, "tradition or reason?" I think what they mean by this is, how best to construct doctrine? Putting together scripture to make an argument would be considered tradition; whereas reason in their minds would be more metaphysical, through abstract logic and not using scripture. So slightly different to how we would use words "reason" and "tradition". Notice then how Wolff speaks to their hearts.

They then asked Wolff "how he liked best to argue: whether from tradition or from reason?" He said, "he liked to argue chiefly from tradition, and then from reason." "For," he said, "reason can only reach to a certain point, but tradition tells us things which God has revealed. But, besides tradition and reason, there is an internal evidence; the heart is also given by God, and if the heart comes into collision with reason, something must be wrong. And the heart tells us that, as faith is the gift of God, we must pray for it." They all exclaimed, "Good! Very good!" They then asked Wolff, "What he believed Jesus to be." He replied, "The Son of God." They said, "God has no wife." Wolff replied, "There are different kinds of fathers. One the father by marriage, another is father by being the

educator, bringer up, and bestower of benefits. And God is a father by creating and by preserving, by bestowing of benefits, and by his very act of chastising his children.”

Then they said, “Then we are all children of God.”

Wolff replied, “Yes; all of us, in a different sense. But Jesus was God, for in Him the fullness of the Godhead dwelt bodily.”

They said, “Then Jesus is less than God.”

To which Wolff replied, “Look at the sun. The sun gives light and heat to all the earth, yet the light and heat is one with the sun.”

They again exclaimed, “Good! Very good!” and then said, “What objection have you to Muhammad’s doctrine?”

Wolff answered, “Muhammad did not act in conformity with God’s actions, which are quite different from his.”

They asked, “How do you know God’s actions?”

*Wolff* – “By his loving all mankind.”

*They* – “How do you see that?”

*Wolff* – “In his creation. Look at the sun, which comes from God, which shineth upon the good and the bad, the Jew, the Christian, the Muhammadan, the worshippers of fire – the Parsee [Farsi]. But Muhammad commands his followers not to love the Christian, who is yet the creature of God.”

Once more they exclaimed, “Good! Very Good!”

To his great surprise, Wolff was soon after invited with the Muhammadans to a rich Jew, who, in order to save his riches, had become a Muhammadan himself. This man kept continually exclaiming to Wolff, in Hebrew, “The voice is the voice of Jacob, but the hands are the hands of Esau.” Wolff understood at once the meaning of those words: namely, that he himself was still at heart a Jew, although in outward appearance a Muhammadan. Wolff sighed, and thought it not well to press the poor man with arguments in the presence of Muhammadans; and he continued to speak to the Muhammadans on the fulfilment of many of the prophecies contained in the Old Testament respecting Jesus.

I find the above a helpful exchange that we may learn much from. As this passage continues many questions arise to the modern reader, but there are countless things that must remain mysterious to us because of the exotic locales and the hundreds of years that have passed.

Anyways, it is interesting that in Baghdad the Jews were extremely wealthy, but here in Shiraz their situation is terrible. The Jewish neighbourhoods of the Middle East talked about in this book, which were many hundreds of years old, are close to non-existent now. After the formation of the modern state of Israel, the rage of Muslims against the Jews was terrible, and most left their original neighbourhoods either to go to Israel or to America. The intensity of the imagery and feeling of this next section is remarkable.

Now let us accompany Wolff to his brethren, the Jews, in a town which boasts of the highest civilization. In passing through the streets of Sheeraz, he went through the large bazaar, built by Kareem Khan, formerly ruler of Sheeraz. The upper part is entirely covered in by a vaulted ceiling, and below there are magnificent shops. **As he was going through and through the rest of the town, there were shouts from all sides, "Here is Joseph Wolff, who proclaims that Jesus is the Son of God!"**

One day, Shanasar, and David Makardeetch David, two Armenians who were at enmity with each other, called accidentally on Wolff, at the same time, so that they met; and they began to talk to him, and said, "We will go now with you to the Jews. Do you know what happened last night? One of the chief Moollahs of Sheeraz went to the prince, and advised him to call on you to dispute publicly on the merits of Islam; and that if you were beaten in argument, you must either embrace Islam or die! But scarcely had the Muhammadan proposed that, when he was struck with apoplexy, and died." They added, that such excitement had never been before in Sheeraz."

But, before making them any answer, Wolff, who knew their feelings towards each other, said to them, **"First of all, both of you being Christians, I command you, in the name of Jesus Christ, to make peace together, before you go with me to the Jews, to whom I go to proclaim the Gospel of peace."** Whereupon Shanasar and David Makardeetch David embraced and kissed each other; and Wolff drank with them a glass of Sheeraz wine to celebrate the restoration of their friendship; and then they accompanied him to the Jews Quarter, where they aided him greatly in conversing in the Persian language.

Wolff had been warned what he must expect in visiting the Jews at Sheeraz, and the description of their misery had not been exaggerated. A Persian Mussulman, of whom he had inquired their condition some time before, had said, First: Every house at Sheeraz with a low, narrow entrance, is a Jew's house. Secondly: Every man with a dirty woollen or dirty camel's-hair turban is a Jew. Thirdly: Every coat much torn and mended about the back, with worn sleeves, is a Jew's coat. Fourthly: Every one picking up old broken glass is a Jew. Fifthly: Every one searching dirty robes, and asking for old shoes and sandals is a Jew. Sixthly: That house into which no quadruped but a goat will enter is a Jew's." All which things, of course, came into Wolff's mind, as, in company with the two Armenians, he approached the street where the Jews resided.

And what a sight it presented! It was in the month of January, 1825, and therefore, in the depth of winter – and all was cold and frozen. The street was only a few yards in width; all the houses were like pig-styes, and even these were in ruins from the effects of the recent earthquake. Men, women, and children were lying about the street – many of them ill, naked, or in rags – women with their children at the breast, exclaiming, "Only one *pool*, only one *pool*!" (*pool* being the Persian word for farthing [a former monetary unit and coin of the UK, withdrawn in 1961, equal to a quarter of an old penny; i.e. the least possible amount]) "I am a poor Israeli. I am a poor Israeli." Wolff crept into some of their houses, and spoke to them about Jesus being the Messiah. They asked, "What shall we do? What shall we do?" in a singsong tone. Wolff told them to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and be baptized in his name. They wept. But how to baptize them—but how—in a town—with all its civilization—of the most fanatical Muhammadans? "Poor Israelis of Sheeraz!" exclaims Dr. Wolff, "I shall see many of you in heaven! Around the throne of Jesus! You were baptized with the baptism of misery, and suffering, and poverty! **God forbid that one harsh thought should enter my mind against you!** His blood has come upon you: but that blood speaks better things than the blood of Abel."

The Armenians reported the whole proceedings of Wolff to their brethren in Calcutta [India]; tell them how he had made peace between Shanasar and David Makardeetch David, who were

at enmity with each other. And after all this was over, he called on the Prince of Sheeraz at his palace.

Fire from heaven must come down upon a court like that! Let no person dare to ask Wolff to give a description of such a cursed court. Such a court never can be converted, with all their politeness and elegance! "Let God arise and let his enemies be scattered: let them also that hate Him feel before Him!"

I love the amazingly unique imagery this above passage shows us. First is Wolff walking through the city, with the shouts greeting him "from all sides" that he proclaims that "Jesus is the Son of God!" Incredible. I imagine that some of the disciples who travelled to distant countries after the crucifixion of Christ were greeted in the same way.

It is interesting to note also the difference in the welfare of the Jews in Shiraz to Jews in other cities. It shows that the Jews were not organized with a hierarchy that oversaw their whole diaspora, but had become a part of the area they immigrated to and therefore each place had its own Jewish history, distinct from others. Of course there was probably some interaction with Jews in other cities, but I think the Jews in Shiraz would have little contact with the Jews of Jerusalem, particularly the Shiraz Jews of the lower-class. This also breaks the myth that Jews have always been rich and well off wherever they are, which definitely was not the case in Shiraz. I also love that Wolff got the two Armenians to reconcile before he began his ministry.



Persian Jews, unknown date (early 1900's I think). At the time of the establishment of Israel, 1948, there were 140-150,000 Jews in Iran. Now there are 8,756. There are 90,000-500,000 (due to disputes over numbering) Christians in Iran, most Armenian and Assyrian who do services in their own languages (not Persian). It is currently illegal to distribute Christian literature in Persian, and converts face massive challenges.

Also I read this interesting article by G.I. Butler, former conference president (famous for his dispute against EJ Waggoner), about him listening to a Mr. Coon, a missionary to Persia who had come back to “arouse the cooling ardour of American Christians to the importance of missions to the heathen.” It tells the importance of going to Christians in Muslims lands, called Nestorians, as going to Muslims first is not possible. It also shows how difficult the pioneer missionary work was. I wonder how many written languages in this world owe their origin to missionaries. Many of the ethnic groups around Thailand that I know, such as Karen and Hmong, had alphabets developed by missionaries. Many African alphabets were too. Interestingly enough, there is some evidence [that Arabic script was too](#). Here are ten more: <https://www.toptenz.net/top-10-missionaries-who-invented-writing-systems-to-spread-the-gospel.php>

His descriptions of the difficulties encountered by the missionaries in heathen lands was striking. In many places they had no books, no tracts, no churches, no schoolhouses, no Sabbath-schools, no newspapers, none of the comforts of our civilization; few of the people could read or write, and in many places they had no literature. Everything had to be made [note: this would be referring to another language besides Persian. Often missionaries worked with disenfranchised ethnic groups who needed help and therefore were more open to receiving help than the dominant majority ethnic group]. The spoken language had to be reduced to its elements, characters chosen to represent sounds, these combined into words and sentences, and books written. Then the children had to be taught to read and write, the Bible had to be translated into this tongue, and its principles taught. As these scholars grew up, they were sent out to instruct others, till after many years' labor, churches would be raised up, and civilization established. In many instances, men and women commencing as missionaries in early life would grow gray before seeing any marked growth. Ten years, Mr. Coon said, they labored in their mission, scarcely seeing a single conversion; but then the work advanced with greater rapidity.

...

**The great changes in the characters and lives of these Nestorian Christians wrought by means of missionary labor, was almost the only avenue to the Mohammedans. These changes astonished them.** They began to inquire what could be the cause, and many were led to see it was the Bible, with its precious instruction; and thus their confidence was gained and access to their hearts was obtained, and a few of them were brought to Christ. (G.I. Butler, R&H, November 29, 1877)

## On to Tehran

(Chapter 12 of Wolff's Travels and Adventures)

Wolff continues his journey, making a stop at Isfahan which is now the third largest city in Iran, but was once one of the largest cities

in the world. In the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries under the Safavid Dynasty it was made capital of Persia and still to this day it is famous for its architecture. I relate the following anecdote to show how even in Iran there is a connection to the Old Testament. It just shows how famous people like Solomon were in their time; that it became glorious even to be connected to their name.

After twenty days' journey forward, Wolff arrived near the great city of Ispahan [Isfahan], of which the say is, Ispahan Neem-Jehaun – "Ispahan, half the world." [note: a saying still used to this day] It was built by a man, the wonder of the earth – King Solomon – who had travelled through the world in the air – carried by genii [genie] – as far as Chashmeer [Kashmir]! As a proof of the truth of this story, there is to this day even, in Cashmeer, a mountain called Takhti-Suliman, the throne of Solomon.

Wolff proceeds to share some of the strange Rabbinic traditions they have. One is interesting psychologically. Solomon had a captured apostate angel, almost like a pet, in his power, who one day escapes and kicked Solomon thousands of miles away. In his absence this angel, "Ashmeday", reigned in Jerusalem, and it was him who married the many wives and committed idolatry. Solomon at the end of his life returns and takes back his throne. There are even more ridiculous details to the story than this, but remember that these stories were believed by many of the Jews. It seems to me this extra-biblical story's purpose is to excuse the faults of a man that the Jews wanted to represent the Golden Age of Israel, but in actuality came to be a lesson of the weakness of men.

The exploits of the leading Rabbis that had passed away and the great miracles they did were told and believed also by the Jews, and many such stories were related by Wolff which I have not included here. I think that, having been raised on such stories, I can see why the miracles of Jesus could seem minor in comparison, or nothing special. It is sad that this is the case. We must always remember that the importance of Christ's work is the character in which it was done: to reveal the loving character of the Father. That is what gives Christ's miracles their profundity and sublimity compared to the all too human

supernatural fables of the Rabbis, the Tibetan Lamas, the Greek Heroes, and any other folk traditions of men.

Wolff then proceeds to Tehran, then and still now the capital of Iran, where he met the leader, Fath-Ali Shah, who Wolff says had 300 wives, but on further research his harem was thought to have almost a 1000 ladies. He is considered to maybe hold the record for the man who had the most children ever. He is introduced to the ministers of the Shah by the British Envoy. The characteristics of these ministers are such that you couldn't make them up:

Sir Henry Willock and Dr. McNeil introduced Wolff to all the ministers of his Majesty; highly-bred and well informed gentlemen they were.

It is worthwhile to describe three of them. Daood Khan was a gentleman who was acquainted with the history of the Church of Christ, and with the authors [historians] of it, such as Eusebius, Baronius, and the French Fleuri [Claude Fleury]. He knew the writings of these men, which was really astonishing, and was acquainted with the heresies which were in the Church of Christ; and he made this most surprising remark, though a Muhammadan himself, that "Muhammad seemed to have been a disciple of Cerinthus and Arius."

The second of those gentlemen was Mirza Abd-Alwehab, who took an interest in all the exertions of the British and Foreign Bible Society; and, especially, in the controversies of Henry Martyn [pioneer missionary to the Persians], and whom Abd-Alwehab told Wolff, that forty learned men had tried to answer his arguments, and could not. Mirza Abd-Alwehab had a most pleasant countenance, and was of a more serious turn of mind than the majority of Persians are.

The third was Khosrof Khan, and a most extraordinary man. A Georgian by birth, he was chief eunuch, and one of the king's prime ministers; and he may be called the Muhammadan Swedenborg. He maintained, like Swedenborg, that he had intercourse with the inhabitants of the other world. He was of a highly-intellectual mind, and could converse on every subject in the most rational manner; when, suddenly, he would fall down upon his face, and then rise, saying, "I have had the most remarkable conversation

with the prophets Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Samuel;” and then he would give a most interesting description of their figures and appearance.

I could never have imagined such characters, but such is the diversity of man. On the third man, the Muslim Swedenborg, as Adventists we would scoff at him having conversations with Isaiah, etc. But while we know that this is not the case, it could be that the man himself believes it, and to mock such a high-level minister would be dangerous; we must be careful to not let disdain, scorn, or mockery show in any way, whether it be in tone of voice or subtle facial expression – both of which Orientals are adept at noticing. As missionaries, we must be respectful and take things at face value at all times. Wolff knows how the British audience would take this. “Wolff would here remark, that he never speaks ironically on such points as this, but he believes its possibility and probability.” This attitude I think endeared him to the strangers he met; for he never looked down on them or disrespected their worldview or learning.

Another point that may be of interest to the would-be missionary is Wolff’s approach to language and his care for those around him.

“Wolff took, as it was always his wont to do whenever he remained in a town for a while, a teacher of languages; so he took, while there, one of the first scholars of Persia, whose name was Mirza Ibrahim. And, as Ibrahim expressed a wish to go to England, and Wolff had observed his great talents, he took him with him as far as Constantinople. Thence Wolff sent him, at his own expense, to London; where Sir Gore Ouseley recommended him to the Haileybury College, where Ibrahim became professor of Persian and Arabic; and, having learned Latin and Greek, he translated Herodotus into Persian, and he remained at Haileybury from the years of 1826 to 1847, when he retired, with a pension, to Persia.”

A missionary should never underestimate the impression learning the local tongue, even a little, has on the people – it is another powerful sign of respect. Even a cursory study of a language can help the

missionary understand the culture much more, and a language teacher can be an ally and a helpful guide in teaching cultural nuance and how to avoid bad manners. (For example, putting your feet on the table is highly offensive in Thailand, which you would never know without speaking to a person with experience in cross-cultural matters, which a language teacher is) Notice also what strikes the leading intellectuals at the court in Tehran:

After Wolff had conversed with the Muhammadan Moollahs, and the ministers of the king, at Teheran, Sir Henry Willock asked him, after they left the room, "Do you know what they told me? They said, **'This man rivets the attention to everything he says,** for he speaks with such force, as none of the most eloquent of our nation could do; and, in spite too, of his foreign pronunciation, and his foreign manners, he rivets us, **because sincerity speaks out of him!'**"

From Teheran, Wolff proceeded to Caswin [Qazvin], the ancient residency of the kings of Persia; where he preached the Gospel of Christ to Muhammadans, Jews, and Daoodee, a people who believe in the divinity of David; and to the Ali-Oollahe, who believe in the divinity of Ali.

I quoted the above passages for two reasons: speaking with the spirit of Christ in sincerity impacts people, and that people love to worship men, especially dead men. Muslims often honor the prophets of the OT, but the scripture itself, which God oversees so as to ensure the knowledge of His workings in human history, they say is corrupted and therefore we must accept the Koran.

Wolff then leaves Persia and goes north past what is now modern-day Azerbaijan, Armenia, and Georgia, through Russia on the way to Ukraine. Here he enters a more European culture, where Germans, Greeks, Russians, and Jews all live together. I pass through this part quickly, but would like to mention his stop with the Caraites.



Wolff from thence made an excursion to the settlement of the Carait Jews, who had been there from time immemorial. The place is called Jufut-Kaleh, the “Castle of the Jews,” upon the height of the town, called Bakhtshe-Seray. The Empress Catharine was about to impose a tax upon them, when they sent a petition, proving to her satisfaction, that they were of that tribe of Jews who had had no hand in the crucifixion of our Lord Jesus Christ. The Empress thereupon graciously freed them from the tribute; and it is most remarkable, that **though proselytism is prohibited in Russia, those Caraites have converted, not by their preaching, but by the integrity, uprightness, and honest of their conduct, many of the Russians to the Jewish religion.** Let us cease from talking about the tyranny and despotism of Russia. The Crimea, from the moment that it fell into the hand of Russia, prospered. Mighty cities were erected, the wandering Nogay Tatars, who live in the Oural [Ural] mountains, and even around Bokhara [Bukhara], and feed on human flesh, settled down in nice cottages in the Crimea, and lived in harmony and peace with the Germans, the Russians, and Greeks there.

Sadly, this would be before the Crimean Wars between 1853-1856, and the area remains a hotspot for international affairs to this day (in relationship between Russia and Ukraine). But the takeaway here is the potential to evangelize through upright conduct, and also I agree with Wolff that bashing the politics and policy of other nations isn't helpful – let us focus on the gospel. We have not ceased from denigrating the “tyranny and despotism” of Russia, while the same thing is mirrored there, with Russia to this day mocking American naiveté, arrogance, hypocrisy, and corporatism. Just as individually there is “none righteous, no not one”, the same applies for nations and kingdoms – all “have come short of the glory of God.” Romans 3:10,23.

Notice also this idea of certain people being responsible for killing Jesus, while others are “innocent”. This is similar to Adam saying “the woman whom Thou gavest to me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat.” Such rationale has been used for millennia to justify anti-Semitism. It was not until Vatican 2 that the Papacy made it clear that this is wrong in its document *Nostra Aetate*:

May all, then, see to it that in their catechetical work or in their preaching of the word of God they do not teach anything that could give rise to hatred or contempt of Jews in the hearts of Christians. May they never present the Jewish people as one rejected, cursed, or guilty of deicide [killing God]. All that happened to Christ in His passion cannot be attributed to the whole people then alive, much less to that of today.

The Empress Catharine, the Catholic Church, and all Christians should read Robert Wieland's book 'Corporate Repentance.' Rather than narrowing the guilt of killing Christ, we need to see how Christ is suffering today, and how he bears the sins of the whole world even now, and that every man through every impure thought and deed is piercing Christ. All men are equally guilty for killing Jesus, for in the place of the Jews 2000 years ago we would have done the same. We are of the same character and the same blood (same carnal flesh, “God made of one blood all nations”, Acts 17:26) as the Jews of the time of Tiberius Caesar. Only this realization can allow us to see the true seriousness of our sin-sickened state and therefore finally attain the full measure of grace that

God would give to us. Rom 5:20. We continue on to Constantinople, now called Istanbul.

Wolff found out here that several Jews to whom he had preached at Jerusalem, had become Christians, and were at Constantinople. He also made an excursion to Adrianople, which almost cost him his life, for when he arrived there he preached not only to Jews, but also to Muhammadans, and circulated the Word of God among them openly, just at a time when the **Muhammadans were in the wildest state of frenzy and hatred against the Christians, because the revolution of the Greeks was at its height.**

So Wolff had scarcely left Adrianople half an hour, when the janissaries marched out to cut him to pieces. However, he managed to escape, and arrived safely in Constantinople again, where he was introduced to Sir Stratford and Lady Canning, with whom he dined. Sir Stratford warned Wolff not to go amongst Muhammadans at this critical moment; an injunction which he obeyed.

In the 1800s half the city of Istanbul was Greek, and therefore Orthodox Christian, and there were constant disputes between them and the Turks. During the early 1900s Ataturk took power, proclaimed Turkey a secular Turkish state, and almost all the Greeks were expelled from Turkey and Istanbul. Istanbul now is almost totally Muslim. Note here that Wolff heeds the advice from locals regarding current events in the area. God protected Wolff when he was in ignorance of the political climate, but we should not be presumptuous in taking unnecessary risks once we have been warned unless truly convicted by the Spirit. Notice also *why* the Muslims were hating the Christians – because of political reasons. That is why Muslims hate Christians and persecute them now in their countries, because of perceived attacks upon them by Christians, such as the invasions of Muslim countries by America.

After this Wolff visits Smyrna, another city in Turkey, and then takes a ship back to Dublin, Ireland, and thus ends his first missionary tour.

## Back in England and meeting with Edward Irving (Chapter 13 of Wolff's Travels and Adventures)

We now meet Henry Drummond and Edward Irving, and the serious Bible students they fellowshipped with. Edward Irving needs to be remarked upon, for it was Irving who was crucial in publishing the writings of Manuel Lacunza, the Jesuit who spoke on the 2<sup>nd</sup> coming. The Great Controversy says this of Lacunza:

In South America, in the midst of barbarism and priest-craft, Lacunza, a Spaniard and a Jesuit, found his way to the Scriptures and thus received the truth of Christ's speedy return. Impelled to give the warning, yet desiring to escape the censures of Rome, he published his views under the assumed name of "Rabbi Ben-Ezra," representing himself as a converted Jew. Lacunza lived in the eighteenth century, but it was about 1825 that his book, having found its way to London, was translated into the English language. Its publication served to deepen the interest already awakening in England in the subject of the second advent. (GC 363.1)

This book was studied deeply by the circle around Drummond and Irving, and Irving went on to write many works on prophecy. He was crucial in restoring to glory the doctrine of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Advent to England. Wolff, to whom this doctrine was very important to, has some interesting thoughts on this man, their studies, and what Wolff perceives as flaws in the Protestant position. Irving also wrote works on Daniel and Revelation, and died in 1834 at the age of 42. Strangely, Irving was involved in the first meetings in England where "speaking in tongues" in the Pentecostal sense occurred, which he also supported.

At the end of a few weeks, Henry Drummond and Irving sent for Wolff to come to London; and, as he had been lately reading Irving's celebrated "Orations," he was extremely anxious to see him, and not less so from Irving's having mentioned Ignatius Loyola and Francis Xavier with great admiration.

Wolff accordingly arrived in London, and was not disappointed in his expectations of Irving. Even at the first interview, he was

struck with him as a very remarkable man; and he often afterwards said, that he quite bore out Chalmers' account of him, that he was "like the sun, with a few spots upon it." But Wolff even goes beyond this, and thinks that many things, which Chalmers [Thomas Chalmers, called "Scotland's greatest 19<sup>th</sup> century churchman"] considered spots, were not so in reality. And, although he never accepted his new doctrine of the unknown tongues, he has never liked to speak against it. Of one thing, however, he is perfectly certain, namely, that Irving had, what may be called, the organ of being humbugged; no deceiver himself, he was yet liable to be deceived by others.

On his arrival in London, Wolff went at once, by arrangement, to Irving's house. It was nine o'clock at night, and Irving was not at home, but had left word that Wolff was to follow him to the house of Lady Olivia Sparrow, where he was dining. Thither he accordingly proceeded, and saw Irving for the first time; and it was on this occasion, also, that he was first introduced to Lady Georgiana Walpole, daughter of the Earl of Orford, who, in February, 1827, became his wife.

...

After a few days, Henry Drummond invited Wolff to Albury Park, near Guildford, in Surrey, to be present at the great conference that was to take place there, among a chosen set of friends, upon unfulfilled prophecies. The consultations lasted a week, during which time the consulters lived together under Drummond's roof. Among them were Dr. Macneil, Lord Mandeville (afterwards Duke of Manchester), Lord Riley, Dodsworth, Dr. Marsh, Frere, Simons of Paul's Cray, Haldane Stuart, Cunningham of Lainshaw, &c., Drummond, Irving, and Wolff. **There they discussed the personal reign of Christ, and future renovation of the earth; the restoration and conversion of the Jews; and judgments on the Christian Church for their infidelity and unfaithfulness; - each person speaking out his peculiar views, and all referring to Wolff upon the texts of the original Hebrew.** These dialogues were subsequently printed, and the opinions of each given under fictitious names: Wolff's sobriquet being "Josephus," Irving's "Athanasius," etc., etc.

The result of these meetings was, that all became of the opinion that the system of interpreting fulfilled prophecy, in a grammatical, historical, or, as it is commonly, but not quite correctly, called, *literal* sense; and unfulfilled prophecy in a *phantomizing*, or what is commonly called, spiritual manner, is a miserably rotten system, and one leading to infidelity.

We see in these proceedings many aspects similar to the Millerites. There is a commitment to a literal reading of scripture, stressed greatly by Wolff in the next paragraphs on Luke 1:30-33, where “the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David. And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end.” Wolff goes against the grain of his time that this is a literal, or “personal reign”; Jesus will come back as a king – in contrast to many who said He was already “spiritually” reigning. They argue above that unfulfilled prophecy must also be first interpreted in the historical/grammatical sense, rather than “phantomizing”, or spiritualizing.

The “restoration” they speak of is “restorationism”, meaning to restore the old apostolic church of the first centuries AD. This is similar to the goal of the Christian Connection, precursors to Adventism. They considered Christianity generally fallen. It is partly because of the influence of this group that Wolff really begins to stress the 2<sup>nd</sup> coming.

Sadly, this fellowship would end in much difficulty, with truth being corrupted by error. Edward Irving boldly moved toward reclaiming the human nature of Christ, and was declared a heretic and his views were considered by many repugnant. Yet he made the same mistake that so many do, that God the Father is without form, a teaching the Adventist Pioneers attacked by quoting Daniel 7 and the description of God as “the Ancient of Days” – a being with a form, with hair, hands, and legs. Considered a great mind and a very godly man, Irving’s life would end in tragedy, and is a great lesson for us that I would like to spend a little time on.



REV. EDWARD IRVING.

From a print by Meyer, after a drawing by A. Robertson.

Edward Irving was convinced that the spiritual gifts would return, having only ceased because of unbelief and bad doctrine – this was part of his efforts at “restorationism.” We know that this is true, the spiritual gifts were given to the Advent people; James White said they were repressed through the creeds, which didn’t allow the Holy Spirit to flow. The 3<sup>rd</sup> volume of *Spiritual Gifts* includes a section defending Adventist belief in the gifts, from page 9-31, as most of the Christian world at the time thought they had ended in the Apostolic era. Presently this issue is

more unclear than in the mid-1800s, due to the great rise in Pentecostalism that claims for its movement the spiritual gifts.

Irving believed with all his heart that the gifts should reappear if obstructions are removed from the path of the Holy Spirit. If only he had been patient... for strange things began to happen in his congregation in the late 1820s; speaking in tongues broke out, along with loud prophesying and automatic writing – 70 years before the birth of modern Pentecostalism at Azusa. Irving, who needed some proof of the apostolic legitimacy of what he was doing, fully committed to defending this totally novel appearance of “tongues.” His case would eventually be taken by his own elders to the Church of Scotland, which rebuked these manifestations as “delusions” and “disorder”. In their opposition to squashing the “tongues”, that church would commit itself to rigid “cessationism”, meaning that the spiritual gifts ceased with the apostolic age; many other denominations were influenced by these events and also intellectually agreed with “cessationism”. Enshrining “cessationism” in its believers would make it difficult for many to accept the prophetic gift of Ellen White.

Edward Irving would start a new church where those with the “gifts” were placed in charge, with Irving, who never manifested any gifts himself, in submission to the authority of these “prophets”, whom he considered chosen by God. He would live the last remaining years of his life fully doing the will and whim of these “prophets”, which led him in circles and into dead ends – showing his utter sincerity to their outbursts and “prophesying”, and even when many admitted they were making it up he continued to believe. He hoped for the manifestations of the gifts in himself, and for the fulfilment of certain prophecies spoken to him, both of which never happened. He was sent on missions all over England, and, in ill health from tuberculosis, died in 1834. The Irvingites would organize into the “Catholic Apostolic Church” and considered themselves the only true church in the world, and they too would slowly fade away into obscurity. There is much to learn from this heart-breaking episode.

Continuing on, Wolff seems to have been blessed by God with a good wife, saying “Wolff will not allow to have paraded before the world the great practical talents and intellectual gifts of his dear wife, her active usefulness, her piety, and her affection; and therefore he concludes to spare his own feelings by saying no more about that heavenly being. After his marriage, Wolff was naturalized as an Englishman, before both Houses of the Lords and Commons.”

Wolff then set out, with Reichardt, for Germany, to meet his mother and sister, whom he had not seen for eighteen years. He met them at Dusselthal, a place where he had appointed to meet them, for they resided at Munich. The moment Wolff saw his mother and sister, they both wept, and his mother said, “To-day, I have born thee again.” Wolff had the unspeakable joy of preaching the Gospel to the Lutheran congregation; his mother and sister listening to the sermon, for the former said, “Nothing should prevent her hearing her son preach, though she was a Jewess.” She wept the whole time he preached.

Wolff had left home at the age of 11, travelling first from relative to relative, and then from school/monastery to school/private intellectual. He paid for his studies and for his travels by teaching Hebrew. Actually the first chapter of his life is remarkable, which I have skipped for the sake of time, but if the reader would get a sense of Germany in the early 18<sup>th</sup> century written in an almost “picaresque” style, one may read the book himself. It is just as full of adventures as his later career. “With God’s grace, his arguments were instrumental in converting his sister,” but not his mom it seems. Though I searched throughout the book, I do not know what happened to Wolff’s father.

Wolff is now a “credited missionary of the London Society,” and he sets off on his next journey. He stops by at Gibraltar before going east, and writes the following powerful appeal to the Jews there:

“DEAR BRETHREN, - Seven years have passed since I was the first time in this place, proclaiming to you the tidings of salvation by Jesus of Nazareth. I found but little candour among you. The most

learned of you have been called to answer, but were never able to do so with reason, for the truth of the Gospel is too clear to be obscured by sophistry, either of rabbis or of philosophers.

“You, Jews of Gibraltar, were the first among whom I commenced my missionary career; and if I was not convinced, by the grace of the Lord, that the word of Jesus Christ is a hammer which smiteth rocks in pieces, I should at that time have been discouraged, for you were impenetrable as the rock of Gibraltar itself; but the love of Christ constrained me, and your hardness of heart, and your blindness, convinced me more of the necessity and the importance of preaching to our brethren the Gospel of Christ, in which I have found for my own soul, joy, liberty, and abundance of peace. I went to Egypt four times, thence twice through the deserts of Arabia; my feet stood upon Mount Sinai, Mount Zion, and Calvary; and thence I went to Mesopotamia and Persia; and often, in hunger and thirst, and amidst the persecution I suffered in my travels, I proved to the Jews that Jesus was that seed of Abraham in whom all the nations of the earth were to be blessed: that Jesus of Nazareth was that Shiloh, who came after the sceptre of Judah had departed; that Jesus was the promised Prophet, like unto Moses: for He was rejected like Moses; He was an intercessor like Moses; He performed signs and wonders like Moses; and being the very image of the invisible God, He saw his Father face to face like unto Moses; He proclaimed a covenant and a law like Moses; He was persecuted like Moses. Walking upon Zion, I proved to the literal children of Zion that Jesus was that Son of the Virgin – that Immanuel, who was a sanctuary and a rock of offence to both the houses of Israel. To the Jews at Jerusalem, at the ruined wall of their ancient Temple, I proved that Jesus was that Root of Jesse, upon whom the Spirit of the Lord rested, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge, and the fear of the Lord. Walking with the Jews upon the Mount of Olives, I proved to them that Jesus was that Child which was born to us, and that son which was given us, whose name is Wonderful! Counsellor! Mighty God! Everlasting Father! Prince of Peace! And, going with the Jews of Jerusalem towards Bethlehem, I proved to them that Jesus, who was born at Bethlehem, must have been that Man of whom It is said, ‘But thou,

Bethlehem Ephrata, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall He come forth unto me, that is to be ruler in Israel, whose goings forth have been from old, from everlasting.' And in the case of Jeremiah, I reminded them of the words of the prophet, that the Anointed of the Lord was taken in their pits, i.e., received of the Gentiles, of whom the Jews said, 'Under his shadow we shall live among the heathen.' (Lam 4:20) And day and night I tried to convince thy nation that Jesus of Nazareth was He who had borne our grief, and carried our sorrows, and who was taken from prison and from judgment. And at the sepulchre of Haggai, I proved to them, that Jesus was that desire of the nations predicted in that same prophet. And though I was thus forced to remind my Jewish brethren of their guilt and crime, in approving of the murderous act of our ancestors, I left them not comfortless; for, at the sepulchre of Zechariah, I showed to them, that 'the Lord will pour out the spirit of grace and supplication upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and they shall look upon Him whom they have pierced, and mourn.'

"Men and Brethren of Gibraltar! – Believe in Jesus Christ, and you will have a testimony without you, in which thousands of evidences have concurred, and you will have a testimony within you, which likewise has been confirmed by the concurrent experience of thousands. *You will see, you will know, you will enjoy the truth*; and you will find that in your affliction, distresses, and *temptations*, the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ will be made perfect in your weakness, and the power of Christ will rest upon you. You shall be blest in your coming in, and you shall be blessed in your going out, and you will stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free. Believe in Jesus Christ, and the Lord shall establish you, Jews of Gibraltar, a holy people to Himself; and the Lord shall make you, Jews of Gibraltar, the head, and not the tail; and you shall be above, and you shall not be beneath.

"But you, Jews of Gibraltar, rich and poor, if you will not hearken unto the voice of the Lord your God, and should reject the Gospel of Christ, then beware lest all these curses shall come upon you, and overtake you: 'Cursed shall you be in the city, and cursed shall you be in the field; and cursed shall be your basket, and your store; cursed shall be the fruit of your body, and the fruit of your

land; cursed shall you be when you come in, and cursed shall you be when you go out. And the Lord shall send upon you cursing, vexation, and rebuke.'

"Would to God that I could conscientiously say, that I hope better things of you, Jews of Gibraltar; but I can scarcely hope. I am afraid that you will reject my exhortation; you will despise this appeal of your brother; you will go on in boasting that you are the sons of Abraham, without having the faith of Abraham; you will go on in being proud of your Talmudical wisdom; you will continue to be contented in being well off in temporal respects; but I have done my duty. And I again call heaven and earth to witness, that there is but one name given in heaven and on earth by which man can be saved, and this is the name of Jesus Christ. If you reject my exhortation, I am clear of your blood; and the Lord delivers me from blood-guiltiness, for I have warned you. Speak ye, therefore, 'Blessed by He, who cometh in the name of the Lord; Hosannah to the Lord in the highest.' And then the Gentiles, true believers in Christ, will rejoice with the descendants of his ancient people, residing at Gibraltar.

"Joseph Wolff, Missionary to the Jews in Palestine."

This is a touching appeal, but with hindsight I feel that it is tinged with tragedy in that it cannot but be rejected. Why? Wolff talks extensively of the blessings and the curses of Deuteronomy 28, but he doesn't bring up why those blessings and curses happen. "The LORD shall establish thee an holy people unto himself, as he hath sworn unto thee, *if thou shalt keep the commandments of the LORD thy God, and walk in his ways;*" "And the LORD shall make thee the head, and not the tail; and thou shalt be above only, and thou shalt not be beneath; *if that thou hearken unto the commandments of the LORD thy God, which I command thee this day, to observe and to do them:* And thou shalt not go aside from any of the words which I command thee this day, *to the right hand, or to the left, to go after other gods to serve them.*" Deut 28:9,13-14. Of course, one needs the faith of Jesus to do the commandments in spirit and truth, which Abraham had, being made righteous by faith; but one cannot be made righteous, at least not fully, if one ignores what one needs to be righteous to – the law. I'm sure that Wolff would never

consider himself an antinomian, someone who believes we are released from obligation to the moral law, but he still is affected by Augustine's dispensationalism and is confused over what law has changed and why it has changed. How is the sincere educated Jew to give up his Sabbath for the Sabbath of Constantine? It would not be until 1888 and the Covenants that this issue would be more fully addressed. Please see Pastor Paul Penno's book "[Calvary at Sinai](#)".

Interestingly, I have yet to read this argument about breaking the commandments being used by the Jews against Wolff in the book. But another argument does come up, and it is exactly the same as the Jew Yahiel, whom Wolff discussed with earlier. A Jew named Jonas, in response to Wolff's appeal, comes to Wolff and quotes Deuteronomy 13: 1-3, "Let us go after other Gods...that prophet shall be put to death." Read carefully what is said, and what is Wolff's response to it.

"Now, you are come among us," cried Jonas, "and you tell us, '**Let us go after three gods,**' and therefore you deserve to be put to death!" Wolff replied, "Show me that I believe in three gods." Jonas answered, "You believe Father, Son, and Holy Ghost." Wolff replied, "Does not Moses say, 'Is He not thy Father?' and does not David tell us that the Lord says, 'Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee;' and does not Isaiah say, 'They vexed his holy Spirit?'" **Wolff had often to encounter this argument from the Jews.**

Jonas then broke off, and said, "I was rather startled with one announcement in your appeal, and thought, at the first impulse, that you must be a holy man, because you gave us to understand that you walked upon Mount Zion; but I recovered myself on reading the following passage, which I now beg you to read aloud, Lamentations v.18, and I knew at once that you answer to that description. Read it aloud!" Then Wolff read, with a loud voice, "Zion is desolate, *the foxes walk upon it!*" "There!" he exclaimed, "you have at least fulfilled this prophecy! But," added he, "you are a personage of another description, also mentioned in Holy Writ, because you give us to understand that you have travelled much here upon earth. Read in Job 1:6, 'Now there was a day, when the

sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan came also among them. And the Lord said unto Satan, Whence comest thou? Then Satan answered the Lord, and said, From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it.” **Wolff answered the whole with a hearty laugh.**

First notice that the key to keeping the oneness of God the Father while retaining the deity of Christ the Son lies in the Father-Son relationship, and Christ’s begottenness in eternity – not in saying that “Hear, O Israel, Jehovah our God is one Jehovah” (YLT) means one Jehovah in purpose made up of three, as in one family. So in that sense, Wolff’s answer, while not perfect, is still better than the tritheistic answer of modern Adventism, that believes that Jesus was unbegotten in his preexistence. *“Does not Moses say, ‘Is He not thy Father?’ and does not David tell us that the Lord says, ‘Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee...”*”

Jehovah is one, the Father; and Jehovah has a begotten Son, who was the only real Son even before Lucifer fell. Christ was not a parallel deity who became a Son to save the universe, acting a role (i.e. lying). And Jehovah has a Spirit, flowing out through the lamb (Rev 22:1), going to all the created universe to keep all things in perfect peace, harmony, order, fellowship and love.

“Wolff had often to encounter this argument from the Jews” – sometimes when we encounter something many times, God wants us to think about it, it may be providential. Notice also that Wolff “answered the whole with a hearty laugh,” which earlier in the book he said he never did: “Wolff, who never laughed at anything which was told him seriously.” This Jew, Jonas, was serious in his anger, and Wolff subconsciously betrays his uncertainty on this point by reacting with this laugh and sharing it with us the reader. I quote an interesting experience a pioneer of our Church had:

When questioned on the Trinity teaching Elder Loughborough said: "There are many objections which we might urge, but on account of our limited space we shall reduce them to the three following: 1. It is contrary to common sense. 2. It is contrary to

Scripture. 3. Its origin is pagan and fabulous... Instead of pointing us to Scripture for proof of the trinity, we are pointed to the trident of the Persians, with the assertion that 'by this they designed to teach the idea of a Trinity, and if they had the doctrine of the Trinity, they must have received it by tradition from the people of God. But this is all assumed, for it is certain that the Jewish Church held to no such doctrine. Says Mr. Summerbell; **"A friend of mine who was present in a New York synagogue, asked the Rabbi for an explanation of the word 'elohim.'** A Trinitarian clergyman who stood by, replied, 'Why, that has reference to the three persons in the Trinity,' when a Jew stepped forward and said he must not mention that word again, or they would have to compel him to leave the house; for it was not permitted to mention the name of any strange god in the synagogue.'" (Review & Herald, Nov. 5, 1861)

The Jews have always understood Elohim, when referring to God, as a plural of majesty. Exodus 7:1 states – “And the LORD said unto Moses, I have made thee a god [Elohim] to Pharaoh: and Aaron thy brother shall be thy prophet.” The word for “god” here is “elohim”. “Moses, I have made thee elohim to Pharaoh.” It certainly does not mean that Moses was multiple gods to Pharaoh, nor does it mean that Moses has become a multiplicity.

An Adventist friend of mine went to study at the Jewish-founded school, Brandeis University, so that he could safely keep the Sabbath. About half the students there are Jewish, and he remarks how he had the same conversation there. I quote from Obert Merchant’s testimony, posted in 2012. (<http://maranathamedia.com/article/view/the-knowledge-of-god-my-journey>)

For the next couple of hours, my Jewish classmate and I compared and contrasted our religious experiences. I learned that he had often felt pressured to disregard the Sabbath--especially around other Jews. I shared with him that one of my primary reasons for attending this particular university was so that I would not have to deal with conflicts regarding the Sabbath. He had never heard of the Seventh-day Adventist movement and listened

intently as I outlined the history and peculiar teachings of the church. In the end, he was content to call me a Jew who believes in Jesus. He thanked me for standing up for what I believed in and encouraging him to do the same. I could feel the sense of pride swelling up inside myself for having "witnessed" to this young man. He was genuinely excited and as the other guys returned from their shopping trip, he could hardly wait to share what he had just learned.

"Here's a Christian who keeps the Sabbath!", he exclaimed. My pride as well as his excitement proved to be short lived.

"Oh, he may share our Sabbath, but he has three gods and we have one", retorted another of the guys as he shoved his newly purchased six-pack of alcoholic beverages into the refrigerator.

"No, I don't." I said as my pride gave way to a feeling more akin to embarrassment.

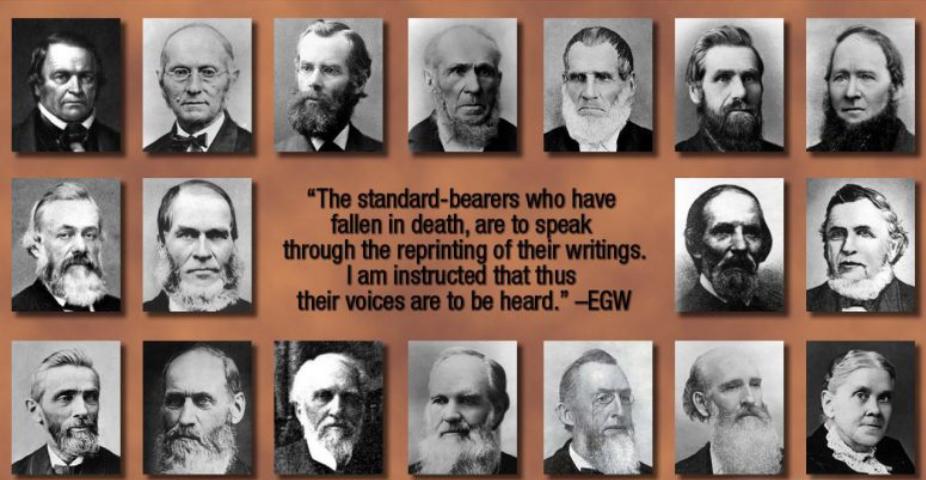
"Of course you do," he said. "...God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost".

I was deeply disturbed by this accusation of polytheism. For weeks the accusation haunted me. I knew it wasn't true but I had no explanation to offer. In my mind, I resorted to name-calling. "What would an alcoholic Jewish Sabbath-breaker know about Christianity anyway?"

In the months that followed, I spent many months trying to make sense out of a concept that I had to admit had always confused me: how is it that a god can be three and one at the same time and not be three gods? As I read the works of most modern authors, it was easy to see that I wasn't the only one caught up in doctrinal confusion concerning the personalities of God and of Christ. I reasoned that this must be why I had not experienced the joys of victorious living.

When it seemed that no one could help me, my journey took me back to the writings of the Adventist pioneers. I read as much as I could get my hands on and was thankful to have had access to a vast library of electronic literature via the Internet in addition to a wide selection of reading material from my parent's personal library.

So we see that many things change, but this problem continues. I also found it interesting that Merchant connects this issue with not experiencing the “joys of victorious living.” It does feel to me that in the church we cannot get correct our balance between Christian standards and love respecting freedom of conscience. But there may be multiple reasons for that. Regardless, I don’t blame Wolff for this, his status as a recognized missionary of the British Empire made it easier to do that great work in the orient; status which he could have lost if he were to go too far out of orthodoxy - and Wolff was pretty unorthodox already. So, it may have been God’s providence; Wolff’s job may actually have been more to the gentiles; the work to the Jews seems to me to need to be done with near-perfect doctrine, a task which God has left to the very end of time when His people come to fullness of understanding.



Notwithstanding the rejections of his people, Wolff had great love and took care to help the Jews at every opportunity, which we will see in the next passage. Wolff had sailed to Turkey, and the Ottoman Empire at this time, 1827-1828, was in disarray. Wolff in this next passage is just near Athens, and it is the middle of the Greek Wars of Independence. Greece would gain independence in 1832, being the first small ethnic group to gain independence, emboldening other nationalist movements, particularly those under the control of the Ottoman Empire – The Serbs, Albanians, Bulgarians, Romanians, and Armenians would

all subsequently fight and gain their independence. This may have also inspired Zionism and the feeling of the Jews for their own state.

Athens was at that time in the hands of the Turks, and besieged by the Greeks. Egina was filled with English, French, Italians, and Poles. Among the English were there, Captain Felix and Lord Prudhoe. Wolff circulated the New Testament and Tracts amongst the Greeks, and wrote a letter to the Government of Greece, desiring them to extend that liberty, which they themselves now enjoyed, to the Jews, and not persecute them. This letter attracted the attention of every member of the Government, so that Prince Mavrokordatos, and Monseieur Spiridon Trikoupis, now Ambassador in London, called upon Wolff, and conversed with him on the subject of his mission...

Those in England, who consider the Greek priesthood as a set of ignorant and superstitious people, ought to be informed that many of them have had their education, not only under their great countryman – Korais [Adamantios Korais, Encyclopedia Britannica asserts that “his influence on the modern Greek language and culture has been compared to that of Dante on Italian and Martin Luther on German.”], who resided at Paris, and who is celebrated as philosopher, historian, and grammarian – but also have studied in the Universities of Gottingen and Heidelberg.

So hospitably was Wolff received that he had not to spend a single farthing either in coffee-houses or hotels in Egina; and he never experienced one single slight from any of the Greeks for his having been born of Jewish parents; and he is convinced that the Greeks are capable of the highest moral and scientific cultivation, so that he hopes that a Greek will one day re-ascend the throne of Byzantium; and that the indolent, heavy, cruel, and barbarous Turk, filled with all possible immorality, will be expelled from Europe. For neither the Khat-Sherif of the drunken, Sultan, Abdul-Medjid, nor the concourse of Italian Carbonari, and French Jacobins, nor English Socialists, will ever be able to bring life into the cadaverous body of the Turk. **Muhammadanism has been established by the sword, and Muhammadanism must perish by the sword. Christianity, in its most deformed condition, is better than Muhammadanism in its most enlightened state.**

Enough of them! One thing must, however, be observed. Justice must be done even to the Turks. Wolff never received one single insult from them any more than from the Greeks, or from any other nation of the East, for his having once been of the Jewish persuasion.

I included this to show the prejudice that existed at that time, not to think us more enlightened, but to realize that prejudice is the nature of fallen men. We must remember that slavery is only outlawed by the British Empire in 1833, that eugenics is still on the horizon, and that wars and instability are everywhere, which naturally leads to bigotry and hate. Wolff is much more open-minded than the average person, yet he still has his biases. Wolff defends the Greek priesthood against the English, though in doing so slams the Turk, while in the end admitting that the Turk too never insulted him for his Jewish blood.

What can “bring life into the cadaverous body of the Turk?” For me the answer can only be the pure gospel, united with the complete understanding of the law, including Biblical statutes kept by the Muslims, such as not eating pork nor drinking alcohol – and a repentance and an asking of forgiveness on behalf of Christianity to Islam for our teaching error and misrepresenting the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. A haughty, holier than thou attitude that we are right and you are wrong will never win them over. And while I agree that Muhammadanism will perish by the sword, I think this will not be unique to it – for almost all power structures in this world are built on force, manipulation, oppression, and injustice; therefore they too, whether nation, priesthood, or corporation, will perish by some form of the carnal sword – unless first saved by the sword of God, His Word of spirit and truth.

Lastly, is this statement true? “Christianity, in its most deformed condition, is better than Muhammadanism in its most enlightened state.” Joseph Wolff has not had the opportunity to see how far it is that Christianity could fall – I wonder what he would say now if he were to see the debauched depths of Christianity wracked by Darwinism and hedonism. We know that God says that Babylon, which is apostate Christianity, “is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful

bird.” Revelation 18:2. The devils inhabit fallen Christianity, not fallen Islam – and the “nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her [Babylon’s] fornication,” not Islam. There is a power that Satan has over people who have known Christ and rejected him that he doesn’t have over those who have never had the chance to know Christ. I think of Matthew 12:43-45

<sup>43</sup> When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest, and findeth none. <sup>44</sup> Then he saith, I will return into my house from whence I came out; and when he is come, he findeth it empty, swept, and garnished. <sup>45</sup> Then goeth he, and taketh with himself seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there: and the last state of that man is worse than the first. Even so shall it be also unto this wicked generation.

Such is the state of fallen Christianity, which is surely worse than the religions that have not known Christ. Who is spreading immorality in music and movies all over the world? Whose companies oppress the poor? Whose armies terrorize nations? Whose intelligence services topple governments? Whose ideologies and philosophies confuse and undermine civility and order? Is it not those of professing, backsliding, and apostate Christians? So I respectfully disagree with Wolff on this point. There is nothing worse than deformed Christianity.

## Impasse in *Wolff’s 1861 Travels and Adventures* (Chapter 16 of the 1861 Text)

Dear reader, we have reached the part that I warned you of at the beginning – the moment I realized there were some irregularities in Wolff’s telling of the story. Remember that this is book, *Travels and Adventures of the Rev. Joseph Wolff, D.D., LL.D.*, was published in 1861, and was dictated by Wolff to his friends. Wolff surely used his letters and journals, but it still is a book of an older man looking over his life – and this always adds some difficulties of memory and potential changes

in doctrinal position. It was at this point that I knew that I would have to read another book if I wanted to get his earlier doctrinal position:

They sailed away from Navarin [Navarino, or Pylos, Greece], and, passing towards Cephalonia [largest Ionian Island], the ship was dashed to pieces on rocks; but Wolff, his companions, and the crew, saved themselves in a boat; and thus arrived in a most destitute state in the harbor of Cephalonia, where, soon after their arrival, the greatest man, whom not only England, but all nations have seen for centuries had – a man whose fame resounds from England to Bokhara, and to the walls of China – made his appearance on the shore, with convulsive eyes and shoulders, with fire-flashing glances, and a pleasant countenance. This man was at that time Colonel Charles James Napier, afterwards General Sir Charles James Napier. Thus, again, a British officer appeared at a time when Joseph Wolff was in the greatest distress.

The first thing that extraordinary man said, was, "I know your sister-in-law, Lady Catherine Long, very well. She is one of the prettiest women I ever saw." This was spoken to Wolff through the *Parlatorio*, as it is called, i.e., the iron grating of the Lazzaretto, in which all new-comers are placed before being allowed to go on shore. **He then added, "Now Wolff, I know you, too, very well. I know that you are going about preaching that the world is to come to an end in the year 1845. It serves them right!"**

Napier made a mistake here. It was not 1845 which Wolff had imagined to be the date of a great change, 1847; and what he had imagined, was not the destruction of the world, but its renovation, and the restoration of the Jews, at the coming of the Messiah in glory.

But here, let it be observed, that Wolff has long ago given up attempting to fix a date for the accomplishment of unfulfilled prophecies; and these are his reasons for doing so: -

First, he has a difficulty in fixing the time from which to date. **Secondly, he has entirely given up considering the 1260 days as so many years, but believes them to be literal days. Thirdly, the Antichrist is not yet come.** And, as long as Antichrist, or the Man of Sin, is not yet come, the words of our Lord, in the first of the Acts, are still in their full force, i.e., "Of the times and seasons

knoweth no man.” **And Wolff deeply regrets that he ever fell into the errors here alluded to.**

Sir Charles Napier would become a great friend of Wolff’s, and tease Wolff all his life regarding his fixing the date for the end of the world. For example, in another letter he started: “My dear Prophet (I mean *False Prophet*, who tried to kill the world before its hour), your name is great, and rings through the world...” It is teasing like this that I think caused Wolff to, I think jestingly, call Napier the greatest man seen in centuries – tit for tat.

Wolff pushes hard the idea that Antichrist has not yet come, and praises those who give up the old protestant position. But when I read this above passage, it made me wonder, was this always the case? So I went back and read some of the 1824 manuscript to see what he says. I immediately noticed that it speaks negatively of the Jesuits, in contrast to this 1861 book, which is full of praises for them. This reflects not only Wolff’s change of thinking, but I think the change of thinking of all of Europe – The Jesuits in 1824 had terrible PR, because they were seen as defenders of autocracy and despotism which had caused their suppression in 1773; they had only been reformed in 1814 – a reinstatement that caused shudders of foreboding across Europe. By 1861 their rehabilitation had progressed greatly, and the Jesuits had come to be seen as the progressive and open-minded faction of the Papacy, a reputation which continues to present day. The Jesuits outsourced their autocratic tendencies to other orders and organizations.

For example, notice how Wolff relates his famous line that the “Pope is dust of the earth” in 1824:

The Cardinal said to me with great kindness and softness, “You must not dispute about this subject until you have finished your studies. You will be persuaded of the Pope’s infallibility when you have heard the reasons.” For a long time I obeyed the Cardinal’s injunction; but when I heard them one day call the Pope *God*, and heard this title defended by the most learned men of Rome, who told me that he merits such a title, because he has power not only upon the earth, but likewise over Purgatory, and in heaven, and because whatever the Pope absolves in the earth, is absolved in

heaven, and that they call the Pope *God upon earth* on account of his power to sanctify and to beatify – **when I heard such arguments as these, I understood Paul’s words, “He as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God:”** and I could no longer abstain from protesting against such an idolatrous opinion, and exclaimed: “The Pope is a man as I am, the Pope is dust of the earth as I am.” (pg 26)

Connecting the Pope to 2 Thessalonians 2:3-4 as the “man of sin” and the “son of perdition” seems to me to be naming him Antichrist. Regardless, this strong connection is not made in the 1861 book. In the 1824 book Wolff describes Pius VII as “a man of deep piety, humility and devotion,” but it is much shorter description than the 1861 book, which effusively describes how honored he was, asking for a blessing and a benediction, and calling the Protestants “bigoted”, “who declare the Pope to be Antichrist”. Still, remember that this 1824 book was not cited by Mrs. White in *Great Controversy*; rather the beginnings of Wolff’s life were cited from the 1861 book.

Wolff would eventually join the Church of England, and I think his emphasis on this also reflects the changing attitude of the Anglican Church toward the Papacy. I do this not to belittle Wolff; I don’t believe he is lying; I think he is just stressing certain things in 1824 that fit more with that time, and then stresses other things in 1861 according to that time. That is why I hope from this point on to stick to the books that Ellen White cites, trusting that the time of his life that she cites most, 1831-1839, was the time that he was closest to the spirit of truth, which would make sense as his calling was to do a pre-1844 work.

Up until this point in the 1861 book Wolff had not mentioned that he had formerly preached a date for the 2<sup>nd</sup> coming. I thought he did, seeing his connections to Drummond or Irving. But it took until the introduction of this straight-talker Napier for Wolff to admit to it. And even so, he says he does not mean the “destruction of the world, but its renovation, and the restoration of the Jews”. But the very fact that Napier says Wolff “tried to kill the world before its hour” means that Wolff formerly preached the 2<sup>nd</sup> coming differently than he did now, or at least with different emphasis.

This idea of the “restoration of the Jews” is such a powerful prophetic idea that it continues until today, with much of the Christian world looking upon the movements the Jewish nation of Israel. This really gained steam as the Ottoman Empire seemed on the verge of falling. In the US, this strain of premillennialism was highly influenced by Darby, Scofield, and the dispensationalists, but its connection to the restoration of the Jews is most clearly outlined in this point from the Niagara Conference of 1878:

“...that the Lord Jesus will come in person to introduce the millennial age, when Israel shall be restored to their own land, and the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord; and that this personal and premillennial advent is the blessed hope set before us in the Gospel for which we should be constantly looking.”

What is interesting is that the Adventists also believed various forms of this teaching, connecting it to the 2520, and thinking it would come in 1844. It was big enough in the aftermath of 1844 that it caused Uriah Smith to reject the 2520 prophecy of Lev 26 preached by the Millerites, thinking that it supported too much the “restoration of the Jews”, or as he called it, “age-to-come”.

So the question arises: did Joseph Wolff preach the prophetic periods in a way similar to the Adventists? After reading nearly half of the 1861 book, he has little mentioned Daniel and Revelation. It is at this point that I think that I must switch books. We end our discussion of this book, for now, in 1828.

## *The Researches of Joseph Wolff, Start in 1831*

Published in 1835 (Pages 1-49)

Wolff spent his time up until 1830 working as a missionary in the Mediterranean, so the reader need not fear that we have missed any exotic locale. We start his adventures again in 1831, where he is back in Greece, and the Ottoman Empire is in complete chaos, and there is war all over this region, including with Egypt, which is in accordance to how

the pioneers understood Daniel 11. I am quoting now from journal entries; Wolff is now writing in the 1<sup>st</sup> person, rather than the 3<sup>rd</sup> person of the 1861 text. Remember how Wolff in the 1861 book was defending the learning of the Greek priests, and name-dropping two famous Greek diplomats? Not in 1831:

March 8, 1831 – Imperial Fast-Day Among the Greeks – It is said that the Emperor Constantine ate meat on the 8<sup>th</sup> of March, and pieces of it remaining between his teeth, he decreed a fast to kept on this day. **The Greek Priests are very ignorant.**

March 27 – Arrival at Constantinople – I observed at Constantinople the steps taken by the Sultan, for bringing about the accomplishment of those prophecies, **which predict the downfall of the Turkish Empire, under the emblem of the drying up of the river Euphrates.** It is somewhat remarkable that the Jews at Constantinople believe it to be the place where Job lived, i.e. the land of Uz. At Constantinople are many of the sect of Shabatay Zebi [Sabbatai Zevi, a Sephardic Rabbi who claimed to be the Messiah], the pretended Messiah in the 17<sup>th</sup> Century, who apostatized and became a Turk: nevertheless the sect still continues.



The Hagia Sophia (Greek for “Holy Wisdom”), built in 537AD and was the center of Greek Orthodox Christianity for a 1000 years until the Ottomans took Constantinople and renamed it Istanbul. Famous in particular for its massive dome. It was the world's largest building and an engineering marvel of its time. It is considered the epitome of Byzantine architecture and is totally different in style to the Gothic Cathedrals of Europe (and in my opinion, much to be preferred).

The tone of these journals is more brief and concise than that of the 1861 book. Wolff above links the 6<sup>th</sup> plague of Rev 16:12, the drying up the river Euphrates, to the downfall of Turkey.

May 1 – Arrived at Angoroo [Ankara, present capital of Turkey], the ancient Galatia. There is a convent near this town, belonging to the Armenians, where it is believed that the Apostle Paul resided. On the first day of my arrival, I lodged in the Greek convent. The next day, the Armenian Catholic Archbishop, for whom I had letters, sent for me. He is a good natured, active old man; he offered me every assistance in his power. He is a great favourite with the Court of Rome. The inhabitants of Ankara are, Turks, 50,000; Greeks, 1500; Jews, 500; Armenians [of Armenian Apostolic Church I think], 250; and Armenian Catholics, 15,000.

The latter were converted to the Catholic religion, one hundred and fifty years ago. There I met with Abbate Shereen, a fellow student with me at the Propaganda at Rome. I confess that at first I was afraid that he would greatly oppose me; but on the contrary, he embraced me as an old acquaintance, and talked of the agreeable hours we had passed in the college. He only observed, "Dear Wolff, if you had remained, you would have been a Bishop!" The Armenian Catholics have twenty-two Priests. If you ask an Armenian Catholic, whether he is an Armenian, he replies, "No, I am a Kotolok," i.e. a Catholic. But it cannot be denied, that the Armenians, converted to the Roman Catholic Church, are more humane, more kind, more civilized than the rest of the Armenians in Anatolia. In those parts of Asia Minor where the Roman Catholic missionaries have not been, the native Christians are most rude and uncivilized; the Greeks at Ankara form an honorable exception...

Though very unwell, I proclaimed the Gospel to the Greeks and Catholics. The Greek Primate Anastas Kupegio Oglu, took me to his house, where I had the assistance of his whole family. I convinced them of the absurdity of some of their tenets...

I had repeated interesting conversations with Greeks and Armenian Catholics, about the truth of the religion of Jesus Christ; and **respecting the literal interpretation of unaccomplished prophecy**, and the future Christo-archy at Jerusalem. **They were all convinced, after I had read to them the 20<sup>th</sup> chapter of Revelations** [sic]. The Armenian Catholic Archbishop I found to be a liberal and kind hearted man. I cannot bear to hear people canting about the illiberality of Catholics: that there exists illiberality among them is certain; but, that is not confined to Roman Catholics...

May 4 - I dined with the Armenian Catholic Archbishop, (to whom I had been recommended by Sir Robert Dordon) and with the Primates of the Armenian Catholics. It is to be observed that the Armenian Catholics, and Orientals in general, subject to the Pope, are frequently very liberal when not watched by Italian Priests.

May 5 – When the Jews were driven out of Spain [in 1492 through the Edict of Granada after much Anti-Jewish persecution], they went to all parts of Asia Minor, and the coasts of Africa. They were kindly received by the Turks, and treated as “Musaffir,” i.e. Travellers. The Jews of Ankara are the descendants of those Sefardim [all Jews who are descendants of Spanish Jews are called Sephardic] that were driven out of Spain. They have lived there for these 300 years. I left them a Bible, and expounded to them the Scriptures in the synagogues. They are not in possession of the Talmudical books.

Both, the Cadi [or Qadi, Muslim judge or magistrate] and Governor desired to see me. I went and explained to them the object of my mission. **The Cadi observed that people ought to live quietly at home, and not concern themselves about the religion of others. I replied that neither Mohammed or his followers could have been of that opinion, for they were anxious that others should embrace their sentiments.**

Wolff doesn't speak Turkish well, yet he says he is able to speak enough to tell of “the unsearchable riches of Christ” and “with every sort of people, and to tell them that Christ died for our sins.” (May 24) He also mentions that “during my missionary wanderings I frequently, very frequently felt the need of being supported by an increase of divine grace, in order that I might not fall into vain glory and self-conceit.” (May 20)

I think it important to note the success Wolff has when he stresses the literality of scripture with Orientals, such as reading Revelation 20, which deals with the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> resurrection and the 1000 years. I also would agree with him regarding the religiosity of many Orientals; that often they are strict only when they think there is an authority figure watching them – meaning the level of spirituality is superficial; this is particularly true if the religion is considered a foreign religion. In Thailand, Islam and Christianity would be considered foreign, and therefore oftentimes the rules/standards are considered foreign too. An Armenian Bishop (of their national Church) tells Wolff that “the strictness of their fast days induces many to turn Catholics; the same reason was assigned by the Syrians, Chaldeans, and Greeks for

many persons of their communities embracing the Roman Catholic creed.” Therefore it seems that a more relaxed legality is one means that the Papacy wins converts. I can attest to this in Thailand, where my friend, on becoming a Christian and saying she would no longer worship idols, was told by her relatives, “if you are going to be a Christian then you should be a Catholic. They can still worship idols!” Not sure how acceptable that would be to a serious Italian or Spanish Catholic, but that seems to be near-official policy of the Roman Catholic Church here in Thailand.

Now there is a temptation to think of those brethren as ‘weak’ who are not living up to a certain standard. I see this in the Adventist Church. It takes the Spirit of Christ to give people the strength to live up to the law, while not feeling self-righteous for keeping that law. Without that Spirit we either will feel righteous by works, or we will fall back on an “easier”, “less demanding” religion that isn’t telling me what to do and how to live my life all the time. That happens a lot in the church too. Let us remember that “there is none righteous, no not one,” (Rom 3:10) and uplift Christ our Redeemer. It is how He lived His life that is ultimately the standard of judgment, for He shows us how to live the law perfectly.

May 29 – At Gumushkhane [Gumushane, NW Turkey] – I conversed with the Armenian Bishop, and Greek Priest Santoropolis, about the conversion of the Jews; for I think it is very necessary to make these people acquainted with the exertions that real Christians are making for the general promulgation of the Gospel. Santoropolis asserted that all the Children of Israel will be converted, with the exception of some tribes; this he endeavored to prove in a curious manner by Ezekiel 21:12-13, Jer 2:9, Apoc 2:9 [Revelation?], Gen 35:23. **I examined the Armenian Bible, and found that in Daniel 8:14** there is the number 2068, whereas in our version it is 2300.

Dear reader, please forgive me if you are feeling frustrated by the lack of forthrightness regarding Wolff’s beliefs, I too don’t know as I am writing this. I hope that we can continue this detective work together.

Here is the first mention I have found of Dan 8:14 in Wolff's writings. I don't know why Wolff examines Daniel 8:14 the Armenian Bible here.

May 31 – I arrived at Trebison [Trabzon, Turkey], and took up my abode at the house of Mr. Brant, the British Vice Consul, who received me with the greatest kindness. The day following I preached in the Consulate, and **conversed with Mr. Brant about the Millenium.**

That our task of figuring out Wolff's theological positions is a difficult one is shown in this sentence from the preface: "I have abstained from introducing subjects of controversy amongst real Christians; for my purpose in publishing this journal is to edify all those who worship the name of our divine Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, and to encourage them in uniting together in opposition to Jews, Mohammedans, Infidels, and Pagans." This is a book meant particular for missionaries, to be used as a tool for those who come after Wolff to the places mentioned, and for their encouragement.

...the Christian will here find sufficient motives to admire God's Providence in preserving his servants; and Missionary Societies find matter for encouragement in the extending of their labours to those benighted countries. The individual Missionary may find matter for confirming his confidence in the Lord; **the Divine, matter for research** [note: a strange turn of phrase]. By my openly disputing with Mussulmans at Meshed, and throughout Khorossaun, which I am enabled to testify by letters from Mohammedans of those countries, and the passports of the Princes of Persia, and the King of Bokhara [city in present-day Uzbekistan], which I have annexed, it may be seen that one may travel with these objects without disguise. I have abstained from introducing subjects of controversy amongst real Christians; for my purpose in publishing this journal is to edify all those who worship the name of our divine Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, and to encourage them in uniting together in opposition to Jews, Mohammedans, Infidels, and Pagans. If the reader should find these objects have been attained, it will be a great satisfaction to the Author; and if they

should feel themselves in some measure disappointed in their expectations, they will take into consideration, that these pages came from a humble individual, such as,

Joseph Wolff, Missionary.

He also states his goal succinctly as this: “The object of my journey, as I have stated in it, was solely to proclaim the Gospel of the kingdom of Christ, amongst the Jews, and the tribes whom I have visited; and to seek for those tribes of Israel whom I conceive to be the Kings of the East, mentioned in the Revelation of Jesus Christ.” This statement of seeking the tribes of Israel is really interesting in the light of the scattering and the gathering and the pioneer understanding of the 2520.

Anyways back to the statement that I wanted to discuss: “conversed with Mr. Brant about the Millenium”. I believe that a huge part of the “Great Religious Awakening”, Chapter 20 of the Great Controversy, was the uncovering and expanding of the great truth of premillennialism – that Christ will return in glory before the 1000 years. The reigning view up until Miller, Wolff, Irving, Lacunza, and others was postmillennialism, that sees Christ’s coming after the 1000 years, or amillennialism, which saw the 1000 years as symbolic and that the reign of Christ began at Pentecost. I believe it was this that Wolff was preaching and sharing, though he avoids explicitly stating it here in these journals. We continue on:

Hamshoon is a village, a few hours from Trebison, where the inhabitants were Armenians, but have turned Mohammedans... There are besides these, Greeks at Trebison [Trabzhon], who outwardly profess the Mohammedan religion, but are Christians in secret.

There are many non-western people who have Christian sympathies, but for various reasons are not openly practicing or are not church-going. They believe in God and pray to Him, and want to learn more about His Son Jesus. This is definitely the case in Thailand, where many have gone to Christian schools and have come out of them with a range of attitudes towards Jesus. But they can’t give up worshipping

idols, or they are married to a Buddhist, or they moved away from the church they attended, or they have gotten too busy, or they had personal conflicts in the fellowship.

June 12 – Arrival at Erzeroom [Erzurum] – I was informed by Mr. Zohrab, that 97000 Armenians had emigrated with General Paskewitsh, from Erzeroom and the neighbouring countries; first Lori, then to Akhalzikh [Akhaltzikhe, Georgia]. When the Russians came to Erzeroom, the Armenians poured out their vengeance against the Turks, for all they had suffered from them in former times. When the Russians retired, Paskewitsh told them, he was apprehensive, if they remained, that the Turks would fall again upon them; moreover, this shrewd General through his influence with their Bishop, induced the whole Armenian and Greek population to emigrate with him, except 48 Armenian Catholics, and 100 Armenians, who remained at Erzeroom.

“All they that take the sword shall perish with the sword.” Matt 26:52. We see a good example in the prior paragraph of how this works. Without the gospel people will fight when they are under pressure economically and politically – and the results of this sword are terrible. The Armenians needed the Spirit of Christ to have peace and rest; instead their longstanding feud with the Turks culminated in the Armenian massacres of the late 1800s and early 1900s. Satan will cause people to remember their grievances, and encourage the taking of vengeance – only God gives repentance and forgiveness.

June 25 – I had informed Sir John Campbell of the ill state of my health, when I set out for Astara [Azerbaijan], near Tabreez [Tabriz, Northern Iran], with my Armenian Priest, and a soldier of the Pasha. As it began to rain, we stopped in the tents of the Curds, Gozi-Kara, where I met with an old Dervish [ascetic] from Bokhara, who spoke Persian, so that, by divine assistance I was enabled to preach to him the Gospel of our Lord, Jesus Christ. He was by far the most intelligent Dervish I ever met with; I spoke with him on the subject of prayer. The following is the substance of our conversation.

*Dervish:* Whilst I am speaking with you, I am in the presence of God. God created the light, of which he formed the angels, and the heavens, and the earth, paradise and hell. Of that light he created the light of the Prophets, of the light of the Prophets he created the light of the Dervishes, and of the light of the Dervishes he created the light of Islam, and of that of Islam he created the light of the Kufar, i.e. Christians, Jews and Pagans.

*Myself:* What will become of this world?

*D:* The world will become so good, that the lamb and the wolf shall feed together, and there shall be general peace and fear of God upon the earth; there shall be no controversy about religion, all shall know God truly; there shall be no hatred.

*M:* Who then shall govern upon the earth?

*D:* Jesus.

*M:* How many years shall Jesus be King?

*D:* Thirty six years.

*M:* How do you know this?

*D:* From the Hadees (Traditional Accounts [Hadith]).

*M:* What do you think of Christians?

*D:* If you wish to have the sentiments of the Koran, they are infidels. If you wish to have my own opinion, I can only say, that we are all images of God; more I cannot tell you!

*M:* Who was the first Dervish?

*D:* Mohammed Abd-al-Ali.

He continued, "Khaikus Avdal, a Dervish, wrote a book, in which he said, 'Know thyself, and thou wilt know God.'" I asked his opinion concerning those Dervishes who go about playing the fool, and are called Loote. He replied, "Some of them are drunk with the love of God, others are imposters."

There are two extremes of opinion prevailing among the divines and philosophers of Europe: some assert, that no light whatever is to be found among people who are not Christians. This is certainly not the case. Others again, like the mystical Philosophers of Germany, imagine that more light is to be found among the Sufis and Dervishes of Persia than even in our Sacred Writings; which is a grievous error. But one thing is certain, that more light is to be found among Dervishes than among the most learned Neologists and infidels of Europe.

I add this section so we can see what a great questioner Wolff was. I believe that as missionaries we also need to ask questions, to get others to think, and to learn from them, and to guide the thoughts. People have such a diversity of beliefs, and if we can know where they are coming from we can work with it, just as God meets us where we are.

Wolff travels among the Armenians, and hears the story of Grigor Lusavorich, also known as Gregory the Illuminator, the religious leader who is credited as converting Armenia from paganism to Christianity in 301 AD. I next relate an interesting discussion with a Mullah named Hussein on Christ being the Son of God. This is a topic that comes up often.

*Mullah:* Are you an Isawee (Christian)?

*I:* By the grace of God.

*M:* And I am a Mussulman [Muslim], by the grace of God.

*I:* Prove to me your religion to be true.

*M:* My religion is founded on the four books, vi. The Bible, the Gospel, the Psalter of David, and the Koran.

*I:* I deny that your religion is founded on the three first mentioned books.

*M:* Do you call Jesus the Son of God?

*I:* I do; for the Bible and the Gospel call him thus.

*M:* We are all sons of God.

*I:* Then you admit that the word *Son* may have different meanings. Jesus is called the Son of God, for the fullness of the Godhead dwelt in him bodily.

*M:* How can he be God, and the Son of God?

*I:* He is God from eternity; as regarding the Divinity being united to humanity, he is the Son of God; but how it is, I cannot explain, but believe it on the authority of Divine Revelation, which cannot err.

I must admit that I don't like how Wolff managed this dialogue. I would prefer to answer the question, "How can he be God, and the Son of God?" this way: Christ is the Word of God, and just as the Word is the

manifestation of the Thought, so is Christ the image of His Father, His only Son, the great Prince of Heaven. Now I recognize that this is getting into complicated territory. But hopefully this is some food for thought for when we have to deal with such questions in the future.

Soleiman Pasha, a relation of the King of Persia, called on me; he is well acquainted with the New Testament, and is a *Farmason* (Freemason); he said that Freemasonry was to be found in the fourth chapter of the Revelations of St. John.

The death of Hussein, the son of Ali [Son-in-law of Mohammed], who was killed by Yazid, the son of Moawia, is commemorated this month by all the Persians who bear his name: all those who are called Hussein put on mourning...(pg 41)

During my stay, Sir John Campbell wrote to the King of Persia for letters of introduction to the King of Bokhara [now Uzbekistan]. (Pg 46)

This passage shows how old freemasonry is in the Middle East. I cannot figure out what in Revelation 4 this man is connecting to freemasonry; it may be that the Bible lists different types of stones, which may interest a mason. The 2<sup>nd</sup> paragraph is of note because of the strangeness of having to mourn based on your name. Lastly the Emirate of Bokhara was a Mongol run Kingdom existing from 1785-1920; it became a Russian protectorate in 1873 and then part of the USSR later. There is much fascination with this Kingdom among the Europeans. I assume no missionary had entered into Bokhara up until that time. Here is a letter to Wolff that gives insight into how he moved between nations:

*Letter from Khosroe Khan, Chief Eunuch to His Majesty the King of Persia*

My esteemed and kind friend, the ENGLISH PRIEST Joseph Wolff.

The letter, the messenger of friendship, which in remembrance of your friend, you had written, reached me at the favorable time and in the happy hour; and gave me intelligence of the welfare of my friend. As for some years there have been symptoms of disease in Persia, and as I had no intelligence as to where you might be, the

receipt of your letter gives me the sincerest pleasure. Thank God, your epistle promises, at no great distance of time, the blessings of a meeting.

Regarding your journey to Bokhara, and your desire that I should write to my friends, this is a small request; you cannot doubt that I and my friends will consider your step as fortunate; and that in fulfilling the duties of friendship, they will act without reluctance or reserve.

According to your desire, at this time, when we were dispatching a Cossid (Messenger) to Meshed, we have written an intimation to each of our friends on this subject, that stage by stage, they should send their Agents with you, till they shall have conveyed you to Bokhara. God willing, after your arrival at the Capital, I shall send a man to convey you to Semnan, and from thence H.R.H. Bahman Mirza will forward you to Juwein; and from thence, Alee Moorad Khan, to Sabzewar; and from thence Mohammed Tuckey Khan, the Governor of that place, will forward you, stage by stage, till you arrive at the Holy Meshed; and if from the holy city you should desire to go direct to Bokhara, I have written a letter to His Excellency Mira Askeree, that he may forward you with some merchants and a caravan, so that you may reach Bokhara in safety: and if you should wish to go to Kelat, a letter has been written to Yelantoosh Khan, the Governor of Kelat, that he may send you with Turkomans to Bokhara. Please God, after your arrival in the Capital, matters shall be arranged in whatever manner may be most agreeable to you; of this you may rest satisfied. May you always convey to us pleasing intelligence of your circumstances. Here is a merchant, who will go direct for Teheran to Bokhara, but before you can arrive here, he will have returned from Kashaan, and will be at your service to convey you to Bokhara. These are the arrangements, and when we meet, whichever plan you may adopt, it shall be ordered accordingly. Give my friendly regards to Captain Campbell, and Mr. McNeill. I am much obliged to you for the accounts you have given of them. I hope one day to have the pleasure of conversing with them. I thank God, that they are in good spirits and free from sorrow.

(Signed)

Khosroe Katmez

Dr. John McNeill [surgeon and diplomat] was so kind as to translate the above; he frequently did me the favor to copy and translate.



A room from the Golestan Palace in Tehran, the capital of Iran,

## Wolff in Persia, 1831

(Researches and Missionary Labours Pages 50-100)

As there are no chapters in this book, I will make my own chapters every 50 pages. Wolff is still in Persia:

*Aug. 8* - I rode on to the tents of the Russian Embassy. Mons. Bisack, the Russian Charge d' Affaires, was so kind as to give me a letter of recommendation to the Russian Authorities, in the event of my meeting them.

Mons. Chodzko, a Pole, and attached to the Russian Embassy, was much interested in the study of Prophecy: he was concerned to

know what shall become of his country. I told him, that God had sent forth a spirit of revolution into the world, to punish the Kings and the People, in order to teach both to look up to Him; and those awful times of rebellion, radicalism and irreligion, shall last, until Kings and People shall look up to the Lord Jesus Christ.

Remember that God does not directly send a violent spirit of revolution into the world. “He cast upon them the fierceness of His anger, wrath, and indignation, and trouble, by sending [Hebrew is “releasing”] evil angels among them.” Psalm 78:49.

Notice Adam Clarke’s commentary on 1 Kings 22:23 - *Now therefore, behold, the Lord hath put a lying spirit in the mouth of all these thy prophets, and the Lord hath spoken evil concerning thee.*

“He hath permitted, or suffered, a lying spirit to influence thy prophets. It is requisite again to remind the reader, that the Scriptures repeatedly represent God as doing what, in the course of his providence, he only permits or suffers to be done. Nothing can be done in heaven, in earth, or hell, but either by his immediate energy or permission.” (Adam Clarke, Commentary on 1 Kings 22:23, 1831)

See more examples of this here:

<https://characterofgod.org/2016/05/i-create-evil/>

Notice also that Ellen White agrees with this:

**“I was shown that the judgments of God would not come directly out from the Lord upon them,** but in this way: They place themselves beyond His protection. He warns, corrects, reproves, and points out the only path of safety; then if those who have been the objects of His special care will follow their own course independent of the Spirit of God, after repeated warnings, if they choose their own way, then He does not commission His angels to prevent Satan’s decided attacks upon them. It is Satan’s power that is at work at sea and on land, bringing calamity and distress, and sweeping off multitudes to make sure of his prey. And

storm and tempest both by sea and land will be, for Satan has come down in great wrath. He is at work. He knows his time is short and, if he is not restrained, we shall see more terrible manifestations of his power than we have ever dreamed of." (Letter 14, 1883, also, Manuscript Releases 14, p1-3) See here: <https://characterofgod.org/god-leaving/>

Let us remember as we are preaching to get this right, as Satan is attacking God as the source of calamity when God is in actuality allowing us our free will to reap what we have sown. I believe many people subconsciously understand this, but now these misunderstandings need to be brought into the light and addressed. Continuing on:

#### Arrival at Teheran, The Capital of Persia

Aug 15 - I arrived at Teheran, 24 miles from Solemanea, and having a letter from Sir John, (at that time Mr.) Campbell to the housekeeper of the palace of the British Ambassador, a room was given me in the palace. Mullah Bahraam, a Parsee, the agent of Mr. Campbell, came immediately to visit me, and gave notice of my arrival to Khosroe Khan, one of the King's chief Eunuchs and Ministers, and to Mirza Mohammed Ali Khan, the Vizier to the Prince Governor of Teheran, who has the title of *Sille Sultan*, i.e. Shadow of the King. Khosroe Khan instantly came to me with his friends Mira Mohammed Monshee Bashe, and another Persian. I entered into conversation about our Lord Jesus Christ.

***Khosroe Khan: What ought one to do, after one has sinned, in order to be reconciled with God?***

***Myself: "The blood of Christ cleanseth from all sin, - believe in him, and thou shalt be saved." I translated to him Isaiah 53 and after this I spoke to him of the judgments which were coming upon the Powers of Europe and Asia. I then spoke of the second coming of Jesus Christ upon earth, in glory and majesty, and of his millennial kingdom.***

Khosroe Khan, who was sitting opposite me, said, "I dreamt a few nights ago, that I was riding upon my horse, whose name is Firmaun; when I suddenly found myself upon a high wall: the sea was on my right hand below the wall, and there was a beautiful

field on my left; when suddenly my horse leaped down with me into the beautiful meadow, and I found myself situated in a room like this in which we are now, sitting at the table, opposite to my friend Joseph Wolff. (p 53)

Aug 16 - His excellency Mira Mohammed Ali Khan, Vizier to the Prince Royal, Sille Sultan, called on me, and promised me all the assistance in his power, for my journey to Bokhara; but he was not a man with whom I could enter into a religious discussion.

I afterwards called on Khosroe Khan, where I met several Mullahs. Khosroe Khan shewed me a beautiful manuscript in Persian: a translation of the Pentateuch, made by order of Nadir Shah, evidently by a Jew converted to Mohammedanism, for "Shiloh" in Genesis 49:10 is translated "Mohde," [Mahdi] who is the deliverer the Mussulmans expect, who shall restore all things before the day of Judgment.

When I returned home, I found my room crowded with Jews of Teheran, who desired Bibles and Testaments; some of them were the same, who six years ago, when I was here, sent the Testaments back. (p 54)

Lots to digest from this section. Notice how Isaiah 53 is one of the first chapters Wolff goes to - the sufferings of Christ well explained ([the ever-present cross](#), see Education 263, also "daily He suffers the agony of crucifixion 2SAT 214) has the power to touch and soften man's heart. Also notice that Wolff does not preach Jesus to everybody: to some it is not possible, such as the Vizier. And lastly see how different the reaction is of the Jews this time. It is important to follow up on places we share in.

I called today on Khosroe Khan. He asked me whether it was true, that Judah, the son of Jacob, had possessed such strength in his hair, that he would have been able to kill all the Egyptians with one single hair of his head, and that this strength of Judah's hair had frightened Joseph to such a degree, that he made himself known to his brethren. Khosroe had learned this fable from the Jews. I observed in Palestine and in the deserts of Mesopotamia, that the Jews and Christians frequently entertain the Arabs in the deserts,

sitting down with them under their tents, amusing them with legends of this kind; and in Persia, where they are greatly persecuted, yet in spite of this, many a curious Khan, especially such a man as Khosroe Khan, will desire Jews and Christians to amuse him with histories of their Saints. I frequently saw grave Turks, and Arab merchants, sitting in the desert near a Jew, listening to him with attention, while he was telling them of the beauty of Joseph, the miraculous power of Moses, and the legend of the ascent to heaven accomplished by him: and at other times, attending to the history of Heyk or Abgar, related by an Armenian, smoking his pipe at the same time. **Hence may easily be traced the reason, why the Koran abounds with legends taken from the Talmud.** Many a journey the Pseudo-Prophet must have made with Jews from Yemen, and many a time must he have listened to wonderful stories from a Jew, about the wisdom of Solomon: how that wise Monarch knew the language of the beasts of the field, and of the fowls under heaven; and many a time he must have sat (as the history of the Arabians leads us to suspect) together with Baheera the Monk, and heard the accounts of the cures performed by Christ the Lord, and of the preaching of John the Baptist.

Those sayings in the Koran, although fabulous, are mostly founded on truth; though disfigured, many a saying must have been preserved and related in the desert about Abraham, and that High Priest of the Most High God, Melchisedek, not related in Scripture. It is so beautiful; **I admire the affection of the Arabs for their forefathers**, and I feel more delight in sitting in the tents of the Arabs, listening to the histories of Ishmael, when a child, how he cried and stamped with his little feet, whilst his mother Hagar at a distance, united her cries with the cries of her thirsty babe, which at last touched the Lord, the most merciful and most pitiful, to such a degree, that he sent the angel, who caused a well of water to spring forth from the same place, where the little babe had stamped his feet: I say, that I delight more in hearing such a tale, than in the dry and chilly speculation of a German or French infidel, with which he awfully impoverishes and not enriches, empties instead of furnishing the minds of the youth of our universities.

I prayed with an eminent person in secret. After prayer, which was directed to our Lord Jesus Christ, he left me in no doubt of his sincerity, with an act not quite consistent with European manners, but expressive of the utmost reverence for his spiritual guide: he literally kissed my feet. I reminded him of the words of our Saviour, "He that denies me before men, him will I deny before my father which is in heaven." He replied, "In the times of our Lord, immediate death was not to be apprehended, for Kings cared not for the different creeds: but now immediate death is certain, and even in those times, St. Paul found it necessary to be a Jew to the Jews, and a Greek to the Greeks." He then added, "my dear Wolff, you shock the Persians, by telling them at once, that Jesus is the Son of God, and that he died for our sins; would it not be better to tell them, "Oh my friends, I am a Dervish of Jewish origin, and returned to Jesus, and am drunk with the love of God, and I wish to know more of God;" but as you are now doing, your life in danger: they killed the Russian Ambassador in open daylight, and fifty persons with him, on account of the eunuch, Mira Yakoob, who wanted to profess Christianity openly: and they wanted to kill me, and Manujar Khan... (pg 70-72)

[On the power of personal testimony]

I received a visit from Mohammed Mohde Mirza, brother-in-law to the Prince Governor of Teheran, (a descendant of Nadir Shah,) and several other persons. **I related to them the manner in which I came to the knowledge of Christ. It is neither self-conceit, nor vanity, to remember the goodness of God, and the goodness of Christ towards one's soul; on the contrary, it humbles the soul, from the consideration of its unworthiness, compared with the experience of the goodness and lovingkindness of God; and to promulgate that goodness, makes our brethren sympathize with us,** and encourages them to look to that Saviour, who is able to save even for the uttermost. (pg 75)

Before I continue, a word briefly on the end-time beliefs of the Muslims. Their eschatology is complicated and unsystematic, but I can lay out basically what it is. The Antichrist is either a Jew, or related to a

Jew, or a man that Jews will think is their Messiah. Jesus will also come, and in some way rebuke the Antichrist or say that the Muslims are correct. Then the Mahdi (Mohde) will appear. There are many variations on this, and this is a subject that Muslims generally are very interested in. Wolff says, after hearing some Persian Shia expound on prophecy: "I then explained to them my views respecting the sufferings of Christ, and his glorious manifestation, as King and Priest; also my opinion concerning Antichrist: for to hear the opinions of infidels on these subjects, and not to make them acquainted with the tree of everlasting life, would be a great sin."

### Guebres (Parsis/Farsis, Zoroastrians)

Poor and despised people! You are almost like my own nation, ye worshippers of fire! What shall I relate of you, - you descendants of *Keon* and of *Yezdigiru!* *Poor Guebres!* How often have I watched you performing your devotion, in the corner of the British Embassy at Teheran!

The Guebres reside chiefly Yezd, Kerman, Sheeras, Ispahan, and Kaashaan. In India, they reside chiefly in Bombay, Soorat, and Guzzerat (Gujarat)...The atrocious, and unnatural crimes committed among Persians and Turks, are not committed by the Guebres. They relate of Zerahust (Zoroaster), they he was cast into a fiery furnace by Nimrod, for refusing to acknowledge him as God, and to worship him as such.

They say, that Zoroaster arrived at the knowledge of one God by degrees, by drawing conclusions from effects to the first cause. It is remarkable, that the Jews assert both of Abraham: namely, that he was cast by Nimrod into a fiery furnace, and that he came to the knowledge of God, by the power of reasoning, and his knowledge of Astronomy. A superstitious belief in the sanctity of those Patriarchs, leads to the same mistake, as that of philosophy: namely, an attempt to deprive God of his glory, by ascribing to the power and exertions of man himself, what only could be effected by the favor and grace of God...

They believe in the deluge, and that the whole world was of water, before God created it. They are acquainted with the history

of fallen angels. Good men, according to them, go to Behesht, i.e. to Paradise and bad men, to Doozakh, i.e. Hell, where they remain, until they have expiated their sins.\* (pg 78-79)

Prior to Islam, Zoroastrianism was the state religion of Persia. The mainly exist only in India now. A good friend of mine is Farsi, and if I remember correctly both parents must be Farsi for the child to be of that religion. Therefore this religion is fading away. But it has many elements consistent with the other Abrahamic religions: monotheism, judgment, messianism. It is at this point that Wolff makes an amazing footnote:

**It is remarkable, that I have not hitherto met with a sect, who believe in everlasting punishments,** except Christians: neither Jews, nor Parsees (Zoroastrians), nor Buddhists, nor Hindoos (Hindus) believe it. (pg 79)

These other religions have a hell, but it is not eternal, it is in some sense temporary, or had annihilation at the end, or even entering into paradise after a time. Imagine, that no other religion, not even a sect, has such a doctrine as that taught by mainstream Christianity of eternal torture! What a difference this is to “the last message of mercy to be given to the world [which] is a revelation of God’s character of love!” (COL 415)

During the twelve years of my mission, I have met everywhere traces of Christianity. In Egypt, I found the Copts [Coptics]; in Palestine and Mount Libanus, the Maronites, Syrians, Greeks, Armenians and Armenian Catholics; in Mesopotamia, at Merdeen, Mosool, Arbel and Bagdad, I met with the Jacobites, the followers of Nestorius, and Roman Catholics; in Asia Minor, Trebison, Bayazid, and Shoosha in the land of Karabagh, again Armenians; and at Tiflis, the Gorgians professed the name of Jesus Christ, and there I met even with devoted German colonists; and thus it was in Macedonia, and in the Greek islands, the name of Jesus Christ was professed in some form or other. Now the reader will follow me in my wanderings from Teheran, towards a country, where the

Gospel of our Lord has never been preached, where the light of the Gospel never shone; a land, untrodden by the Apostles of old, or missionaries of later times. The reader will now see me wandering towards a country, inhabited by followers of the Arabian Fanatic, and a few only of the Children of Israel; never visited but by wandering tribes for the purpose of plunder, and intoxicated Dervishes: a country, in which human life is estimated at the lowest price.

Khorossaun [Khorosan] is the name of one country: Bokhara is the name of the other country and city, towards which I am now directing my steps. (pg 90-91)

I doubt that Khorosan and Bokhara weren't visited in the Apostolic era. But you can see how important this trip is to Wolff, for I guess these kingdoms have no Christians in them. But before that I relate an important discussion he has with "Haje Sheikh Mohammed, the son of the grand Mullah of the Shia at Herat, who had daily visited me in the British Embassy at Teheran, to go in his company to Herat [city in NW Afghanistan now]." The following is an argument that Muslims often put to Christians:

*I:* I like to converse with you, for you are a man of candour, and one who has seen the world; I can learn something from you. Tell me now openly, what do you think about Christianity?

*Haje Sheikh Mohammed:* We do not think it to be a good religion, for the same reason as you believe Judaism not to be a good religion. You believe Judaism not to be a good religion, because it was abolished by Jesus; and for the same reason we believe Christianity not to be a good religion, because it was abolished by Mohammed.

*I:* We do not say that Moses and the Prophets were abolished; but that Judaism was accomplished, and its types were realized, and the prophecies respecting the Incarnation, sufferings and death of Jesus were fulfilled. We believe that sin came into the world, by Adam and Eve's transgression, with all our sorrows and woes; and therefore God promised to Adam, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and the rest of the

Prophets, one, who should be brought like a lamb to the slaughter, and thus take away the sins of the world, i.e. Jesus of Nazareth. He came, and the religion of the Jews was accomplished.

*H.S.M:* And Mohammed was the Prophet after Jesus.

*I:* How do you know that Mohammed was a true prophet?

*H.S.M:* By his miracles: he divided the moon; and persons, taller than himself, became shorter as soon as they walked with him; he had no shadow as other people have; he was able to see everything with his back, as well as with his eyes; the earth opened itself and swallowed up the uncleanness of his digestion.

*I:* (Continuing to question him, for it would in the first instance have been of no use to urge him to produce proofs; and besides this, it would have exasperated him). How did Mohammed promote his religion?

*H.S.M:* With a few by persuasion, but with most by the sword.

*I:* Does God want merely outward confession, or belief of the heart?

*H.S.M:* Belief of the heart.

*I:* Now suppose that you go to England, and all Englishmen hold the sword to your throat and say, "If you do not become a Christian, we kill you;" fear might betray you into an external consent, but this will not make you a Christian in heart.

*H.S.M:* Mohammed was driven to use the sword from the number of his enemies, who, after he had made peace with them, attacked him again.

*I:* This does not alter the case, and the fact, that the sword can never be a means for persuading a man really of the truth of a religion. (pg 94-95)

Once again the argument that Wolff comes to with the Muslims is the ungodliness of converting believers by the carnal sword. There is a power to this, and we are to remember it well. They talk more of other things. The Muslims wonder why Christians don't have a holy place, like their Kaaba, the black stone in the center of Mecca. Wolff recites the

words of Jesus to the woman of Samaria in response: “The hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor at Jerusalem worship the Father: but the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth.” John 4:23. Wolff’s heart goes out to the Muslims, and he relates such anecdotes like this that are terribly sad and nonsensical corruptions of scripture.

Oh that the Mohammedan world may soon turn their face towards Thee, Oh Temple, which can never be broken down; which once was broken, and built up again after three days! Haje Sheikh Mohammed told me the following story about Cain and Abel: “God commanded Abel to marry the twin sister of Cain, and he commanded Cain to marry the twin sister of Abel; but Cain wanted to marry his own twin sister, married to Abel, and therefore he put Abel to death.” (pg 93)

Other topics are discussed, such as how the Muslims also have the same debate between free will and destiny that splits the Calvinists and the Arminians. How when God created Adam he desired the angels to serve and worship Adam, which all did except the Devil, who therefore was cast into Hell. How some Muslims believe in the death of Christ, “though the Koran attempts to persuade that his likeness only was crucified.” These all exist presently in Islam and are common ideas, and I believe that most Muslims understand that God’s foreknowledge doesn’t influence man’s free will (meaning man does have free will).

As Wolff goes deeper into Northeastern Iran, near the border with Turkmenistan, things get more remote from civilization. The area is ruled by Khans (warlords), who, though paying tribute to the Shah of Persia, are allowed to rule their own cities in the manner of Feudal Lords. They are constantly at war with each other. It is to this mysterious border area that we approach. Lonely Planet says this about Turkmenistan:

By far the most mysterious and unexplored of Central Asia’s ‘stans, Turkmenistan became famous for the truly bizarre dictatorship of Saparmyrat Niyazov, who ruled as ‘Turkmenbashi’

(‘leader of the Turkmen’) until his death in 2006. Niyazov covered this little-known desert republic with grandiose monuments and golden statues of himself. Although many of these statues have since been dismantled, plenty of visitors still think of Turkmenistan as a sort of totalitarian theme park. But the least-visited of Central Asia’s countries is far more than this – it’s an ancient land of great spirituality, tradition and natural beauty.

The 3 following countries had the most foreign visitors to Turkmenistan in 2011:

Iran – 3874

Germany – 1143

USA – 531

(From Wikipedia article: [Tourism in Turkmenistan](#))



The route that Wolff takes is through Northeast Iran.

## Wolff Taken as a Slave (Iran, near the border with Turkmenistan)

(pg. 100-150)

At Detshe the danger begins, and the reason of it is this: the Mullahs of Bokhara, who are followers of Omar, i.e. Sunni, issue every year a “fatwa”, or kind of bull, promising to the Turkmens of Sarakhs, Mowr, and Khiva, the blessings of paradise, if they go and make slaves of the Shia, or followers of Ali, and bring them to Bokhara for sale. The Turkmens therefore, encouraged by the Mullahs of Bukhara, which city is emphatically styled the “strength of Islam,” annually make Tshapow, i.e. plundering excursions to Khorosan, and sometimes take whole caravans, and whole villages as slaves. As far as Boostaun towards Astarabad, Meshed, Tursheesh, Burjund, and as far as Heraut, their Tshapow extends, and this month of October is just the time in which they make their appearance. Besides, **in this part of the world, they never saw a Christian before**; those Russian deserters who came here, instantly apostatized from the faith; **therefore I was surrounded by them: they were watching every motion of mine**; in eating, and drinking, and sleeping, and making observations, how I rose, and how I sat down; I however made them sometimes laugh, by asking them, whether I was not a beautiful man. My servant amused me however by telling me of the miracles of Imam Resa {Reza, 8<sup>th</sup> Imam of the 12 Shiite, his shrine in Mashhad, Iran near the border with Afghanistan and Turkmenistan is the largest mosque in the world by area, has been described as “[the heart of the Shia Iran](#)”}; I spoke to him about Jesus Christ. I examined the words of the Afghan language, to see whether I could find any traces of the Hebrew in it, but in vain. (pg 104-105)

Conversation With Mohammed Hussein [Wolff’s Servant]  
About Christ

*I:* In which Prophet would you have the most confidence: in one who tries to convince people by the sword of the truth of his creed, or one who tries to do the same by persuasion?

*Mohammed Hussein:* In him who persuades people by arguments.

*I:* In which would have the most confidence: in one, who tries to promote his doctrine by *suffering* persecution, or in one who tries to promote his doctrine by *inflicting* persecution?

*M.H.:* In one who suffers persecution.

*I:* In whose sincerity of belief would you place most confidence: in one who has been forced to make a profession, or one who has been induced by arguments?

*M.H.:* In one who has been induced by arguments.

*I:* Jesus Christ and His disciples never used the sword, but words for convincing others. Jesus Christ and his disciples suffered and died for the sake of the truth of the Gospel, which He proclaimed; whilst Mohammed and Ali forced some people by the sword, to adopt their religion and put others to death.

*M.H.:* Why are so many miracles performed at the grave of Imam Husseyn at Kerbelay? Many a sick camel has been cured at the grave of Imam Resa; many a barren wife has become pregnant there; many a blind man has had his eyes restored, and I myself have a charm with me, such that neither dagger, nor pistol can hurt me.

*I:* I should not like to see you put to the trial. (pg 105-106)

I share this argument one more time to impress in the mind of the reader the importance of the Character of God message; that God does not and cannot use force – for it would undermine the whole legitimacy of His position. See Ellen White’s words in Chapter 1 of *Desire of Ages*:

The earth was dark through misapprehension of God. That the gloomy shadows might be lightened, that the world might be brought back to God, Satan's deceptive power was to be broken. This could not be done by force. The exercise of force is contrary to the principles of God's government; He desires only the service of love; and love cannot be commanded; it cannot be won by force or authority. Only by love is love

awakened. To know God is to love Him; His character must be manifested in contrast to the character of Satan. This work only one Being in all the universe could do. Only He who knew the height and depth of the love of God could make it known. Upon the world's dark night the Sun of Righteousness must rise, "with healing in His wings." [Malachi 4:2](#). (DA 22)



Spring in Khorosan, which is usually a dry wilderness landscape

## Arrival at Burjund



Capital of South Khorasan Province of Iran with a population of 200,000.

Through a complicated misunderstanding, Wolf has been accused of stealing. He is brought back as a prisoner to meet the Khan of this city. I am struck by Wolff's bravery here:

Oct. 28 – I arrived again in this town, where certainly never had any Englishman before had been. The two Hindoo merchants gave me kindly every assistance in their power; and thus Abd Resa Khan of Yazd, who had rebelled against the King of Persia, and who had taken asylum with Assaad Ullah Khan, promised me his assistance.

Oct. 29 – I was called before Assaad Ullah Khan; the fort in which he resided was filled with rough and uncultivated people of Belujestan, soldiers of Khorosan, and Persians, entering the dark room. I saw Assaad Ullah Khan upon the floor; around him were seated Mohammed Resa Khan, and several Mullahs; and among them was Mullah Mohammed Jawad, who informed me, that he had accompanied Mr. Morecroft from Kashmir to Bokhara. I had taken my Hebrew Bible and Testament with me. Assaad Ullah

Khan asked me to sit down near him and Abd Resa Khan.

*Assad Ullah Khan:* What is your profession?

*Myself:* (Lifting up my Bible), This is my profession: the proclamation of the Bible and the Gospel among the Jews, and to converse with all nations about God,

*Abd Resa Khan:* With What kind of denominations have you conversed?

*I:* With Mohammedan Mullahs at Shiraz, Isfahan, Yerivan [capital of Armenia], Urmia, etc. and the Jews of the Turkish and Persian empires; with Yazidis, Guebres, and Ali Ullah.

*Abd Resa Khan:* Are the Guebres in the right?

*I:* No.

*Abd Resa Khan:* Now say the truth, are we in the right?

*I:* I only consider those in the right, who believe in the Bible and the Gospel.

*Assad Ullah Khan:* Why do you not believe in Mohammed?

*I:* According to the Gospel, none can be as great as Jesus was.

*Assad Ullah Khan:* Is Mohammed not predicted in your books?

***I:* He is predicted as a chastiser of evil doers: in his time Christians were fallen into idolatry, and God therefore sent Mohammed to chastise them.** [note: Revelation 9]

*Assad Ullah Khan:* Was he no prophet?

*I:* No.

*Assad Resa Khan:* Read me some parts of the Gospel.

I read and translated the fifth chapter of Matthew. He continued, "Read something of the Tawrat, or books of Moses." I read Exodus 15 and translated it into Persian. [note: Song of Moses after Red Sea Crossing]

They asked me then to write down what I had translated. I then sent to them Arabic Bibles, and Arabic and Persian Testaments. Assaad Ullah Khan promised me his protection, and also to send me on to Meshed. (pg 110-111)

I think it is important to tell Muslims the role that Mohammed and his armies have in Bible Prophecy – to chastise the sensual idolatry of Eastern Roman Empire. This makes much sense to them, and I had an

excellent conversation on this topic with a sincere and strict young Turkish businessman on this very topic in Antioch. We also bonded on how hard it is to be religious nowadays; for he himself was somewhat of an outcast during his university years for his religious feeling.



Cossacks in Birjand, circa 1909

Another passage showing that this information is of interest to Muslims is this:

Nov. 2 – The chief Mullahs...to whom I had sent Bibles, sent their servants to me, requesting me to point out to them the passages about Christ's coming, and the appearance of Antichrist, whom they call Dajaal, which I did.

Nov. 5 – We arrived at Nogaw, 28 English miles from Mohamed Abad. We saw at a distance Turkomans on horseback, overladen with slaves, which prevented them from coming near us.

Nov. 6 – We arrived at Monabatsh, 24 miles from the former place. In the morning we continued our journey, and met on the road with poor peasants in the fields, who were about to retire

farther into the mountains, for fear of being taken by the Turkomans. On perceiving my guard, myself and my servant, they believed us to be Turkomans, and suddenly we heard the cries of the poor women and children; but we quieted them. Oh that the Lord Jesus may soon renew the face of the earth, that violence and destruction may no longer be known in the land!

Nov. 8 – We arrived at Morandis, 40 miles from Sennoo. The soldier who was sent with me by Assaad Ullah Khan, wanted me to sleep there one night in a mosque; but I protested against such a course, being assured that if it became known in the town that a Christian had taken up his abode in a mosque, they would put me to death; we slept therefore in a house.

The year is 1831, and slavery is still in effect in this area of the world. A few days later, Wolff himself is taken captive by slavers near Sanjerd, Iran.

We had scarcely rode on for five miles, when we saw at a distance a band of horsemen, and heard a firing: they came towards us with their arms spread open. As I was already a good deal advanced before the caravan, I might easily have made my escape; but I thought it not right to leave my servant in the hands of the robbers, and therefore returned. One of the banditti took hold of my horse, whilst the rest bound the others. The one who came up to me was panting in an awful manner, and the match of his gun was smoking. Without looking into my face, he took hold of the bridle of my horse, and said. "Pool! Pool!" money! money! I gave him all the money I had in my pocket; he ordered me not to tell his comrades that he had taken it, and continually panting, he asked, "Have you no more money?" I replied, "Yes, I have more in my trunk."

Soon after, I was surrounded by the rest; they took me down from the horse, and exclaimed, "Have you no money?" I replied, "I have given it to your comrade." They began to beat their fellow robber for having tried to keep the whole for himself. I was stripped in a moment of everything, even of the shirt from back: nothing, nothing was left to me; it was then extremely cold. They

put a rag filled with vermin over me, and brought me out of the highway, where I met with the rest, weeping and crying, and bound to the tails of the robbers' horses. It was an awful sight, to see robbers (twenty-four in number) beating and cursing each other, and beating us poor *Banda*, (i.e. those that are bound); disputing among themselves whose property every one of us should be. We were driven along by them in continual gallop, on account of the approaching Turkomans: for if the Turkomans had found us out, or come near us, our robbers would have been made slaves by them, they being Shias themselves. As I thought it would be better that the Turkomans should take me, as they would have brought me immediately to Khiva, instead of being first taken to Torbad, and then sold to the Turkomans of Khiva, I made a noise; but the people of Mohammed Khan Kerahe threatened to put me to death, which compelled me to be silent.

During the night, three of the prisoners had the good fortune to make their escape. The Chief, Hassan Khan by name, a horrid looking fellow with a blue diseased tongue which prevented him from being well understood, screamed out, "Look out for them, and if you find them, kill them instantly." However, they did not succeed in finding them. About 2 o'clock in the morning, we stopped in a forest; they had pity on me, and gave me a cup of tea, made of my own, which they had taken. They broke open the cases, belonging to Abbas Mirza, filled with dates, and gave me a share of them. They began after this to put a price on us: my servant was valued at ten, and myself at five Tomauns. The moment they took the money from my servant, I found out that the fellow had robbed me of 16 Tomauns, which he now lost. Some tried again to make their escape, but were horridly beaten by a young robber 14 years of age. After this we were put in irons. Twelve of the robbers separated for the purpose of making another plundering expedition. It was an awful night, cold and freezing, and we were without any thing to cover us. The robbers consulted together about me, whether it was advisable or not to kill me, as I was known by Abbas Mirza: for they were afraid, if Abbas Mirza should hear of me, that he would claim me.

Yes, it was an awful night; and what consolation could I have expected from above, from my Saviour, if I had not put my trust

and my faith in Him, and in his promise! At such an hour, one experiences the precious fruits of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Blessed is he, who at such an hour knows that Christ is with him, and that neither bonds, nor cold, nor hunger, nor thirst, can separate him from the love of Christ, and that to him he can carry all his wants.

I prayed to that Saviour, and then spoke to the robbers, beseeching them not to kill me, and promising, that on my arrival at Torbad, (to which place they intended to bring me) I would ransom myself with the assistance of the Jews; which I could do, if they would permit me to write something in the Hebrew Bibles and Testaments that I had with me. They gave me those books, and then I wrote in Hebrew shortly, my name, condition, and present situation. The hope of a good ransom prevented them from killing me the first night.

Nov. 15. — We arrived at a village belonging to Ameer Khan of the Kerahe; he treated me kindly, and desired Hassan Khan to give him one of my Persian Testaments, which he did. An Englishman was never seen in these parts. In the evening we arrived at Arkhshee, where I was sitting near a ruined house, together with my servant. Ali Khan, one of the robbers, came near me, and put the chains around my feet, and said, " Now you sit comfortably." But one of the robbers, having pity on me, loosed them again.

Nov. 16.— They put me upon a wild horse, and one of the robbers, 14 years of age, beat my horse, in order that it might throw me off; but fortunately I kept my seat.

Nov. 1.7. — We arrived near Torbad: it was an impressive sight to witness the families of the robbers, who came out to meet their husbands, fathers or brothers, to congratulate them on their success. Turkomans from Sarakhs, Khiva and Mowr, who were waiting there to purchase slaves from the Kerahe, came out of the town in order to look at us.

The Hazarah, descendants of the Moguls, another slavemaking tribe, sallied out of the town on horseback, for the purpose of

making Tshapow [slave-raid]. All these are in understanding with the great Mohammed Ishak Khan Kerahe of Torbad Hydarea.

Here I had again a specimen, such as I had frequently remarked before in those countries, that liberty of speaking consists with excess of slavery and tyranny.

The first question our robbers made openly to the people of Torbad, in the presence of the Turkomans and Hazarah, was expressed in the following manner, "How is the tyrant Mohammed-Ishak Khan going on? is he not yet dead?" They replied, "No, but one of his sons is dead."

*Robbers.* "A pity that he died not himself, then we should be free from that tyrant, and not be obliged to plunder people in the high road, and eat the bread of blood! When will God save us from the hands of that tyrant? No wonder that the just Al-Nakee Khan of Tabas, his brother-in-law, does not eat bread with him, for his bread is the *bread of blood!*"

We saw hundreds of blind men and women in the road near the gate of Torbad; the robbers turned to me, and said, "Do you see these blind men and women? Their eyes were taken out by that eye cutting tyrant, Mohammed Ishak Khan of Torbad Hydarea! God curse him, and curse his house; curse him in his getting up, curse him in his lying down! God curse his wife, and the fruit of her womb! And may he, that has made many widows, may he die, that the dogs should drink his blood, that his wives may be widows, and his children orphans!"

I asked Hassan Khan, whether they were not afraid of the day of judgment. He replied, "We neither enjoy this world, nor shall we enjoy the happiness of the other world!" Though naked, they examined us narrowly, believing we might have money concealed about us. Suddenly Jews came out of Torbad; I exclaimed, "Hear Israel!" (a common exclamation among the Jews throughout the world.) I was soon surrounded by all of them. Hassan Khan had delivered over to them for sale my journals, beside the Bibles, not knowing what they were. They pledged themselves that I would not run away, and took me to their houses; and thus the first evening, though in a most wretched state, I had them all around me, and I proclaimed to them the Gospel of Jesus, of whose history, sufferings and death, they were quite ignorant.

Nov. 18. — I was desired to go back to the robbers, when suddenly I was put in irons, and chained together with the rest of the slaves. One of the slave-sellers, a Kurd, maliciously came and squeezed with the irons my feet still more together crossway. The slaves with whom I was chained together, cursed me continually. Once more I experienced the goodness of the Lord, and his lovingkindness, which is new every day. I was brought first with the rest of the slaves to a large house, where there were hundreds of slaves. The Director of the Police came out and said, "To this Infidel (meaning me) you must give neither water to drink, nor a galyoon to smoke, for he is najas, i.e. unclean: if he is thirsty, he may go to the well and drink like any other dog." Suddenly a man appeared, exclaiming, "Is no Englishman here?" "Yes, yes," I exclaimed. The chains were taken off: a soldier of Abbas Mirza had arrived with a letter for Mohammed Ishak Khan, ordering him to release me.

Mohammed Ishak Khan gave instantly orders to set me at liberty, which were executed, and the robbers were put in prison; for the tyrant wanted now to make it appear that this had been done without his consent. When I was examined with the rest before the judge as to the sum of money the robbers had taken from us, and after I had stated the sum, the judge said, "All these are Mussulmans, they lie: for our moral is in a bad condition, but Mullah Youssuf Wolff is a Kafer [kaffir, derogatory term for a non-Muslim], he speaks the truth."

I was brought before Mohammed Ishak Khan; he is a tall stout man, with very large eyes, of black complexion, never looking into one's eyes, but always downwards — a deep thundering voice. His sword is continually girt around him, and he does not even lay it aside in the bath: nobody knows where he sleeps. He was seated upon a high throne, all others standing at a distance from him; awe was expressed in the countenance of every one. He asked me how much money they had taken from me? I replied, "Eighty Tomauns." He got it from the robbers, but kept it for himself. He said, "You came here with books, in order to shew the right way: well go on." (pg 124)

Thus concludes an exciting chapter of Wolff's adventures. Wolff is free to roam around this city of Torbat-e Heydarieh. This is a city of 120,000 presently, and produces some of the world's finest saffron, of which Iran makes 90%. I continue on in the book.



Saffron, the world's most expensive spice.

Mehrob Khan of Bujnurd, the brother of Nujuf Ali Khan, was obliged to flee from his brother, and seek an asylum at forbad. He desired me to tell him from the Bible whether Abbas Mirza would restore him to his former dignity. I replied that I knew from the Bible the way of Salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ. His brother desired me to tell him a secret, how he could make himself invisible.

**They desired me to read to them several parts of the Gospel: I read to them the fifth chapter of Matthew.**

Sayd Neas of Sarakhs, Teere (i. e. tribe) Yatshee, called on me. As I had got back my Bibles and Testaments from the robbers, as soon as I was set at liberty, I had begun to circulate the books among the Mohammedans. Sayd Neas desired me therefore to give him a Bible for his Mullah at Sarakhs, which I did. I ate bread and salt with him, and then he said to me, "Now you may safely travel to Bokhara, for if you ever are taken as a slave, I will come twenty

days distance to ransom you." He then told me, in the presence of some Persians, "We Turkomans never take Jews as slaves; for the Jews have a book, but the Guzl-Bash, (i. e. Persians) are apostates (Keshte) from the book, and therefore they are taken by us as slaves." That this should be said in a place entirely inhabited by Shia, and governed by a Khan, who is himself a Shia, is extraordinary.

...

I must now return to my brethren, the Jews of Torbad. Those of Meshed give the same account of themselves, which I heard afterwards confirmed at Meshed: viz. that during the captivity of Babylon, they went to Casween, where they remained, until Nadir Shah brought them Meshed. These Meshed Jews are rich, clean and respectable looking; whilst those of Yazd are poor, mean, thievish, slovenly, and dirty in the extreme, immoral, and addicted to sorcery.

...

Is it not remarkable, that at Burjund, as well as at Torbad, where I was in difficulties, I should have had more opportunity of preaching than anywhere else in Khorossaun, except at Meshed.

Wolff leaves Torbad in caravans going to Meshed [Mashhad]. This part of his adventures is so exotic and interesting that I will comment little and let the story continue. He stops at a fort Shereef Abad:

We had scarcely entered the fort Shereef Abad, when a scream of men, women and children, was heard exclaiming continually, "Tshapow! Tshapow! Tshapow!" [slave raid] For the Hazara from Shahr-Now, whose Chief had been killed in a most treacherous manner with a great number of his people by Mohammed Ishak Khan Kerahe, had sworn death and destruction to all his subjects. (Mohammed Ishak Khan married the daughter of the Chief of Shahr-Now, and during the celebration of the wedding he gave orders to massacre the Chief of Shahr-Now and all his relations and attendants; and after this, Mohammed Ishak Khan took possession of the town. But many left the town, and continue plundering the caravans, and murdering every man belonging to Torbad.) They

made some prisoners, and killed 80 sheep; this determined us to stop longer at Shereef-Abad. One of the poor women of Shereef-Abad called on me and said that one of her sons had been made a slave, and asked if I could do something to procure his ransom: she promised if I would, to perform a pilgrimage to Kerbelay, for the benefit of both herself and me. On leaving Shereef-Abad, one of the caravan beat me, and said, "Say, God is God, and Mohammed the Prophet of God." I replied with the greatest calmness, but without reflecting, "I cannot tell a lie." These fanatics, instead of being enraged at this, burst into a fit of laughter, and said, "Let the fool alone."

Approaching Meshed, we observed the golden and spending cupola upon the mosque of Imam Resa. All the Muslims stopped and offered up a prayer, and exclaimed, "Oh Imam Resa, thou bestower of gifts, give to thy dogs abundance of gifts, for we come from a distant country; and we curse Omar, Osman, and Abu-Bekr!"

Hezekiel, the Jew from Torbad, who was my fellow traveler, said, "We shall soon thus salute the temple of Jerusalem." Twenty thousand pilgrims of the Shia persuasion perform every year their pilgrimage to Meshed [Mashhad], to the tomb of Imam Resa.



Imam Reza Shrine in Mashhad, the heart of Shia Islam. From what we have been reading, Shia and Sunni Islam had bad relations in Wolff's time, which has continued to today in greater or lesser amounts due to local particularities. Wolff says this: "So great is the hatred between the Sunni and Shia, that Jews, who have turned Muslim at Mashhad among the Shia, again openly profess Judaism among the Sunni as soon as they are going to Sarakhs, or to any other part of Toorkestaun."

## In Mashhad, Iran

In Mashhad Wolff immediately calls on a prince of the city, who is a son of the king by a Jewess. He offers no help, and instead sends him to the head of the Jews there, who is very much a Sufi. The Abrahamic faith of this heavily Sufi city is strange and sensual and gnostic, with one teaching for the adept and another for the uneducated. I will not go into detail, but if the reader would like to have an understanding of this cocktail he can read pages 128-134 himself. I will quote one interesting passage that summarizes generally their belief system:

Dec. 11 – The teacher of the Jewish Sufis called on me; there was nothing in him which could engage me to like him; he sometimes expressed devotion, which he spoiled again by evident lies. He made me acquainted with the following principles of his. 1. That there is no evil in the world. 2. That to a man whose mind is absorbed in God, adultery can do no harm, nor any other vice. 3. The world stands from eternity. 4. The world and God is one and the same thing. (pg. 132)

...

During the captivity of Babylon, Jews came to Sabzevar, who afterwards, in the time of Genghis Khan, were taken to Bokhara (in Uzbekistan), Balkh (in north Afghanistan) and Shakhrisabz (in east Uzbekistan).

I continued every evening to preach to my nation, often for whole nights, sitting with them in a very small room, and at times gathering information from them. As I had not yet proper clothes to put on, Mullah Meshiakh gave me some of his.

...

Dec. 22 — I was introduced to His Royal Highness Abbas Mirza. His Royal Highness was seated upon a Persian Divan, in a small room; Mirza Abool Kasem, his Kayem Makaam, or Chief Minister, and Mirza Baba, the Hakeem Bashee, i.e. Chief Physician, who introduced me to His Royal Highness, were standing opposite him, leaning on the wall, according to the Persian custom, with their hands upon their breasts. H. R. H. asked me to sit down at a little distance from him, and after having enquired the state of my health and the time I had left England, he said that he sincerely regretted the misfortune I had met with in Khorossaun, and sympathized with me; but this amiable Prince added, "Such adventures belong to the life of a wandering Dervish, who goes about as a man of God." He said to me, "As you now intend to go to Bokhara, speak to the King of Bokhara, and try to convince him that it is sinful to make slaves of one's fellow creatures, and you may tell him that I have no intention of conquering Bokhara, but I mean to put a stop to slavery." His Royal Highness reminded me after this of his having given me a written permission, when in Persia five years before, to establish a school at Tabriz, and said that his desire of seeing his nation civilized remained unaltered. H.R.H. promised me every assistance in his power, in forwarding me safely to Bokhara. He then began to speak with me about the exertions of Sultan Mahmood [Mahmud II, Sultan of the Ottoman Empire], and expressed a wish, that I should converse one day with Jews and Mussulmans, in his room, and in his presence.

...

Jan 13. 1832 - Mirza Hadayat Ullah, a gentleman 65 years of age, received me in the kindest manner, ordered the galyoon and tea to be brought, and said to me that he wished one of these days to enter into a religious discussion with me about Islamism; but as to day was Friday [Muslim holy day], he wished to make only a few observations, and have a quiet conversation with me. He shewed me a complete Arabic translation of the Bible, of which he had been in possession for several years. **He told me that he wished me to become a Mohammedan, not in words merely, but in principle; for only such a one is a true Mohammedan.** I told him that the sentiment he expressed was somewhat like that expressed by Christ, "Not he that saith Lord, Lord, shall enter into the

kingdom of heaven, but he, that doth the will of my Father." **I said I was rejoiced to observe that he insisted upon religion being embraced upon principle**, and in case he could convince me from the Bible that Mohammed was a Prophet, I should acknowledge him. However this was too difficult a task for him; he therefore, as most of the Mussulman Mullahs do, appealed to different commentators of the Koran. I saw him again in the palace with Abbas Mirza, in whose presence I discussed the subject again.

Jan. 18. — Mirza Hadayat Ullah invited me again to his house; the room was crowded, even Jews were present, and I had the great privilege of being allowed to proclaim the tidings of salvation to him and all the Mullahs of Mashhad. **I then asked why they worshiped Imam Resa, as they are commanded by the Koran to worship God alone; they gave me just the same answer as the Roman Catholic, Greek, and Armenian Christians would do: that they make a distinction between prayer to God, and honour due to a saint.**

At this interview with Mirza Hadayat Ullah, I had the honour to see among my disputants the Mujtehed of Kerbelay (the famous place of pilgrimage for the Shia near Baghdad, where Imam Hussein was killed by Yazid, the son of Moawea) and other learned Mullahs from Kasemein and Najaf in Arabia.

...

I read Matthew Chap. v. 8. I desired Mullah Pinehas to translate every verse (for I read it in Hebrew) into Persian, which he was able to do better than I could have done.

The Mohammedan Mullahs entered then into a conversation with me about the divine origin of the Koran. Several of the Mohammedans present had the candour to confess that I had had the advantage in the argument. Whilst I was sitting with these people, Mirza Hadayat Ullah, the Mujtehed, sent to me four letters of introduction for Bokhara and Kabul; **a proof, that my conversation with Mohammedans here has not only not exasperated them, but even gained their good will.**

Wolff has a meeting with the Prince of Mashhad, who shares his concerns and worries with Wolff. I have left out the geopolitical aspects,

which regard the relationship to Iran of England and Russia. Wolff wrote this conversation down in the room of another man who knew English, who read it over to the King, making sure it was to the King's agreement. I also skip much political negotiating between Mashhad and the Turkomans, who take them for slaves – the Prince wants peace and for them to stop raiding their provinces.

I give now a conversation I had with His Royal Highness Abbas Mirza, and which I communicate with his permission. Hearing that I was outside the room waiting till he had performed his prayer, he called out: "Mullah Wolff, come in, for a Mullah may be present at prayer." Before he began his prayer, he asked me about the divinity of Jesus Christ. I replied, that we do not believe that the body of Jesus was God, but the fullness of the Godhead lived in him bodily; that one God displayed a threefold agency, in creating, redeeming, and sanctifying us; and these threefold agencies we call Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, one God.

...

I desired His Royal Highness Abbas Mirza to write to me something with his own hand. As travelers who have made their way through these countries by disavowing their nation and religion and pretending to be Muslims have chosen to assert, that the natives did not know that I was a Christian clergyman and a European; I annex the autograph, in order to prove that it is possible to travel in those countries as a preacher, and that it is even the safest way of travelling; far preferable to going in disguise, as some travelers in Arabia did. His Royal Highness wrote to me of the following in Persian.

"The exalted Padre Joseph Wolff is one of the sincere friends of us Prince Regent. We have seen him before; but this time, when he waited upon us at Mashhad, we paid him much more attention than the first time. He is a truly religious man, and has undertaken a long journey, and full of danger; but he is not afraid of any danger. We hope to see him again well and safe, after he shall have finished his journey to Bokhara and Mowralnehar [Transoxiana, central Asia]."

And now I give the translation of some Persian, written in my journal by Ali Moorad Khan of Jevian, a bigoted Muslim.

“During the time of the liberal, His Lordship and His Royal Highness, the Prince Regent. In the house of my kind brother Mirza Baba, the chief physician, I met the learned infidel Mullah Joseph Wolff, in truth he is a very good man, very good tempered, very sincere, and a good companion. I am delighted with his mode of life. In Holy Meshed these few lines are written, as a remembrance of Ali Moorad Khan, the Governor of Jevian, in Khorasan, in the moon of Shahbaan 1247.” (January 1832.) (pg. 147)

...

**Mirza Baker, one of the secretaries of Abbas Mirza (the Prince), assisted me in composing addresses in the Persian language directed to the Jews of Mashhad, which were stuck on the walls of several shops at Mashhad. In these I cited several prophecies respecting our Lord Jesus Christ, and exhorted the Jews to turn to him as their Saviour. They were addressed to the Jews only; but the Muslims also read them without being offended.**

#### IMMORALITY OF THE INHABITANTS OF MESHED [Mashhad].

It is remarkable that wherever there are places of pilgrimage or convents, the people of those places are most particularly immoral; as for instance, Mecca, Medina, Kerbelay in Arabia, Mazaun in Toorkestaun, and Meshed in Khorossaun. It is generally reported that from the wives of the Mujtehed down to those of the lowest Mullahs, all are prostitutes; but crimes much worse are committed at Meshed.

The people there are so corrupt that several of them are regularly paid by the Turkomans, for giving them notice when caravans are coming, which they may attack and plunder: some of them actually betray their servants and children to the Turkomans, so that when I wanted to take a Shia, at Meshed, to accompany me as a servant to Toorkestaun, Mr. Shee and Mirza Baba were obliged to pledge themselves that they would ransom him, if I were to sell him.

Men cannot save themselves: the work of salvation must be carried on in them by the Lord alone: hence, it is not to be wondered at that a system of will-worship, proceeding upon

principles directly opposite to the Gospel, should be accompanied by a more intense degree of moral darkness; whether in a corrupt Church, or in such an heretical apostasy, as that of Mohammed.

### Departure from Mashhad

His Royal Highness Abbas Mirza sent for the sixteen deputies of the Turkomans from Sarakhs, and desired them to give their signatures; they believe that having once given their word in writing, they have consigned a certain magic power to that person in whose possession it is.

This belief is current among Jews, Mohammedans, Guebres, Hindoos, and many of the Oriental Christians; and therefore I was frequently accused by the Jews of Jerusalem, and even lately by a Jew at Malta, of having desired their signatures for the purpose of making them Christians.

As it was, the Turkomans stroked their beards, gave their signatures, and promised His Royal Highness to bring me safely to Bokhara...I left Mashhad on January 29, 1832.



Entrance of Imam Reza Complex

## At Sarakhs (with Turkomens)



Sarakhs was once a stopping point along the [Silk Road](#), and in its 11th century heyday had many libraries and a famous school of architects. Much of the original city site is now just across the border at [Serakhs](#) in Turkmenistan. According to the most recent national census, in 2006, the city's population was 33,571 in 8,066 families.

Before we entered the camp of Sarakhs, (for it cannot be called a city) we perceived suddenly about 10 Turkomans coming to meet us: they were of Sarakhs. Gooliitsh Mohammed Khan went to

them; they put mutually their hands together and exclaimed, "Amman," Safety!

Ballee, one of the Aga Sakal, or Lord with the white beards (elders), and brought us to his tents; and thus we were the Mehmoon, i.e. Guests of one of the Turkomans; and as soon as one is declared Mehmoon of one of the Turkomans there is no longer any danger in travelling among them. All the Aga Sakal, or Lords of the beards, came to see me; for I had been strongly recommended to them by Abbas Mirza: they promised me their assistance in going to Bokhara. Many of the Turkomans at Sarakhs who had seen me when in slavery at Torbad came out to welcome me.

### Jews at Sarakhs (p. 158)

Before I speak in detail of the Turkomans, I must be allowed to speak of the state of the Jews at Sarakhs; since both there and elsewhere, they have been the chief object and motive of my pilgrimage in these deserts, and of my wanderings in the waste howling wilderness of Toorkestaun [Turkestan]: for the purpose of reminding thee, my brother, of the promises given to our ancestors, and of the expectations which thou hast still a right to cherish; for the purpose of reminding thee of days of old, of those days when Jehovah, He, even He, carried thee on eagles' wings; when fire from heaven kindled the sacrifices upon thine altar, a sweet smelling savour unto the Lord, in thy beautiful Temple: and for the purpose of proclaiming to thee that Temple, which was broken down and in three days built up again; of proclaiming to thee that *Child of Jerusalem*, that *Rightful Heir to David's throne*, who was rejected by his Mother, and harshly treated in the house of his Brethren; on which account Jerusalem, his Mother according to the flesh, became a widow, and his brethren fugitives and vagabonds on earth; and chiefly for the purpose of proclaiming to thee, poor Israel: "Behold, thy King comes, and his reward is with him!" These be my feelings, let me first speak about my brethren.

There are eighty Jews from Mashhad, who live here undisturbed by the Turkomans. They came for two reasons: for the purpose of carrying on their trade with the Turkomans; and because on account of the oppression which they frequently

suffered at Mashhad some turned Muslim; but among the Turkomans they are allowed to practice their religion openly. Every Jew is declared the Mehmoon [guest] of one of the Aga Sakal [elders]: if something is stolen from a Jew, his host *traces the footsteps of the thief*, and brings back the stolen property. When on a Sabbath day a Turkoman enters the house of a Jew, the Jew tells him, "We have our Sabbath," and the Turkoman leaves the room instantly. I took up my abode with one of the Jews; Mullah Yakoob, Mullah Michael, Mullah Ishak, and many others called on me. I expounded to them Isaiah 53; Zechariah 12; Daniel 9; and Psalm 110. They listened with intense interest; and I hope that Mullah Yakoob and Mullah Michael are sincere believers in Jesus Christ. My preaching that Jesus Christ died for our sins brought tears from the eyes of the amiable Mullah Yakoob. Before this, he spent his nights in reading Hafiz [the most famous Persian poet [Hafez](#)]. I may say that he believed my preaching.

...

Ballee, an Aga Sakal [elder of a tribe], called upon me, and made me acquainted with some of his sins. It cannot escape one's observation that barbarians are never displeased at being reproved for their vices; but it is not from a regard for the preacher: they are in fact so accustomed to dishonourable actions, that they are not shocked at hearing themselves styled dishonourable: a thief will never be displeased at hearing himself called a thief; besides this, their religious notions are so feeble, that they do not so soon perceive, that one, preaching to them Christ crucified, speaks against their Koran. I heard several of the Turkomans call Jesus the son of God, from his having had no human father. A Missionary may therefore easily be deceived by believing that he has gained ground by convincing a Turkoman that Jesus is the Son of God; but when the Turkoman finds out that the expression is against the Koran, he will turn against him. However, a straight forward conduct, reading of one's book, i.e. the Bible, performance of prayer, demonstrations of pity and compassion, will effect a great deal, by God's grace, among barbarians. Be not a stiff gentleman, if you wish to gain them over.

Feb. 3. — I was visited by a good many Turkomans, Hazarah [ethnic group mainly in Afghanistan], and Teemooree [I don't know]. I preached to them the Gospel, and exhorted them to desist from their practice of making slaves. The Teemoree promised to follow my advice, and so they did; for they set off for Meshed to take service in the army of Abbas Mirza; but some of the Turkomans replied that if Tshapow was sin, the sin would not be upon their necks, but upon the necks of the Mullahs of Bokhara, who encouraged them every year by their Fatwa. Others remarked, that if it was sin, God would not permit it; and as long as they were capable of making Foray, it was an indication of its being the will of God.

One of the Hazarah besought me to make him a present of Guzl-Bash servant; for he had bought a horse from a Turkoman for two slaves; one slave he had already given, so that he is still in debt for one more. (pg. 166)

...

Mullah Tastsh is the Qadi [Muslim Judge] of the Turkomans at Sarakhs; a very good Arabic scholar, who has made his studies at Bokhara. On the day of my arrival at Sarakhs, he sent for me, letting me know that the Turkoman Sayd Neyas, of the tribe Yatshe, one of the chiefs at Sarakhs, to whom I, on meeting him at Torbad Hydarea, had an Arabic Testament, had sent it here; and that he, Mullah Tatsh, had read it with great delight and pleasure. I called on him immediately, and he shewed me the New Testament. He asked me the meaning of many passages, and the object of my travels; many Turkomans were just then with him. I stated openly that I was travelling about to find the lost Ten Tribes of Israel, to preach the Gospel to the Jews, and to tell the Turkomans that plunder and making slaves of free people was sin. He turned to the Turkomans and said, "In our Hadith is a prophecy, that shortly before the arrival of Mahdi [end-time redeemer] a man shall appear, who shall exhort the nations to repentance: Joseph Wolff is the forerunner of Mahdi."

At the moment I was with him, his wife died at the birth of a child.

The eschatology of the Muslims is definitely Abrahamic. The idea of the Mahdi ("the guided one" in Arabic) is a powerful one, and has several variations to it. Some think that the Mahdi will come with Jesus (Jesus is called Isa by Muslims), others think Mahdi is a title for Jesus and is another word for Messiah. Together they will defeat the false Messiah or Antichrist [called Dajjal]. That Joseph Wolff was named as the Mahdi's forerunner by this Qadi is a big deal, and will play a part in his adventures. End-Time theorizing is hugely popular with Muslims as seen in the chapters shared by Wolff to the Qadi in the next paragraphs:

Many Turkomans came to me, and desired me to pray over their sick relations and their barren wives which I did in the Persian tongue.

I called again on Mullah Tatsh, Qadi of the Turkomans, and read with him Matthew 24 and Revelation 14; and as his wife had died, I prayed according to the custom of the Turkomans; which prayer they call in Arabic "Fatihah" i.e. opening of the Koran; but I prayed the Lord's prayer.

Feb. 7. — Mullah Tatsh called on me, in company with another Mullah from Bokhara; after taking his beard between his teeth, and pondering over something very gravely, he addressed me in the following manner: "Youssuf Wolff, you are a Mullah, and I am a Mullah; and everyone likes to be with his equal. I know that you have experience in every science: I want therefore a great favour of you; that is, to make by witchcraft, that some woman may fall in love with me, and be disposed to become my wife; for you know that my wife died at the moment you were with me." I replied, "I cannot procure you a wife by witchcraft; for in the first instance, I do not understand that art; and secondly, my religion does not permit me to practise it; but you will do well to marry the woman who was seduced by Ballee [one of the elders], that you may become a protector to her child." He said that he would do so. Such advice will sound awkward in the ear of an English reader; but he must take into consideration the difference between a civilized nation and the barbarians in the desert; then he will find such advice not only excusable, but proper.

Many Turkomans called again and desired me to pray over them; which I did. They even go some times to the Jew, Joseph of Talkhtoon, and desire him to pray over them; for, as there are Protestants who sometimes have more confidence in the prayer of some Roman Catholic Priest or Capuchin Friar; in the same manner the Turkomans confide more in the prayer of a devout Jew or Christian; especially as I had been declared to be the forerunner of the Mahdi by their Mullahs.

As the reader can see, this is a very complicated social fabric Wolff has entered. He says there are no Englishmen there, but soon there would be, at least close by in neighboring Afghanistan – which has a similar tribal-desert culture. England would invade Afghanistan from the south due to their “Great Game,” competing for Central Asia with Russia (sound familiar?). The first Anglo-Afghan war was from 1839-1842. Author William Dalrymple wrote a book on this war and the British loss:

[It was] arguably the greatest military humiliation ever suffered by the West in the East. The entire army of what was then the most powerful nation in the world was utterly destroyed by poorly-equipped tribesmen.

On the retreat from Kabul, of the 18,500 who left the British cantonment on 6 January 1842, only one British citizen, the assistant surgeon Dr Brydon, made it through to Jalalabad six days later.

The parallels between the current war [US war in Afghanistan] and that of the 1840s are striking. The same cities are being garrisoned by foreign troops speaking the same languages, and they are being attacked from the same hills and passes.

Not only was our then puppet, Shah Shuja, from the same Popalzai sub-tribe as President Karzai, but his principal opponents were the Ghilzai tribe, who today make up the Taliban's foot soldiers.

It is clearly not true, as is sometimes said, that it's impossible to conquer Afghanistan - many Empires have done so, from the ancient Persians, through Alexander the Great to the Mongols, the Mughals and the Qajars.

But the economics means that it is impossible to get Afghanistan to pay for its own occupation - it is, as the then Emir said as he surrendered to the British in 1839, "a land of only stones and men".

Any occupying army here will hemorrhage money and blood to little gain, and in the end most throw in the towel, as the British did in 1842, as the Russians did in 1988 and as NATO will do later this year.

In October 1963, when Harold Macmillan was handing over the prime ministership to Alec Douglas-Home, he is supposed to have passed on some advice.

"My dear boy, as long as you do not invade Afghanistan you will be absolutely fine," he said. Sadly, no one gave the same advice to Tony Blair. (<https://www.bbc.com/news/magazine-26483320>)

Even in Jordan, which is a much more developed country, for most people tribal loyalty trumps loyalty to the nation. I remember the tense university elections, where different candidates were out campaigning followed by all their supporters, who I learned were part of their tribe/clan.

Things are getting complicated in Wolff's goal to reach Bokhara. Many letters are written to ensure his safe travels crossing the desert wilderness of Turkmenistan to get to Uzbekistan (both countries didn't exist at this time, 1832, but only came into existence after the breakup of the USSR). Wolff must also pay money to many warlords, and pray for everyone. In his own words, Wolf "wandered through a barren, cold, and unkind desert, drinking snow, and making tea with it" from Sarakhs to Mowr [which I think is Merv, near modern day Mary in Turkmenistan] to Jehaar-Joo [which I can't figure out where it is.]



Wolff was in Mashhad, where the Imam Reza Shrine was, the center of Shia Islam. Sarakhs is just across the border. He is now in a caravan somewhere around Mary, on the way to Bukhara, which in our era is Uzbekistan's 5<sup>th</sup> largest city. Tashkent is the capital of Uzbekistan, and Samarkand is its 2<sup>nd</sup> largest city. These are all ancient cities.

## On Route to Bokhara [Bukhara]

Feb. 25.—We arrived at Jehaar-Joo, which means four wells; for there are four wells there. It is a city of a considerable population, belonging to the King of Bokhara. The Governor of the place is a Calmuc [Kalmyk I think]; he has the title of Emir.

There were arrived in the Caravan-seray several Jews from Bokhara; as I had sent on before my Jewish servant, they came out to meet me, and took me to their rooms; they were Mullah Gaday, his son, and several others. The Governor sent his men, desiring me to tell him who I was, and at the same time giving me to understand, that I should tell the truth; for he was obliged to

report my arrival to the Goosh-Bekee, i.e. Prime Minister of the King of Bokhara.

I sent him word that I was a Jew who believes in Moses, the Prophets, and Jesus; and that I came to this country with letters for Goosh-Bekee, and with firmauns from the Sultan of Constantinople. My object was to see the Jews of Bokhara and Balkh, and speak to them about Jesus, and to find the Ten Tribes of Israel; that I was an English subject, and a Mehmoon (Guest) of Goosh-Bekee; that Goosh-Bekee was already informed of my coming, &c. Rabbi Gaday informed me, that the old Rabbis of Bokhara assert, that Balkh and Bokhara were the Habor and Halah of 2 Kings xvii. 6, and that the Ammo, called likewise the Gihoon or Oxus, is the river Gozan, mentioned in the same chapter; that the Jews of Sabzawar had been carried by some King to Samarcand, Balkh and Bokhara. (\*note by Wolff: "This was before and during the time of Genghis Khan; but before this time Jews came directly to Samarcand, Bokhara, and Balkh, during the captivity of Babylon; as I ascertained after my arrival at Balk.")

Rabbi or Mullah Gaday told me the following fact. A Jew with whom he had a quarrel went to a wizard, who bewitched his son, so that he dislikes to sleep with his wife. He also told me that a few years ago a New Testament had been sent from Orenburg to Bokhara. Joseph Mooghreebe, or Joseph Maarabee as the Jews of Bokhara call him, ordered it to be burnt. A long discussion took place between us, about Jesus being the Son of God, and the Messiah promised to our nation.

Rabbi Gaday gave me different information about the state of the Jews at Bokhara; which, after my arrival there, I found to have been an exact statement. He tells me that the Jews of Meshed stand in bad reputation among the Jews of Bokhara, on account of spending their time in reading Hafez. They are prohibited at Bokhara by their Rabbis to learn either Persian or Arabic; and if anyone were to know how to write or read either language, he would be obliged to become a Mussulman.

Isaac Ben Aga Shlome could read Persian and had studied witchcraft; for which reason he was killed, four years ago, by order of Shah Hydar; for he was suspected of having bewitched the Queen.

Bokhara being called the strength of Islamism, the Jews, although they were allowed to worship in their old synagogues, are not permitted to repair them, much less to build new ones. They are obliged to wear a mark, and a little cap, which distinguish them from the Mohammedans; but they are upon the whole well treated by the King. Rabbi Gaday advised me to go to the following Rabbis on my arrival at Bokhara, who, as he expressed himself, are the great men of the Congregation of Bokhara... [many names are here given] (pg 180-182)

Now we reach an interesting point in our narrative. It seems that Wolff has a definitive idea of where the 10 lost tribes of Israel were taken by Assyria. This event, referred to above, is in **2 Kings 17:6** – **“In the ninth year of Hoshea [king of Israel] the king of Assyria took Samaria, and carried Israel away into Assyria, and placed them in Halah and in Habor by the river of Gozan, and in the cities of the Medes.”**

The Oxus River, now called the Amu Darya, is a major river in central Asia, flowing from Afghanistan into the Aral Sea. Wolff naming this river as the Gihoon of Genesis 2:13 is interesting, and beyond the scope of my ability to pursue. I will just say that I think Wolff is right that the Kush/Ethiopia mentioned in Genesis 2:13 cannot refer to Africa, but another Kush in the Caspian Sea region, as stated by many modern commentators. We also remember that the description in Genesis 2:13 is prior to the Great Flood. So I will give Wolff the benefit of the doubt, as this would have been something that he would have studied extensively. Wolff, as is his way, follows the oral tradition of the people of that region, with that river being considered ‘Jayhoun’, or Gihon by Medieval Arabic and Islamic sources.



Although unknown to most Western scholars, the Oxus Civilization dates back 4,000 years—to the time when the first great societies along the Nile, Tigris-Euphrates, Indus, and Yellow rivers were flourishing. News of this lost civilization began leaking out in the 1970s, when archaeologists came to dig in the southern reaches of the Soviet Union and in Afghanistan.

<http://discovermagazine.com/2006/nov/ancient-towns-excavated-turkmenistan>

#### GOVERNOR OF KARAKOL.

Ameer Mohammed Hussein Khan, formerly a Guzl-Bash slave, gained the favor of Shah Hydar, and was exalted to the dignity of Emeer and Governor of Karakol. He is a mild and polite person, and a i.e. Friend of Guests. When I told him that the object of my travelling was to enquire into the state of the Jews, to argue with them about the Gospel, and to have friendly intercourse with the Mohammedans at Bokhara, he observed, "I advise you not to take any step without first having seen the Goosh-Bekee; especially be cautious with the Mullahs: one word against the Mohammedan religion may rouse the Mullahs, and make them forget that you are a Mehmooon. What is your opinion about the Mullahs issuing Fetwa, that the Turkomans should make slaves of the Guzl-Bash?" I

replied, " I decidedly disapprove of it." He rejoined, "Be cautious at Bokhara!" He then told me, that the King of Bokhara would be glad if Abbas Mirza was to take Orgauntsh; for the King of Orgauntsh was an Haram Zadah, i.e. Son of a whore. He then gave orders to the keeper of the caravan-seray, to treat me kindly. I drank tea with him, and he desired me to write a prayer for him; which I wrote in Persian, and advised him to read it daily. The following is a translation of it: " Oh Lord, thou who hast exalted me to my present dignity, give me thy grace, in order that I may judge my people with equity; and give me the light of truth, that I may better know thy will and command. Amen."

March 3. — I left Karakol; but as the Ammoo was frozen, we could not cross it in a boat, and were forced to make a circuit of 8 English miles through a sandy desert, until we reached a bridge, which enabled us to pass what I conclude to be a branch of the Oxus. In the evening, (blessed be thy name, Oh Lord)! in the evening time, after a fatiguing and dangerous journey of one year, two months and six days since I left Malta, I arrived at the gate of Bokhara; cured from illness in Turkey and Armenia; saved from slavery at Torbad Hydarea; untouched and even protected by the wild Turkomans of Mowr, Sarakhs and Tekka, I arrived safely at the gates of Bokhara, the Kawate Islaam ed-Deen, the Strength of Islamism, the city of Afrasiab, the supposed Habor of Scripture, the rival and supplantress of Samarcand, the place of residency of Behador Khan, the treasures of which are so celebrated, that they are mentioned in the poems of Hafez, the asylum of the Nogay, the Jew, the Girgise and the Hindoo: I arrived at Bokhara, the city of Behador Khan, so harshly treated in former times by Tshingis Khan, and then again by Tamerlane: I arrived at the gates of Bokhara, Hallelu-Jah! As it was late in the night, we halted at the house of an Osbek from Orgauntsh, who treated us hospitably. I asked my Turkoman several questions about Bokhara. He replied, "Do not ask such questions to-morrow morning of Goosh-Bekee."



## Entrance in the City of Bokhara, 1832

(pg. 185 of *Missionary Labours*) [In Present-day Uzbekistan]

Finally, dear reader, we have reached Bokhara! I pray that God will reward your diligent study of what is not only distant lands, but distant times – a difficult combination for even the most interested! I marvel that Ellen and James White would have read this book and discussed it with the other pioneers of the church. The level of their learning was remarkably high, and to have worked through not just one of Wolff's books, but three, means they were not unenlightened regarding Judaism, Islam, and matters from far away lands. Remember that I have cut out many details!

At this point in the journal Wolff writes in detail, and most of it is fascinating, so I will be quoting at length.

March 4. — I sent my Turkoman into the town to ask the permission of Goosh-Bekee to enter the town of Bokhara. His Excellency sent a horseman for me, and I entered Bokhara on horseback, with my Hebrew Bible and Greek Testament in my hand. I was first brought to the house of the servant of the Goosh-Bekee, who received me very kindly; and after I had desired him to

make me a cup of tea, he made me tea in the Mogul style, as they call it, i.e. **tea with salt** [For you Mr. Kramlich], instead of sugar. A comfortable room was prepared for me. A short time after, Goosh-Bekee, i.e. he that has the 'Ear of the Lord,' the Prime Minister of the King, sent for me, desiring me to come to him. On entering his room, I saw him sitting with Ameer Sharaaf, the chief merchant of Bokhara; both of whom knew Mr. Morecroft [English explorer] and his party. Goosh-Bekee asked me to sit down; and after I had delivered to him the letters of introduction, from the chief Mujtehed, Mirza Hadayat Ullah, and from Mullah Mohammed Jawad of Burjund, the following conversation took place in the presence of Ameer Sharaaf.

*Goosh-Bekee.* Do you know Morecroft? [William Moorcroft, English explorer]

*Myself.* I only know him by reputation.

*G. B.* Do you come now from London?

*M.* From Malta and Constantinople.

*G. B.* Is King George still alive?

*M.* No, but William, his brother, is now King.

*G. B.* Did you hear of Morecroft's death?

*M.* I heard of it at Tabreez; they say that he died at Balkh.

*G. B.* No, but at Ankhoy. Why did you come to this country?

*M.* I am a Jew who believes in Jesus Christ, and I therefore go about the world to argue with the Jews about the truth of the Gospel. I have on this account been three times at Jerusalem, nine times in Egypt, and twice in Persia; and having learnt that Bokhara and Balkh are the Habor and Halah of Scripture [2 Kings 17:6], and that many Jews were here, I came here to converse with them, and to see the Mullahs of the Mussulmans; and then I shall proceed on my way to Kabul; for I have learned that the Afghans believe themselves to be descendants of the Children of Israel.

*G. B.* Do you know Shoojah-Almulk, and Shah-Zemaan at Loodianah?

*M.* I have never been in India.

*G. B.* How has the dispute between the Governor General of India and Runjud Singh ended?

*M.* I know nothing about it.

*G. B.* Do you eat our meat?

*M.* Not at Bokhara, for two reasons: first, because you eat here horse flesh [note: still eat horse today]; and next, because I do not want to give offence to the Jews here, with whom I wish to converse. (I did not like to tell him a third reason, which was that I was warned at Meshed not to eat with the Mussulmans at Bokhara, telling me that they administer poison to foreigners; which report, however, I believe to be without foundation; for after all, I subsequently very frequently drank tea with Goosh-Bekee.)

After this conversation, Goosh-Bekee told me to go back to my lodgings, and remain there, until he had spoken with the Ameer Almoomeneen, Prince of the believers, which is the title of the King of Bokhara, to see whether he would permit me to live with the Jews of Bokhara. In the evening, Rabbi Pinehas, and a great many Jews came to my lodgings, and told me that after I had spoken again to the Prime Minister and heard the decree of the King, they would take me to their house. Rabbi Pinehas told me, in case that I was to be introduced to the King, I should stand before him with fear and trembling; and petition him to allow a synagogue to be built, or to repair their old ones.

Any missionary who is in a foreign land must always consider that you will be judged by those of your ethnicity or nation who have come before you, especially in places where that race/ethnicity is rarely seen. In Wolff's case it is being judged by the impression the explorer William Moorecroft had given. Also the missionary, especially if he is a well-connected one of influence, must expect to be used as a pawn in local politics. Western missionaries who come to Thailand, for example, would do well to observe local doctrinal and personality disputes first before getting sucked into battles on vegetarianism, church standards, administration, or law/grace issues.

March. 5.—The Ameer Almoomeneen, or Prince of the believers, which is the title of the King of Bokhara, sent to me one of his servants, ordering me to send all my papers for his perusal. I immediately complied with His Majesty's command.

In the afternoon Goosh-Bekee sent for me; he asked me politely to sit down; several Jews were present, among whom there were

Hakham Eliahu from Bagdad, and Rabbi Simha Calandar [“master of police”] of Bokhara. I observed that a whispering was going on between Ameer Sharaaf and Hakham Eliahu of Bagdad: soon after, Goosh Bekee addressed me.

*Goosh Bekee:* I must tell you that you have a great resemblance to Morecroft, and I suspect that you came here to reclaim his property, of which we are not in possession.

*Myself:* Goosh-Bekee, I don't tell lies, I am no relation of Morecroft, for I am a Jew by birth; my wife is no Jewess; her name is Lady Georgiana, the daughter of a Vizier, who was a greater man than you are here. This Bible is my occupation.

*G. B. (to the Jews)* This gentleman believes in Jesus, and tells me at the same time that he was a Jew!

*Hakham Eliahu from Baghdad.* Seven years ago, a person came to Baghdad with Bibles and New Testaments, whose name was Joseph Wolff, who pretended to be a Jew; but when once going to the bath, we observed that he was none, and we burnt all the books which he had given to us; we found him out to be a Russian.

*I.* I am the same Joseph Wolff who brought the books; and you lie like a dog if you say that I was in the bath at Baghdad.

*G. B.* Do you believe in Jesus?

***I.* The fulness of the Godhead was in him bodily. He was the word of God, that was made flesh in the womb of the Virgin Mary, by the power of the Holy Spirit. He died for our sins, rose again, went to Heaven, whence he shall come again, according to my opinion, in the year 1847, and reign at Jerusalem 1000 years.**

*G. B.* Is Jesus mentioned in the books of the Jews?

*I.* Throughout the Old Testament.

*G. B.* Is our prophet mentioned in the Bible?

*I.* The empire which he has established is mentioned; but he is not predicted as a prophet.

*G. B.* Where about is his empire mentioned?

*I.* In Daniel vii. 5.

*G. B.* You are our guest; but I consider you as an Englishman, and I believe you to be a relation of Mr. Morecroft who died at Ankhoy; you may lodge with the Jews here, but the King does not allow you to go to the Mussulman Mullahs for the sake of your own

safety. The way to Kabul is shut up on account of the snow and will remain so for these three months to come, and the Gazal (i.e. fevers) prevail at Balkh; go back either by way of Mashhad, or by way of Russia.

*I. I must be considered both as an Englishman and as a Jew; for I was naturalized by King George and the house of Lords; and that I am a real Jew by birth, of this you shall be convinced.*

One has to admire Wolff's guts to be in such an intense environment and to answer so bluntly. Speaking of his wife's father he says he was "a greater man than you are here!" Wolff must have had an extraordinarily high social understanding to know when and how to read and speak to strangers.

Here we also see his date for the 2<sup>nd</sup> coming being 1847, which I think must be derived from the 2300 days or the 2520, but just with a different starting date. I know that he understood the 70-week prophecy as ending at Jesus's death, and it could be that he thought Jesus's death was AD 34, the stoning of Stephen was AD 37, and therefore the end of the 2300 days would be 1847. His understanding of Daniel 7:5 as representing Islam is a mystery to me; it might be that he is somehow connecting Goosh-Bekee's question to Persia or Mohammed to Persia.

Goosh-Bekee pronounced me to be a sincere man, and immediately observed that he should have much to talk with me about. The Jew Reuben from Mashhad took me to his house; and here my confessing myself to be a believer in Jesus, tho' recognised as a Jew, struck them with amazement; especially as the Jews of Mashhad had written to them that I had acted kindly towards them; "For a Renegado, (as they said,) would not confess himself to be still a Jew; nor act kindly towards us."

Having before me the example of Paul, I went with them to the synagogue and read in the Law of Moses; and as they wanted me to sing one of their hymns in the English style, I sang one with the melody of "God save the King." However, as I was so entirely out of practice with regard to their ceremonies, I discontinued my attendance at their synagogues.

March 6. — A large caravan, consisting of Nogay Tatars, arrived from Cassan and Orenburg in Russia; which latter city is called Kalaa, by the people of Bokhara. The caravan consisted of about 400 camels, and 1000 Nogays and Cosacks. I observed among them two Russians, who passed as Mussulmans; they called on me, and wanted to know news about the movements of Abbas Mirza. There were also at Bokhara two Armenians: one, who came from Russia and lived there for many years, and another who lately came from Astrachan, via Orgauntsh. The people of Bokhara are very good natured, but very effeminate; they have no energy, and are a complete kingdom of Mullahs, i.e. Priests. The city of Bokhara contains from 180,000 to 200,000 inhabitants: the ruling people are the Osbek, after them the Tatshik; but half of the population are Ghooloom, i.e. slaves of Guzl-Bash; who often talk about Baba Khan, a name which they give to Fatullah Shah, King of Persia. Those Ghooloom frequently hold the highest situation in the state: most of the Persians who were taken slaves and brought to Bokhara, prefer slavery there, to returning to Persia as freemen.

There's something you don't expect to hear: that people prefer to be slaves than return to Persia as freemen. A city of priests and half the population is slaves. Hard to imagine.



Bukhara is in modern-day Uzbekistan, a country of 33 million

#### BEHADOR KHAN, KING OF BOKHARA.

Behador Khan, the King of Bokhara, has the title of Ameer Almoomeneen, or Prince of the believers. He is about 28 years of age; he spends his mornings in reading the Arabic writings of Jelaal (Rumi?) and Bydawee (Al-Baydawi?) &c. with a set of Mullahs; after his studies with the Mullahs, he visits the grave of Baba Deen, a Deevane, or sanctified Dervish of Bokhara; and the rest of the day he sits upon the throne of judgment, and hears the complaints of his subjects. He is feared by his Ministers, and considered to be a just King. He is now more than ever desirous to cultivate the friendship of foreign Powers, which change of conduct is ascribed to the advice of Goosh-Bekee, and of Mullah Beddr Addeen, an Afghan merchant, who has one wife at Kabul and another at Bokhara. Behador is dreaded by his Ministers, though not at all considered to be a tyrant. The Jews, although 10,000 souls in number, pay only 300 dollars per annum. Theft is punished with death; striking, with the loss of one's hand; quarrelling in the market place, with imprisonment. (pg. 190)

#### BOKHARA AND BALKH [Balkh is located in Northern Afghanistan]

Mullah Pinehas the elder, who is Chief Rabbi of the community at Bokhara, called on me with the rest of the Rabbis. He informs me, that the ancient Rabbis of Bokhara asserted that Bokhara is the Habor, and Balkh the Halah of 2 Kings 17:6; but that they lost their written accounts in the time of Genghis Khan. On my arrival at Balkh I was told by the Mussulman Mullahs, collected together in the room of Aishaan Khoja, that Balkh had been built by a son of Adam, and its first name had been Hanah, and afterwards Halah; though later writers designate it as Balakh, or Balkh. These united accounts, of the Mussulman Mullahs on the one hand and of the Jews on the other, serve to shew, not only that Bokhara and Balkh are the same as Halah and Habor, but likewise (as the Jews of Balkh and Samarkand assert) that **Turkestan must be the land of Nod, and Balkh the situation where Nod stood. (Genesis 4:16)**

Is it not very remarkable that the Jews in the land of Nod, where Cain dwelt, the Jews I say, who slew the antitype of Abel, Jesus Christ, should wear a mark by order of the King of Bokhara, as Cain of old wore a mark; in order that no Mussulman may give them the Salaam, i.e. Peace.

Thou, my nation! thou art a fugitive and a vagabond on earth, even in the land of Nod, (which word means *fugitive*); an exile and an outcast from on high. But the blood of Jesus Christ cries more powerfully and better things than the blood of Abel; and he soon will make darkness light before thee, and crooked things straight: Jesus Christ shall bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison-house. And though now it is prohibited by order of the King of Bokhara to give you the Salaam, you shall soon dwell in that city where thy officers shall be peace, and thy exactors righteousness, governed by Jesus Christ, the King of Jerusalem! (pg. 192)

Nod is the land to which Cain fled after killing his brother Abel. “And Cain went out from the presence of the LORD, and dwelt in the land of Nod, on the east of Eden.” The word Nod means “wandering”, or “vagrancy”, and comes from the same root as “vagabond” in Genesis 4:12, God’s description of Cain’s future – “a fugitive and a vagabond shalt thou be in the earth.”

John Gill says this in his commentary on Genesis 4:16 – **and dwelt in the land of Nod**; so called, not before he went there, but from his wandering up and down in it; continuing in no one place in it, as well as his mind was restless and uneasy; **Jarchi [Rashi, Jewish Rabbi of the middle ages] mentions another reason of its name: that in every place where he went the earth shook under him**, and men said, “Depart from him, this is he that slew his brother.”

#### JEWES OF BOKHARA.

The Jews of Bokhara know only thus much of their history: the Children of Israel, they say, emigrated from Babylon to divers parts of Persia and settled especially at Sabzawar, two days journey from Meshed. Long before the time of Genghis Khan, and in his time, the Jews of Sabzawar were carried to Balkh and Samarcand. When

Samarcand fell in ruins, a great number of them went to Bokhara, where there were already many who originally had come from Babylon and of whom many had emigrated to China, which they call Tsheen Patsheen, and with whom they soon ceased to have any communication at all; but they assert that they had taken their genealogies with them to China. The Jews of Bokhara, and the surrounding places, Shahr-Sabz, Balkh, Samarcand, Toshkand and Kokan, fell into great ignorance, forgot their laws, rites and customs, and did eat the meat of the Mussulmans indiscriminately. There was no Rabbi among them who was able to teach them the Law of Moses and the Prophets, or who was able to tell them what was clean and unclean, until Joseph Mooghreebe, the African, or, as the Jews of Bokhara pronounce his name, Joseph Maarabee from Tituan, arrived at Bokhara. As I know the satisfaction with which many of my nation trace the history and genealogy of their celebrated Rabbis, I shall give a detailed account of the descent and connections of Rabbi Joseph Mooghreebe.

Rabbi Joseph Mooghreebe who came to Bokhara was the disciple of Jehudah Ephraim Monzoyego, a relation of Jehudah Koriath. He went from Tituan to Jerusalem, thence to Bagdad, and from thence to Bokhara; and arriving in the latter place he preached: "Woe is me, Oh my brethren! to find you in such a condition, that you have forgotten the Law of Moses and the Prophets, and the words of the wise men!" He refused to eat of their meat for six months, during which time he taught them to kill animals according to the law of the Jews, ordered them to perform ablution, induced them to send a man to Constantinople, Wilna, Leghorn and Capusta (in Poland), the seat of Jews residing in that country, for the purpose of purchasing talmudical books; he sent for a Sopher, [Sopher, is a fine-writer, who writes the five books of Moses upon parchment, which are deposited in the ark. of the synagogue] who wrote for them the Law of Moses upon parchment; he then took under his instruction several young men, and thus made of Bokhara, as they expressed themselves, a little Jerusalem. He married at Bokhara a second time, though his wife at Tituan was still alive; he spent there 61 years, lived to the age of eighty-one, and died lamented by every Jew of Bokhara, by whom

he is styled the 'Light in Israel.' His more initiated disciples however tell some anecdotes about him which makes me doubt his orthodoxy, for instance, he told them that it was no sin to drink milk immediately after meat, provided that none of the unlearned Jews were present; that the religion of Moses may be divided into two parts: the one part to be taught to all, and another part reserved for the wise men. Rabbi Pinehas Ben Simha, a young man of extraordinary talents, tells me that his continued prayer had been: "Oh Lord, King of the worlds, when will the time come, that the followers of Jesus will take possession of these countries!" But still he had the bigotry to destroy the New Testament, which came here a few years ago from Orenburg. He knew mathematics and astronomy, and was an enthusiastic freemason, as it appears. Rabbi Pinehas Ben Simha is his son-in-law, and a man of most extraordinary talent; he is now convinced of the truth of the Gospel, and several others with him. Rabbi Joseph Mooghreeb's sons, Abraham and Isaac, are not endowed with the talents of their father; they are bigotted, and proud of being the sons of Rabbi Joseph Mooghreeb. He was considered by the Mussulmans as a great Mullah, and he proved to them that the Jews were possessors of the revealed book of Moses, which saved them from slavery.

As Reuben of Meshed, my landlord, was generally drunk, I left his house, which he very unwillingly acceded to, from fear of Goosh-Bekee; but I told him that I would inform Goosh-Bekee that I did so of my own accord: I went to live in the caravan-seray of the Affghauns, belonging to Mullah Bedr-Addeen. Mullah Joab Ben Mullah Babay, a Jew, born at Meshed, called on me; he was for a long time Hakem, i.e. Judge at Arandajah, in the province of Dere Kase Khan in Mooltan. The name of the Prince in that country, under whom he was employed, is Mahmood Khan Belooje Pehrawee. I bought from him a translation of the Pentateuch into Persian, with the original written over every word in Arabic letters; it was translated by order of Nadir-Shah. I sent it as a present to the British and Foreign Bible Society.

I proclaimed the truth of the Gospel to this feeling Jew; he wept, but the rest contradicted. I sang with him in Hebrew the following words, found in the Jewish liturgy:

Our Father, our King, we have sinned before thy face;  
Our Father, our King, there is no King unto us but Thou;  
Our Father, our King, accomplish it for thy name's sake.

(pg. 195)

....

#### MULLAH JOAB'S OBSERVATION.

Mullah Joab made the following beautiful observation: "We Jews have reason to rejoice that we are scattered abroad among all nations, and that we are a proverb and a byword among all nations; for we perceive by it the exact fulfilment of prophecy, saying, 'And the Lord shall scatter thee among all people, from the one end of the earth even unto the other;' which encourages us firmly to believe that the rest of the prophecies respecting the future privileges of Israel will not disappoint us; for it is said, 'And it shall come to pass in that day that the Lord shall set his hand again the second time to recover the remnant of his people which shall be left from Assyria, and from Egypt, and from Pathros, and from Gush, and from Elam, and from Shinar, and from Hamath, and from the islands of the sea. And he shall set up an ensign for the nations, and shall assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth.'" I then observed, "And thus you can see, my brethren, that likewise those prophecies must have been fulfilled, that 'The Son of Man must have been cut off, but not for himself,' and that he was to be 'despised and rejected of men,' and that only your looking to him will be the way to your redemption, when the Lord shall take from you the heart of stone, and give you a heart of flesh; for only by having such a heart turned to God, you will be able to enjoy the privilege of being again citizens of Jerusalem." (Quoting Isaiah 11:11-12)

#### JEWISH RENEGADOES AT BOKHARA.

There are at Bokhara about 300 families of Jews turned to Mohammedanism; the Osbek do not intermarry with them, and they therefore take the daughters of the above described Ghloom, or slaves of Persians. They are employed as spies by Government.

## MR. MORECROFT.

It is the general opinion of the Jews of Bokhara that Morecroft was poisoned by order of the late King of Bokhara, Shall Hydar; but the Jews and Mussulmans of Balkh and Goosh-Bekee deny it. The King observed to Goosh-Bekee, "We must give to Joseph Wolff permission to travel through our country, in order that we may get rid of the bad name which is cast upon us by the death of Morecroft."

## SYNAGOGUES AT BOKHARA.

The four synagogues at Bokhara are in a deplorable state: small, ruined, and only one of them fit for a place of worship.

March 12. — I said to Mullah Joab and other Jews of Bokhara, "I myself believe that the Jews will be restored to their own land; how do you understand the prediction of the death of the Messiah in Daniel ix. as compared with the predictions of his future glory?" Joab desired me to tell him; and thus I preached to Joab, and to the rest, Jesus Christ and Him crucified, and his second coming in the clouds of heaven.

## OPINION OF THE JEWS OF BOKHARA CONCERNING THE TEN TRIBES.

Some of the Jews say that the Ten Tribes are beyond China and one must cross the Sambatyon in order to reach them; but the river is very stormy through the whole week, except on a sabbath day: on the sabbath Gentiles are allowed to cross it, but not the Jews; for the Ten Tribes would say, "Why do you transgress the Law, by crossing the river on a sabbath day?" and would stone him according to the mosaical Law. Though this is mixed with fiction, there is no doubt that some of the tribes are in China; as I hope to prove when I come to the narrative of my journey to Cashmeer. The tradition already mentioned of the emigration of the Children of Israel from Bokhara to Tsheen-Patsheen, i.e. China, shews that some of the Ten Tribes must have been there; though I believe likewise the Benee-Israel around and at Bombay to be of the Ten Tribes. Rabbi Joseph Ben Zachariah Ben Masliah, from Sanaa in Yemen, now at Bokhara, a very learned man who speaks, as do all the Jews of Yemen, beautifully the Hebrew tongue, and also the

Arabic language, tells me that the Benee-Israel at Bankoot, near Bombay, are believed by the Jews of Yemen to be of the Ten Tribes; and that according to the opinion of the Jews of Yemen the Affghauns are descendants of the strange wives, mentioned in Ezra x. 17, 18. (pg. 200)

I hope the reader will excuse some of this detail. This search for the lost tribes is important to Joseph Wolff, and in honor of him I have added just some of the details of his search, along with his connections to other ruminations of people's ancestry. I hope to show that the history of the Abrahamic religions permeates Asia, particularly Central Asia. If the reader is interested of what happened to the Church in the Wilderness in Asia, I recommend reading BJ Wilkinson's masterpiece, *Truth Triumphant*.

Rabbi Matathia called on me. I shewed to him Isaiah 7:14, and desired him to translate עלמה; he translated it Virgin. (\*A great proof that the Christians have translated correctly those passages is that Jews, who do not know of the controversy which is going on between Christians and Jews, give to those words the same interpretation as Christians do.)

*J.* Who was the son of that Virgin?

*Matathia.* The Messiah.

*I.* Why is the birth of a son of a virgin such a stupendous miracle, as described in Isaiah 7:11?

*M.* She must have had a son without a husband.

*I.* When did such an event take place?

*M.* I do not know.

*I.* It took place at the birth of Jesus son of the virgin Mary.

A long conversation then followed, about Jesus Christ and Him crucified, which lasted a whole night; for it is not the case, as some assert, that since I believe the personal reign of Christ I have ceased to preach Jesus Christ crucified: I preached the personal reign of Christ at Jerusalem because it is a consolation to Jew and Gentile, and a holding out of a beautiful prospect to the Jews; Christ crucified is the medicine, the remedy, and the only consolation to the afflicted sinner. The cross of Christ is the banner to be lifted up against the enemy, when he surrounds us. (pg. 203)

Isaiah 7:14 is important, because this is still debated until today. I was shocked to find it mentioned by most famous atheist in the world, Richard Dawkins, in his 1986 apology for Neo-Darwinism, *The Blind Watchmaker*. It is near the beginning of the book; Dawkins talks about how he believed in God for a while until he “realizes” such a thing is unscientific, and the Bible has been twisted to support Jesus being the Messiah. Then he asserts that the word translated “virgin” in Isaiah 7:14 should actually be translated young maid, and doesn’t necessarily mean virgin. As seen in the above passage, this was not a new argument. But Wolff asserts that a Jew who doesn’t know of this controversy translates the word as “virgin.”

And why is this so important? Wolff mentions Isaiah 7:11 – that God Himself tells wicked Ahaz, King of Judah, to “ask thee a sign of the LORD thy God; ask it either in the depth, or in the height above.” Ahaz doesn’t, and God himself tells him the sign, or miracle, which would become one of the most famous verses in the Bible: “Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.”

One reason this verse becomes so powerful is that the Koran tells multiple times and in great detail of the virgin birth of Jesus by Mary. So if you are a Jew in a Muslim milieu, and you accept that Isaiah 7:14 is connected to the Messiah, you are inevitably drawn to the most famous of virgin births – Jesus. And the fact that Dawkins feels needs to discuss theology in a significant amount of detail, particularly taking shots at this verse, in the first chapter of what is supposedly a book on biology, shows that this verse cuts deep, “piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do.” (Hebrews 4:12-13)

March 19, 1832—This day was a joyful day to me: Rabbi Pinehas Ben Simha professed his belief in the Lord Jesus Christ; he was fully convinced by the prophecies I pointed out to him. He told me that Rabbi Pinehas the elder had been convinced of the same

truth; he advised me however not to speak with every Jew at Bokhara about religion, as many Jews are ignorant and obstinate. (pg. 205)

...

Goosh-Bekee sent again for me, and told me that the King had given me permission to proceed to Kabul, or wherever I pleased. I drank tea with him. A great many Mullahs were assembled in his room, and again a conversation took place; in which I told them that the fulness of the Godhead was bodily in Jesus (note: told again). Every traveller in the East will be aware that those great men are never, alone: men of distinction sit around them, and the servants are standing; so that the conversation I had with Goosh-Bekee was heard by all. (pg. 206)

...

There are at Bokhara 100 colleges filled with Mullahs: the books they read are, Jelaal, Beidaavee, and all the ancient commentators of the Koran: they take all their Astronomical, Astrological, Medical and Philosophical knowledge from the Koran and its commentators.

The Sooffees of Bokhara are quite different from those of Shiraz and Mashhad: those of Shiraz and Mashhad are mystical infidels, and antinomians (no need to observe law due to grace); but the Sooffees of Bokhara strictly believe in the Koran, and try to regulate their life accordingly; they are not addicted to such abominable crimes as the rest of Mohammedans at Bokhara are, and try to come near to God. (pg. 210)

#### BABA DEEN

(I think this is referring to Baha-ud-Din, 1318-1389)

The great Patron Saint of Bokhara, lived some hundred years ago, and was, as the Dervishes explain it, drunk with the love of God, walking about naked in the streets of Bokhara. Baba Deen was highly respected by the King of Bokhara. At present, pilgrimages are performed to him; and the King of Kondo, notwithstanding the deadly enmity he bears to the King of Bokhara, sends every year an offering of rice for Baba Deen at Bokhara.

The memory of this Dervish is highly revered; but the Dervishes now living, are generally hated by the stiff orthodox Mullahs.

**In every denomination of religion, there are among its professors two kinds of people: first, those who content themselves with a cold orthodox creed, whilst they do not seek after internal religion, and close communion with God.** This is the case among the professors of the Christian religion, and this I found to be the case with Mohammedans. To the first class, the Mullahs of Bokhara belong; to the second class, the Dervishes of Bokhara, who are generally Sooffees, but of a different character from those of Persia. The Sooffees of Bokhara, are people who really try, as they express themselves, "to come nearer to God," by a moral life, separation from the world, meditation, prayer, and reading the books of other religious sects. Many of them are like Cornelius of Cesarea, whose prayers and alms went up as a memorial before God. These are termed hypocrites by the Mullahs; and as there are some hypocrites among the Bokhara Sooffees, they believe it right to reject the whole sect. (pg. 211)

Wolff declaring many Sufis of Bokhara to be sincere as Cornelius, the first gentile convert to Christianity, is a strong comparison, and I believe an important one. We must be open to judge all men as worthy of God's love. God knows the heart, and has his people everywhere. All too often the committed followers of the "cold orthodox creed" are the ones lacking in empathy and are quick to use force and coercion and manipulation. They can't see that the reason many look outside orthodoxy is because their creeds aren't satisfying the deep needs of the soul. In my walk with God I have come to be highly sympathetic to those thinking outside the box, though it may lead to strange doctrines, because there is at least a willingness to hear new things and not feel certain of one's own position. Before dismissing things immediately, which carnally is our nature to do, I remember the suggestion that Christ told us: "Wherefore by their fruits you shall know them." Matt 7:20. And also we remember that truth is oftentimes strange to us when we first meet it.

## Wolff Leaves Bokhara to Kabul in Afghanistan

On March 21, 1832, Joseph Wolff leaves Bokhara to travel to Balkh. Described by Marco Polo (1254-1324) as a “noble and great city”, it was historically an ancient centre of Buddhism, Islam, and Zoroastrianism. Now mostly in ruins, it is 20 km NW of provincial capital Mazar-e Sharif, which is where he goes after Balkh.

Wolff arrives in Balkh on April 7, 1832, and immediately begins sharing Jesus with the Jews there.



Turkestan covers a large number of countries including: [Russia](#) ([Tatarstan](#)) and parts of [Siberia](#)), [Mongolia](#), parts of the [Chinese](#) autonomous province of [Xinjiang](#), [Kazakhstan](#), [Turkmenistan](#), [Tajikistan](#), [Uzbekistan](#), [Kyrgyzstan](#), and parts of [Afghanistan](#).

April 8. — 1 proclaimed the Gospel to Mullah Benjamin, and proved to him that Joseph's history was a type of Jesus of Nazareth. I scarcely ever saw a Rabbi so teachable as Mullah Benjamin.

At Balkh are 100 Jewish families, or 500 souls. The rest of the inhabitants of that city are Tatshik, Osbek, Afghauns, a few Hindoo

merchants, a few Nogays from Cassan, and Arabs. Near Balkh are villages, entirely inhabited by Arabs, who speak the Arabic language. One of those Arab villages is called Joktau, probably of the Arab tribe Joktan, who still inhabit the country of Hadramawt and Yemen, mentioned in Genesis x. 26.

April 9. — I was again visited by Mullah Benjamin, to whom I preached that Jesus was the Son of God. **The more I see of this country, the more I am convinced that there is not a more hopeful field for a Missionary than Toorkestaun (Turkestan). The Persian likes to read the Bible, and to converse about religion for the sake of curiosity; but the Turkomans in the desert, with all their barbarity, and the people of Bokhara with all their corruption, and the inhabitants of Balkh, like to converse about religion, and to hear of it, from a genuine feeling for religion.** The Jews of Balkh, and even the bigotted Yehoodah permitted me to read in the Law of Moses in their synagogue, and to preach to them Christ. (pg. 215)

This area known as Turkestan is probably one of the most mysterious places in the world, and highly unreachable, though it has much relation with the Abrahamic faiths. As I look at the map of what Wolff considered Turkestan, I could not help but notice that it includes the massive province of Xinjiang China, seen in the news now for the massive reeducation camps of the Uyghur Muslim people.

Wolff continues on and arrives at Mazaur (Mazar on the map above). Mazar-i-Sharif is now a city of around 430,000 inhabitants and is considered one of the safest cities in Afghanistan, and was spared much of the destruction done to the other Afghan cities during the Soviet-Afghan War of the 1980's.

#### MAZAUR.

Mazaur contains about 10000 inhabitants, and is a famous place of pilgrimage. They pretend falsely, and against all Mohammedan history, that Ali, "Shahe Merdaan", King of men, arrived here from Arabia, riding upon a camel; and soon after becoming ill, he said, "Upon the spot where my camel is standing,

there I wish to be buried." He died, and was buried upon the spot where his camel stood. After he was buried, his camel disappeared in the presence of thousands of people.

Pilgrims come from Affghanistaun, Cashmeer, Kokan, Shahr-Sabz, Hindostaun, Khiva and Bokhara; and abundance of miracles are related as being performed there: such as sick camels becoming healed, barren women becoming fruitful; and impotent men gaining strength. (pg. 219)



Built in the 15<sup>th</sup> Century, it supposedly contains the remains of Ali, cousin and son-in-law to Mohammed. Wolff disagrees, and probably agrees with what most Muslims believe: that Ali was actually buried at Najaf, Iraq.

Wolff is making his way to Kabul, and he has a scary moment on the way. Wolff after this point in his travels in not good condition, and has little money left.

#### ARRIVAL AT DOOAB

As my people, namely, one Mohammedan and two Jewish servants and my muleteers knew that I had been at Jerusalem, they called me Hadjee, i.e. Pilgrim; and the Mohammedans of Bokhara, the Turkomans in the desert, and the inhabitants of Mazaur, treat with

distinction any Christian or Jewish Hadjee; but the Shia (followers of Ali) have no regard except for a Mohammedan Hadjee. Arriving at Doob, I sat down upon the ground; and being asked for my name, I replied, "Hadjee Youssuf:" they desired my blessing, which I gave to them. They then asked my Mohammedan servant whether I was a Mussulman; he replied, "Yes;" I, on hearing it, said, "No;" then they asked me why I had given them the blessing; I answered, "I am a believer in Jesus Christ, and was respected at Bokhara as a Hadjee, because I was at Jerusalem."

*The Chief of the place:* Now say, God is God, and Mohammed the Prophet of God; else we will kill you.

*Myself:* I am a believer in Jesus.

The Chief assembled the Mullahs, who looked into the Koran, and I was sentenced to be burnt alive. I appealed to Mohammed Moorad Beg, and told them that I was an Englishman.

*Mullahs:* Then purchase thy blood.

*Myself:* Then take all I have. And thus they did; they stripped me of everything, even of my three shirts, and the only bed cover I had with me. Doob is 16 miles from Roohe. (pg. 220-221)

Wolff is at this point in a difficult situation. On April 28, 1832 he says of his visit in a rebel village of the chief: "I was in such a miserable condition, covered with rags, that he could never suspect me of being an Englishman..." He owes money to the muleteer (the driver of mules), and fears that he will not be able to pay his debts. He says his servant ahead of him to see if there is not somebody who will help him ahead, and sends up prayers to Jesus. He receives a letter from a British Lieutenant, who takes care of him, being the guest of the local governor. Thus he arrives in Kabul.

May 4. —Lieut. Burnes and myself dined with Doost Mohammed Khan. He entered with Lieut. Burnes into conversation about the state of India &c. And as he knew that I was a Mullah, he desired one of the Mullahs to converse with me, which I did without an interpreter in the Persian tongue.

*Affqhaun Mullah.* Who was Jesus ?

*Myself.* The son of God.

*A. M.* God has no wife.

*M.* There are even among men different kinds of sons: a benevolent man, who brings up an orphan, clothes and feeds him, becomes thus the father of the orphan, and the child becomes his son. We are all in a certain sense the sons of God; for he is our Creator and Preserver. Jesus Christ is the Son of God; for he was born, as your Coran itself states, by the power of the Holy Ghost; and as the Coran beautifully expresses it, 'God said, let it be, and it was.' Jesus is called the Son of God, for the fulness of the Godhead was in him bodily. His spirit of wisdom, and His spirit of Might! We should consider those, who might say that Jesus was the Son of God, like a son from a man and wife, to be an infidel.

*A. M.* To what place did Jesus go?

*M.* He went to heaven.

*A. M.* How is it possible, that he should go to heaven with a body?

*M.* How do you wish me to consider you? if as a believer in the Coran, I shall answer from your own book; if I have to consider you as a Kafer, (infidel) I must take another ground.

*A. M.* God forbid that you should take me as a Kafer, I am a Mussulman.

*M.* Then how could Mohammed go to heaven, which is asserted by your Hadith?

*A. M.* The angel Gabriel carried him there.

*M.* And Jesus was carried there by the power of God; and it is even stated in the Coran, that Jesus went to heaven.

*A. M.* I read the Gospel of Luke and Matthew, when at Candahar. (pg. 227)

As can be seen, this issue of the sonship will come up again and again. Here Wolff uses an argument that calls us sinners sons of God by adoption, in contrast to Jesus being a Son of God by being God's Word. Jesus is the Son of God in Heaven even before the Fall of Lucifer, and the question is how is He the Son of God? To the Christian the analogy of Eve is applicable, as she is begotten of Adam, but she has no mother. Eve was with Adam, and she was human like Adam. Christ was with God (proper noun) and He was God (adjective, as in deity) like God His Father.

Some Ellen White texts have been really helpful to me on this issue:

“A complete offering has been made; for “God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son,”— not a son by creation, as were the angels, nor a son by adoption, as is the forgiven sinner, but a son begotten in the express image of the Father’s person, and in all the brightness of his majesty and glory, one equal with god in authority, dignity, and divine perfection.” {ST May 30, 1895 par. 3}

“He was the Word of God,—God's thought made audible.” {DA 19.2}

The Sovereign of the universe was not alone in His work of beneficence. He had an associate—a co-worker who could appreciate His purposes, and could share His joy in giving happiness to created beings. “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God.” John 1:1, 2. Christ, the Word, the only begotten of God, was one with the eternal Father—one in nature, in character, in purpose—the only being that could enter into all the counsels and purposes of God. “His name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.” Isaiah 9:6. His “goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting.” Micah 5:2. And the Son of God declares concerning Himself: “The Lord possessed Me in the beginning of His way, before His works of old. I was set up from everlasting... When He appointed the foundations of the earth: then I was by Him, as one brought up with Him: and I was daily His delight, rejoicing always before Him.” Proverbs 8:22-30. {PP 34.1}

May God grant us wisdom to know how to explain this sensitive subject. There is a long discussion of genealogy of the Afghans at this point. I just give the original brief synopsis, and not Wolff’s long analysis of their ancestry which they have going all the way back to Adam. Wolff

says this in a footnote about why he includes this extensive reflection on the genealogy, and it is mainly because he wants to show the legitimacy of the Old Testament as a historical document:

It may perhaps be considered tiresome to my readers, and a want of taste on my part, thus to introduce the whole genealogy of the Afghans; but considering that this is the best manner of shewing the origin of a nation, and that a great analogy is observable between the chronicles of the Eastern nations and those of the Bible, I thought it worthwhile to insert it; besides, it is to be observed that as in the Bible the pedigree is sometimes taken from the woman, so it is the case here with Bebee or Lady Matton; as in 2 Sam. iii. 39; viii. 16; and in Isaiah vii. 14; which answers the objection of the Jews against the genealogy of our Lord Jesus Christ, which is, that being from the mother, it did not prove that he was of the house of David. Attai was considered a Jew, though his father was an Egyptian; 1 Chronicles ii, 34, 35. The Affghaun Kings who governed in Hiudoostaun, were descendants of Bebee Mattoo. (pg. 236)

#### HISTORY OF THE AFGHANS.

Mullah Khodadad, an Affghaun, called on me, and gave me the following information about the origin and descent of the Affghauns. Affghana was the nephew of Asaph, the son of Berachia, who built the Temple of Solomon. One year and a half after Solomon's death, he was banished from Jerusalem to Damascus, on account of his ill conduct. In the time of Nebuchadnezar, the Jews were driven out from Palestine, and carried to Babylon. The descendants of Affghana, residing at Damascus, being Jews, were also carried to Babylon, from whence they removed, or were removed to the mountain of Ghore in Affghanistaun, their present place of residence; and in the time of Mohammed they turned Mohammedans. This is the oral account I heard from Mullah Khodadad. In order that the Public may know everything concerning the Affghauns, and every one judge for himself, I shall mention all that I have read or heard about them. (pg 229)

...

My doubts about the Affghauns being descendants of the Jews are these: they have not the Jewish physiognomy; and the tradition of their being the descendants of the Jews is not general. I have already shewn that some believe them to be the descendants of the Copts ("who had turned Jews in the time of Moses"). Their genealogy also is confused; and finally, their language does not resemble the Hebrew. (pg 238)

...

May 10. — I asked Mullah Khodadad, whether the Shia were not considered as Muslims by the Sunni. He replied that the Mullahs of the Sunnee divide themselves on this point into two classes: the *Muhaddeseen* and the *Mawurulneheree*; the Muhaddeseen are those of Cabool, who say that as the Sheah accept the Hadith (Traditions) beside the Koran, they must be considered as Mussulmans. The Mawurulneheree are the Mullahs of Bokhara, who do not consider them as Mussulmans. The fact is, that the Sheah are so powerful in Affghanistaun that the Sunnee there would not dare to declare them infidels. **The Wahabites in Arabia are considered both by Sheah and Sunnee as infidels.** (pg. 239)

Now that is an amazing statement to read. Because of all the oil it has, Saudi Arabian Wahhabism has become remarkably powerful and has spread all over the world due to its financial power ([being able to sponsor schools in Southeast Asia, for example](#)). While I had heard from many Muslims that their disgust of Wahhabism, I had never heard them actually be called Infidels.

ROYAL PRINCE.

A fine looking young man, dressed in ragged clothes, entered my room; I asked who he was, he replied, "I am Jelaal Addeen, son of a King (Shahe Zadah), who is now at Loodianah with Shoojah Ahnulk. Doost Mohammed Khan gives me no bread to eat, I have not eaten anything for these three days past; I am hungry, could you not give me a few rupees?" It was Prince Jelaal Addeen, son of King Sanjaar, of the royal branch Saddo Szeye, a successor of King Timur and Lady Mattoo, who governed Hindoostaun in former times. Prince Jelaal Addeen begs at the door of his father's slave for

a piece of bread, and is refused! **Every additional experience in life shews more and more plainly, that there is no real permanent happiness in this world; and that the Lord pulls down the high and lofty ones of the earth; and that he is the disposer of crowns according to his good pleasure; and that there is only one crown which fadeth not away.** Happy the man for whom such a crown is reserved; but it is only reserved for those who have submitted to the sweet yoke and light burden laid upon us by Jesus Christ our Lord. "*Tu fecisti nos ad te, et inquietum est cor nostrum, donec requiescat in te!*" (latin - You have made us for yourself and our hearts are restless until they rest in thee) Jelaal Addeen, Shahe Zadah, begs for a piece of bread, in the streets of Cabool! (pg. 240-241)

Wolff departs Kabul to head to Kashmir. He gives much background that Kashmir (or Cashmeer as he spells it) is an ancient and historical place, also claiming connections to Solomon. Wolff suggest the idea that "Caashe" could be the word Kush in Genesis 2, which is translated Ethiopia in English (There are many problems with Ethiopia being an accurate translation). The Oxus River has its origins here. Some suggest that the Garden of Eden may have been here, and I think that may be because it is so beautiful.

Now it is one of the most hotly contested regions in the world, with both Muslim Pakistan and majority Hindu India claiming it. It is also on the border with China. Difficulties in Hindu-Muslim-Sikh relations are not a new thing, as we shall see. But first Wolff travels through Peshawar, which is just west of Islamabad, the present-day capital of Pakistan.

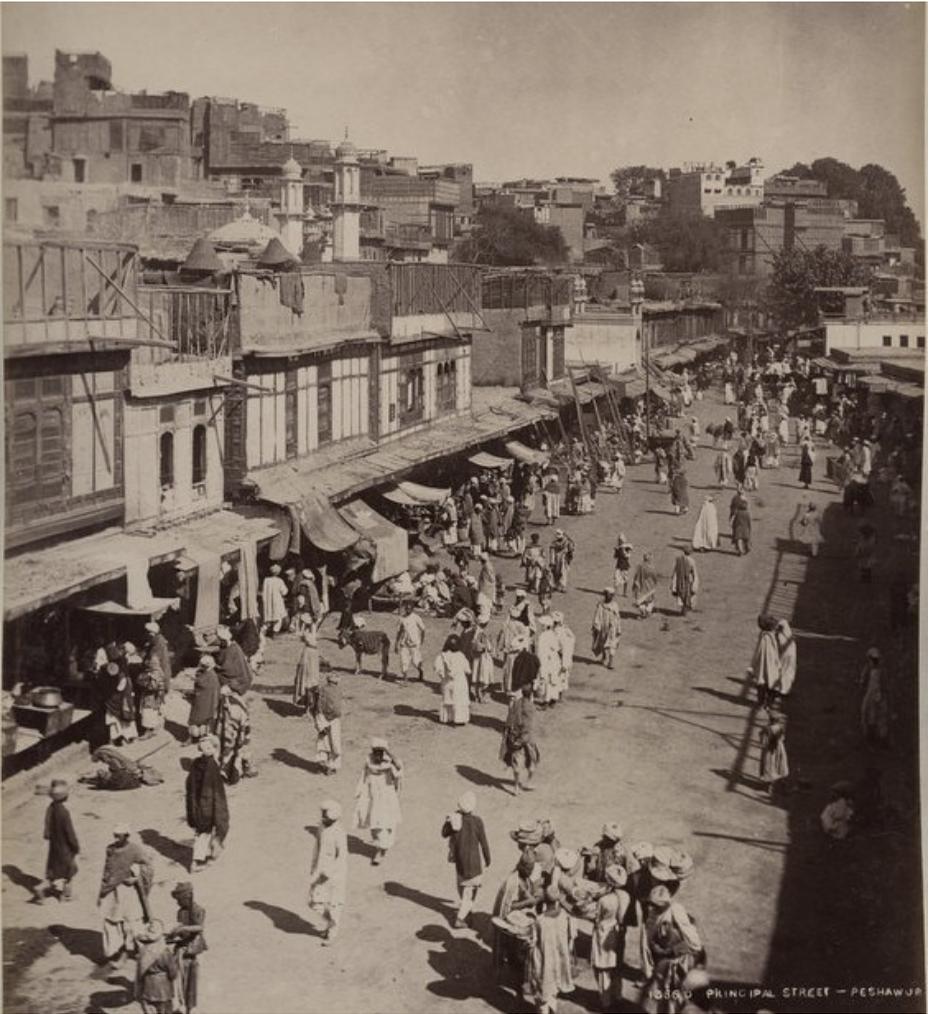
## Through North Pakistan (Sikh Empire and meeting Hindus)



The City of Peshawar, nicknamed “The City of Flowers”, is just east of Islamabad, near the border with Afghanistan.

### EMIGRANTS FROM CASHMEER.

From the time that Ranjit Singh (lived from 1780-1839, founder of Sikh Empire which lasted until 1849 when it was taken over by the British) took possession of Cashmeer, many Mussulmans preferred living as exile under a Mohammedan Government, to being the subjects of a Prince whom they consider as a Kafer (infidel); and beside this, the estates of the principal Mussulmans at Cashmeer have been confiscated by the great Maharajah of the Sikhs.



Principal Street of Peshawar, 1886

<http://www.webchutney.pk/67-photos-of-peshawar-youve-never-seen-before/>

#### ARRIVAL AT PESHAWAR.

May 23. — We arrived at Peshawar. Serdar Sultan Mohammed Khan received me in the kindest manner, gave me a room in his house, and ordered a tailor to make me a European dress at his own expense. **In the evening, he introduced me to a great many Mullahs of Peshawar; for this place is considered to be the most learned city after Bokhara. One of the Mullahs observed,**

**as Christ had said that he came not to abolish the Law, why then have the Christians changed the Sabbath day?** I replied, that it was only commanded in the Bible to labour six days, and to rest on a seventh day; that it was nowhere said in the Scripture, that the seventh day of the Jews was the seventh day of creation. (See Exodus 20:8-12). **I must confess that I never expected such a question from a Mussulman.** (pg. 245)

Wolff has gone through Syria, Iraq, Iran, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Afghanistan, it is Peshawar in what is now Pakistan (one of the most fundamentalist Muslim countries in the world) that someone FINALLY asks him the question I have been waiting for – why have Christians changed the Sabbath day? Surely Peshawar’s reputation at that time as the most learned city of religion in the region after Bokhara is proved true. For myself, I will forever remember the city of Peshawar for this most excellent of questions, asked by the Muslim theologian of the famous Jewish convert to Christianity. And not that question alone, but also by quoting Christ himself, from a chapter that Wolff had repeatedly read to Muslims who desired him to read a text from the New Testament – Matthew 5, the Sermon on the Mount.

<sup>17</sup> Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil.

<sup>18</sup> For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.

<sup>19</sup> Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.

Matthew 5:17-19

How gentle are God’s ways, at times gradual like soft waves; yet how sudden and terrible is his sword of truth at other times, abrupt like a clap of thunder - overwhelming when looked at in hindsight! How

many expositors of the gospel, that precious good news of Christ that allows us to overcome sin and be made right to the law, will have to look at these verses in that last day and decide how they think they ought to be judged for what they have taught in regard to the Law of God? In that great and dreadful day I pray that such people will have heeded the words “forgive, that you may be forgiven,” (Matt 6:14-15) for “as you judge, so shall you be judged” (Matt 7:1-2).

Wolff once again gives his predilection for the traditions of the “barbarians” over the fanciful origin stories of Europeans that are often without foundation. He gives a touching example here:

They [a particular tribe of interest named the Kaffre Seeah Poosh] are believed to be (by Morecroft and other European travelers) the descendants of the army of Alexander the Great. This supposition, however, seems to have been adopted merely by Europeans; they themselves, as far as I could learn, know nothing about Alexander the Great. Travelers have often the vanity to write long dissertations about the origin of a nation, without having the least solid foundation for it. **It is the travelers' business to gather sayings and traditions prevalent among the people they are visiting, and I confess, that I place the greatest confidence in the traditions of the barbarians: they not only transmit the names of their tribes from father to son, but even the names of their horses. A fine horse, belonging to an ancestor, is remembered in the deserts by both the Arabs and the Turkomauns, with tears of affection, and its death is often lamented in poetic strains.** Of what weight then are the doubts of a Gibbon, or a Hume? The Rechabite on horseback, or a Kaffre Seeah Poosh, refutes them with a tale of ancient times. (pg. 251)

I think the lesson the modern missionary can learn is to listen to the people they are working for, taking interest in them, particularly in their origins and their history. I know that a foreigner endears himself to me quickly when he asks me well-thought out questions about Thailand. Then it is not just the foreigner teaching the local, but a 2-way dialogue. Especially don't deride the local's own traditions, whether directly or indirectly, on first interactions with them. Oftentimes condescension

can be seen on the face and in the body language, so the missionary must be careful and pray a lot.

Wolff travels from there into the Sikh areas. The Sikhs have become at this time a major power, and have struck fear into the Muslims of the area. Wolff, who has ingenious improvisational diplomatic skills, honors both the Afghans who have hosted him while respecting the Sikhs (spelled 'Seik' by Wolff) to whom he approaches. He does this with such tact that peoples are brought together; Wolff obeys well Jesus's injunction: "blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God." Matthew 5:9

#### PUNJAUB.

*May 29.* —I set off for Acora, near Nowshara. Fifty horsemen, sent by Hurry Singh, the Governor of Jahaangeer, came to meet me. Jodoram, one of the Sikh officers, desired me to mount an elephant, which stood ready for me. According to the custom of the country, he gave me two rupees, which I took and gave to the elephant driver. A letter of Hurry Singh, one of Runjut Singh's chief Generals, was presented to me, with an assurance of his assistance by order of Runjut Singh the King of the Seiks.

We alighted at Acora, in a mosque. **There is no fear of being put to death by the bigotry of the Mussulmans; for Runjut Singh has pretty well proved to them that the edge of the sword is not always an evidence of the truth of religion.** The Mussulmans, as we shall see hereafter, had been defeated by Runjut Singh in several battles; and those Mussulmans who are now his subjects are held in the most abject condition. The name of Runjut Singh is a terror from Lahore to the city of Bokhara, the Strength of Islamism.

After having travelled for several months among wild Turkomans, and having been delivered from slavery, and escaped death at Dooab, and passed through the wild mountains of Khaibaree, it is an agreeable surprise, to be surrounded by kind people, dressed in white garments, their hands folded, and waiting for an order. Oh, how agreeably the believer will be surprised, when, after having faithfully fought on earth the good fight of faith, and under many trials and afflictions finished the work which He has given us to do, his soul departs from this body upon the

pinions of death, and goes to that land, where a crown of glory which fadeth not away, is prepared for him, and where the family of heaven, clothed in whiter garments than those of the Sikhs, meet him; and where he hears the voice, not of an heathen King, but of the King of Kings, exclaiming: "Well done, thou good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

...

Moonshee Mool Singh, an excellent young man, who understands Sanskrit and is very well informed in his religion, and to whom I translated the sermon on the mount, gave me the following information about the religion of the Sikhs. (pg. 259-260)

#### RELIGION OF THE SIKHS.

The religion of the Sikhs was established about 150 years ago, by Baba Nanak and Gooroo Gobind Singh (Singh means lion). The Sikhs call God Akal Puruk. Akal means in Sanskrit immortal, and Puruk a year; the Being who has neither beginning nor end, and by whom everything was created. They have a book, called "Granth Sahib," written by Gooroo Arjan, and Baba Nanak. The latter believed and taught the unity of God, and abolished idols among his people...

The Sikhs call the first man Brahma, and his wife Shakad. Swarg is the name for their paradise. Nark for their hell. **Those, who have done good works, remain in Swarg, until they have reaped the fruits of their doings, and then return to the world; those, who have done bad, remain in Nark, until they have received full punishment. [note: reincarnation happens after a period in heaven and hell]**

This section is of much interest to me because I have many good Sikh friends. They mostly speak Punjabi (though in Thailand many have forgotten this language, and speak Thai), a language similar to Hindi, and many left the region where they are from during the partition of India in 1949 into Muslim Pakistan and Hindu India. The Sikhs, whose population consist of 26 million of which 20 million are in India, happened to live on the area that was being partitioned; there was much instability and therefore many left.

The Sikhs do not worship idols and believe in one god. They have spiritual guides known as Gurus. They are known as great warriors and business people. It is in a sense reformed Hinduism, influenced by Islam but reject Islam's exceptionalism (claim to sole legitimacy as a way to God). On this point, Wikipedia says this: "Sikhism rejects claims that any particular religious tradition has a monopoly on Absolute Truth." 70,000 Sikhs live in Thailand, mostly in Bangkok, and generally started their trade in the clothe industry.

May 30. — I called again on Hurry Singh. His Monshee, who speaks Persian, was my interpreter.

#### RELIGIOUS CONVERSATION WITH HURRY SINGH.

(Governor of Jehaangeer)

*Hurry Singh.* Do you wish to see the fortresses of this place?

*Myself.* I never look at fortresses, my occupation is to speak with people about God.

*H. S.* What is necessary to do in order to arrive at a more thorough knowledge of God?

*I.* Jesus Christ said, "Will your heavenly father not give the holy spirit to those who ask him?" Pray to God, and He will give you the light of truth.

*H. S.* Which is the best of all religions you have known?

*I.* The religion of Jesus Christ.

*Monshee.* **Recite to Hurry Singh the sermon of Jesus, I will translate it.** (I did so; a general delight was expressed in every countenance). [note: Imagine being told that!]

*H. S.* If anyone purposes to leave this world and to devote himself to God, what must he do with his wife and children? It is very hard to be obliged to leave them.

*I.* If you seek God with all your heart and soul, He will manage affairs in such a manner that you shall live the more happy with wife and child.

Hurry Singh is a devout man, he makes every day a present of a cow to a Brahmin (priest), and is just in his dealings. (pg. 262)

Now that we are getting into East Asia and there is less of an influence of the Abrahamic religions, the questions become less theological (somehow related to the Abrahamic tradition) and more practical. These are the type of questions I would hear more in Thailand, rather than the questions Wolff received from the Muslims and Jews in Central Asia. Notice also the East Asian tendency to leaving the wife and children for a life of asceticism as a means to reach enlightenment.

#### HINDOO NOTION OF GOD.

Lena Singh and a Pundit (Hindu title of a learned man), Sawaram, called on me, and they made the following observation. "Ram Perwerdegar (God), is like the wide Ocean, of whom many drops are formed, and many rivers, but they do not exhaust the Ocean; many grains of sand and shells are cast by the Ocean on the dry land, and do not exhaust the Ocean: thus Wishnoo [Vishnu], whom you call Jesus, is a drop of that wide Ocean God, of which drop many other drops were formed, but do not exhaust the Ocean God, and God is not in want of any of them. From the beginning a religion was established for every nation, suitable to their several climates; and everyone who is faithful to that religion in which he was born, shall come nearer to Perwerdegar, and shall have his reward in Swarg [temporary heaven, see previous]." I asked, "Why do you worship the cow? The cow is not God, nor that wide Ocean of which you are speaking. [\*note here by Wolff: Those Philosophers of Europe, who believe that power of Philosophy is able to bring men to the saving knowledge of Christ, ought to travel among the Philosophers of Hindoostan and Persia, they will easily be undeceived.]

The Monshee of Hurry Singh, who was present, replied, "If you do not wish to make the Hindoos deadly enemies, do not ask about the cow." I broke off the conversation.

#### ARE THE HINDOOS IDOLATORS?

A Dafteree (book keeper) of Hurry Singh, not a Seik, but a Hindoo, told me that the Hindoo acknowledge only one God, and the idols are only representations of the invisible Godhead. They call their book Bhagavad-Gita (Divine song, in Sanskrit).

Infidels among European Christians, who are ready to defend any religion save their own, exculpate the Hindoos from the crime of idolatry, in order to make the veracity of excellent Missionaries suspected. Those infidels, hypocrites as they are, whilst they speak with horror about the Inquisition of Spain (**which language of horror they adopt for no other purpose than to bring into discredit the religion of our blessed Lord Jesus Christ, God blessed forever**), speak with enthusiasm about the Hindu and Sikh custom of burning their wives, and of the horrors of Juggur-Nath! [Jagannath, from which we get the word juggernaut. See this youtube video of the festival of [Ratha Yatra](#)] Whilst I believe that many an Hindoo, and many a Mussulman, and many a Zealander will be met with among the number of the happy in heaven; (for I believe many of these are so guided, by the spirit, as to arrive at the knowledge of the truth in a way unknown even to themselves); I firmly believe that such wicked infidels will be cast into utter darkness; for they had an opportunity of knowing better. What is Idolatry? It is the worship of an invisible Being through a visible likeness, by which the original is forgotten: now this is the manner of worship among the Hindoos, who therefore are idolaters. It is however clear to me, that idolatry originated from a false philosophical system, as that of Spinoza the Jew, upon the system of Pantheism. (pg. 264)

Interesting thoughts here. We see here that while the Sufis of Islam have their share of mysticism, it is the Hindu philosophers who really take it a step further. The Sufis seem to be more preoccupied with how to get around the law, yet at least there is a law as reference point; for the Hindu metaphysicians the reference point seems to be an all-inclusivity that aims to mysticize and then integrate all which is different.

There is also a deep insight into the “agnostic” European thinker, who is highly skeptical and unsympathetic to the points of faith of his own culture – Christianity; yet open and sympathetic to those of foreign religions. I can’t speak for myself, but this was definitely true for me: I was willing to read the Koran, the I Ching, and anything else, but the Bible! No way. But we ought also to not be too harsh to the “infidels

among European Christians,” for the devil has a big hand in this being the case.

Wolff, when he speaks of the darker aspects of Hinduism, refers several times to the “horrors of Juggernaut.” The description of this religious festival by the Scottish missionary Claudius Buchanan was so widely read it caused the word to be incorporated into the English language. Buchanan’s description of the festival has such amazing imagery that it is nearly tactile; I thought I’d share an extract here. The book was published in 1811 so it has a condemnatory tone, but I believe it still of interest:

*Juggernaut, 18<sup>th</sup> of June.*

---I have returned home from witnessing a scene which I shall never forget. At twelve o’clock of this day, being the great day of the feast, the Moloch of Hindoostan was brought out of his temple amidst the acclamations of hundreds of thousands of his worshippers. When the idol was placed on his throne, a shout was raised by the multitude, such as I had never heard before. It continued equable for a few minutes, and then gradually died away. After a short interval of silence, a murmur was heard at a distance; all eyes were turned towards the place, and, behold a *grove* advancing! A body of men having green branches, or palms in their hands, approached with great celerity [swiftness of movement]. The people opened a way for them; and when they had come up to the throne, they fell down before him that sat thereon, and worshipped. And the multitude again sent forth a voice “like the sound of a great thunder.” But the voices I now heard were not those of melody or of joyful acclamation; for there is no harmony in the praise of Moloch’s worshippers. Their number indeed brought to my mind the countless multitude of the Revelations; but their voices gave no tuneful Hosannah or Hallelujah; but rather a yell of approbation, united with a kind of *hissing* applause. I was at a loss how to account for this latter noise, until I was directed to notice the women; who emitted a sound like that of *whistling*, with the lips circular, and the tongue vibrating: as if a serpent would speak by their organs, uttering human sounds.

“The throne of the idol was placed on a stupendous car or tower about sixty feet in height, resting on wheels which indented the ground deeply, as they turned slowly under the ponderous machine. Attached to

it were six cables, of the size and length of a ship's cable, by which the people drew it along. Upon the tower were the priests and satellites of the idol, surrounding his throne. The idol is a block of wood, having a frightful visage painted black, with a distended mouth of a bloody color. His arms are of gold, and he is dressed in gorgeous apparel. The other two idols are of a white and yellow color. Five elephants preceded the three towers, bearing towering flags, dressed in crimson caparisons, and having bells hanging to their caparisons, which sounded musically as they moved.

"I went on in the procession, close by the tower of Moloch; which, as it was drawn with difficulty, grated on its many wheels harsh thunder. After a few minutes it stopped; and now the worship of the god began. A high priest mounted the car in front of the idol, and pronounced his obscene stanzas in the ears of the people; who responded at intervals in the same strain. "These songs," said he, "are the delight of the god. His car can only move when he is pleased with the song." The car moved on a little way and then stopped. A boy of about twelve years was then brought forth to attempt something yet more lascivious, if peradventure the god would move. The "child perfected the praise" of his idol with such ardent expression and gesture that the god was pleased, and the multitude emitting a sensual yell of delight, urged the car along. After a few minutes it stopped again. An aged minister of the idol then stood up, and with a long rod in his hand, which he moved with indecent action, completed the variety of this disgusting exhibition. I felt a consciousness of doing wrong in witnessing it. I was also somewhat appalled at the magnitude and horror of the spectacle; I felt like a guilty person on whom all eyes were fixed, and I was about to withdraw. But a scene of a different kind was not to be presented. The characteristics of Moloch's worship are obscenity and blood. We have seen the former. Now comes the blood.

"After the tower had proceeded some way, a pilgrim announced that he was ready to offer himself a sacrifice to the idol. He laid himself down in the road before the tower as it was moving along, lying on his face, with his arms stretched forwards. The multitude passed round him, leaving the space clear, and he was crushed to death by the wheels of the tower. A shout of joy was raised to the god. He is said to *smile* when the libation of the blood is made. The people threw cowries, or small money, on the body of the victim, in approbation of the deed. He was left to view a considerable time, and was then carried by the *Hurries* to the Golgotha, where I have just been viewing his remains. How much I wished that the

Proprietors of India Stock could have attended the wheels of Juggernaut, and seen this peculiar source of their revenue.”

*Juggernaut, 18<sup>th</sup> of June.*

“Moloch, horrid king, besmeared with blood

“Of human sacrifice, and parents’ tears.” – Milton

---The horrid solemnities still continue. Yesterday a woman devoted herself to the idol. She laid herself down on the road in an oblique direction, so that the wheel did not kill her instantaneously, as is generally the case; but she died in a few hours. This morning as I passed the Place of Skulls [note; many pilgrims come there to die; they live difficult lives. The outskirts of the city are full of open-air graveyards where vultures flock], nothing remained of her but her bones.

“And this, thought I, is the worship of the Brahmins of Hindoostan! And their worship in its sublimest degree! What then shall we think of their private manners, and their moral principles! For it is equally true of India as of Europe. **If you would know the state of the people, look at the state of the temple...**

I end the scene here. This is from Claudius Buchanan’s book ‘Christian Researches in Asia: with Notices of the Translation of the Scriptures into the Oriental Languages.’ Of interest is that he subtitled the book by quoting Rev 14:6.

#### MUSSULMANS AMONG THE SEIKS.

The Mussulmans under the government of Runjeet Singh, in a country formerly belonging to the descendants of Tamerlane, stand in the same relation to the Seiks as the Christians do in the Ottoman Empire to the Mussulmans; except that Runjeet Singh is more tolerant than the Turks and Persians. The Mussulmans in the Punjaub are not allowed to eat cow’s flesh. (pg. 265)

Wolff makes his way south to Lahore, and then to Amritsar. He will meet King Ranjit Singh, ruler and founder of the Sikh Empire. Ranjit Singh had made this the center of the empire, and he built there the Golden Temple, Darbar Sahib, the most important holy site of Sikhism. (see photo below, Sikhs are most famous for not cutting their hair and therefore usually wear turbans. Doesn’t mean that everybody who wears a turban is a Sikh though)



Sikhs are famous for not cutting their hair, which they cover with majestic looking turbans

Wolff meets the King with the intention of going onto Kashmir and Tibet to preach the Gospel. Wolff had sent a letter ahead of him to Ranjit Singh (whom he spells Runjeet Singh), which “enclosed to His Majesty a proclamation, which I issued here in the Persian tongue, exhorting all nations to repent, and declaring to them that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, who died for our sins, rose again, and went to heaven; and that great judgments are already beginning to announce His great coming: viz. Pestilence, Earthquakes, and Cholera Morbus.”

There is no doubt that Wolff believes that the coming of Jesus is imminent. We move ahead to his meeting with the King, but first some background on this interesting historical figure. Later on Wolff would meet some old friends from England who would tell him that this proclamation to the king “made people suspect that I [Wolff] must be crazy; and that was the reason why Lord William would not request Runjeet Singh to permit me to go to Cashmeer until he had seen me (pg. 281).

## RUNJEET SINGH. (pg. 273)

As I am now soon coming to this great and extraordinary man, I think it worthwhile to give a short sketch of his life.

Runjeet Singh was the son of Maha Singh, a petty Rajah of Goojra-Wala, in whose time the Punjaub was divided among several Rajahs, who were continually at war with each other. Runjeet Singh was ten years old when his father died. He made friendship with several of the small Rajahs, and made war against Lena Singh, Rajah of Lahore, defeated him, and took the latter city. When Zemaun Shah Dooranee, King of the Affghauns, invaded the Punjaub, all the Rajahs of the country fled before him, and Runjeet himself fled with his army to Umritsir [Amritsar]. At that time the news arrived in the Affghaun camp, that an intestine war had broken out at Cabool, and Shah Zemaun retreated. Immediately after this, the revolution in Affghanistaun took place, by which Shah Zemaun was dethroned, and the country thrown into disorder. Runjeet Singh, being at liberty to prosecute his designs in the Punjaub, became the Maharajah, or great King of all the Seiks. In the reign of Shah Mahmood Dooranee, he took the fort of Attock; afterwards he took the castle of Kote Kangra and Moulton, and finally completed his conquests, by driving the Affghauns out of Cashmeer.

One day Runjeet Singh was riding in the field. He met a Fakeer. Runjeet Singh dismounted to perform his devotion to the Fakeer. The Fakeer, without looking at him, said, "What use is thy external devotion, as long as thou oppressest the poor, and tyrannisest over thy subjects?" The Maharajah promised to reform, and the account of this fact appeared in the court newspaper, published under his own eye.

## SIKHS.

Runjeet Singh pays a great deal of respect and veneration to the Akalee [Akali, also called Nihang – an armed Sikh warrior order], though he knows at the same time how to keep them in proper bounds.

The Seiks are capable of enduring great fatigue, as they have shewn in the attack of Cashmeer, when Runjeet Singh and his whole army subsisted seven days without lighting a fire. They are

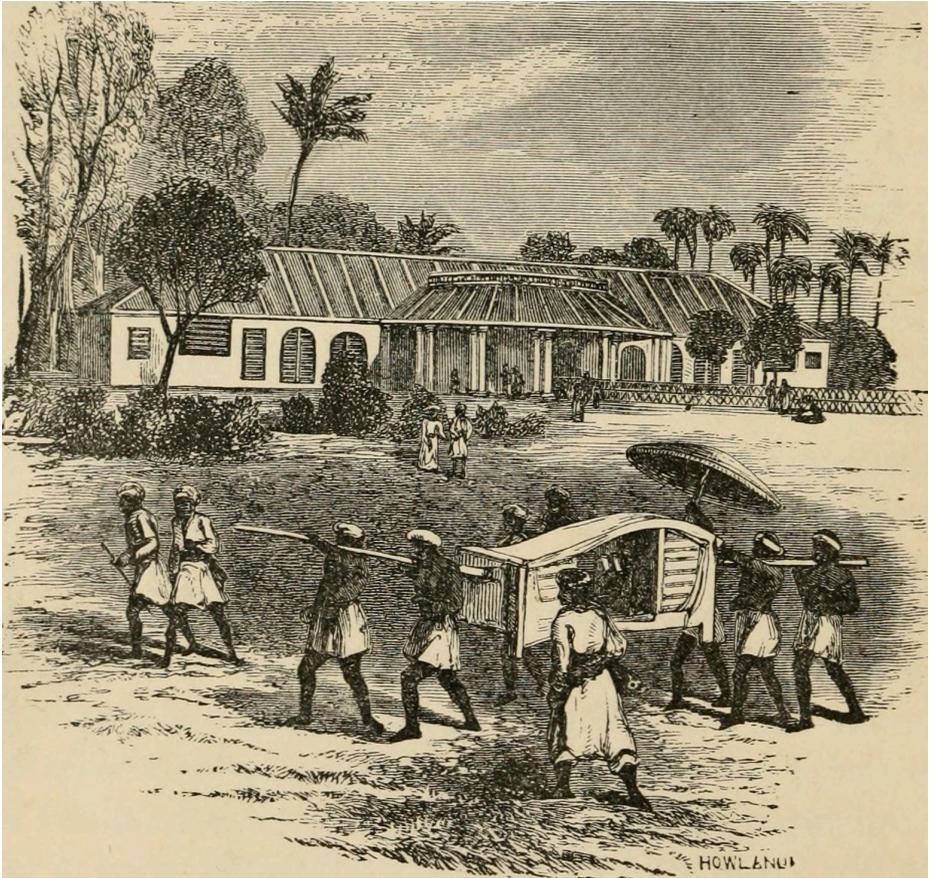
strong, powerful and athletic men, and esteem the fatigues of war a pleasure. The Seiks have of late introduced into their religious customs the burning of wives after the death of their husbands, like the Brahmins.

### BABA BETEE SAHEB SINGH

Is the Pope of the Seiks. He is 100 years old and a descendant of Baba Nanak, the founder of the Seiks' religion. He resides at Oonawala in the Himalayan mountains. When I asked a person belonging to this sect in what his occupation consisted, he replied: "He can curse the Maharajah and all the Sirdars [sardars, meaning noblemen], and they humbly bow before him. He says to the Maharajah, 'I am he that has created and exalted thee.'" One day Runjeet Singh wanted to take possession of the castle Teere in the mountains. He went to Betee Saheb Singh, worshipped him, and said, "I want a horse of you, in order that the rest of my horses may be blessed." Betee Singh answered, 'Thou blind rascal, (for Runjeet Singh has only one eye) thou wantest a horse of me; I shall give thee a 100 bastinadoes [a punishment or torture by caning the soles of the feet].' Runjeet Singh said, "Not 100 only, but 500; only give me a horse." Betee Singh, seeing the humility of the Monarch, gave him a horse, and added. 'Tomorrow thou shalt be in possession of the castle.' And thus it was. Betee Singh has a property of £30,000 sterling. He remains up the whole night, and performs worship and ablution. He gives harsh words only to his followers; and those who patiently hear the reproaches, become pure, whilst those who are offended at them become hated by their own wives. He is however a great wretch: he has killed his own son.

Arriving at Pool, about 25 k.m. from Amritsar, I received an order from the Maharajah to stop there until the next day; for the Pundits and Brahmins had observed that it was not a lucky day for me to enter the town of Umritsir [until today many East Asians are serious about numerology and luck]. Monsieur Allard managed it with the Brahmins, by observing, that I might sleep outside Umritsir, in his garden house, till next morning. I therefore

received a few hours after permission to advance towards Umritsir, in a palankeen [palanquin, see below].



## Arrival at Amritsar, Center of Sikh Empire

June 20.—Towards the evening my Palankeen stopped near a beautiful palace, situated in a garden; alighting from the Palankeen, I was embraced by a gentleman, with a silvery white beard, in an European dress; "it was Monsieur Allard, ex- Aide de Camp of Marshal de Brun, and now General of the cavalry of Runjeet Singh.

[French mercenary entrusted with the task of reorganizing the Maharaja's cavalry on European lines]

June 21. — Chevallier Allard went to the Maharajah Runjeet Singh, and announced my arrival. Soon after, a great many sweet meats were sent to me by His Majesty. Monsieur Allard told me that the people, sent with these presents, had orders to report to the Maharajah upon my look, my person, and all I may say. In the evening an elephant was sent by the Maharajah with several Officers to convey me to His Majesty. We entered two or three court yards of the palace, when I suddenly observed in the open air a little old man, with one eye, seated upon a chair; it was Runjeet Singh. At his left hand a boy, 12 years of age, was seated; immediately after, a great many Pundits and Brahmins sat upon chairs. A chair was placed for me opposite the Maharajah.

His Majesty asked me why I had taken such a dangerous journey through Toorkestaun. I replied, "On account of God, that I may speak with all Mullahs, and especially with the Jews, about the best way of serving God."

*Runjeet Singh.* (Pointing to the Pundits and Brahmins). These are our Padri (Priests).

*Myself.* Are these Mussulmans? (He burst into a fit of laughter). In order to understand this laughter, one ought to know that a Brahmin feels himself as much insulted by being called a Mohammedan, as a Mussulman in Turkey would feel by being called a Jew; but Runjeet Singh took it in good humour, and repeating my words said, "Are these Mussulmans?"

*R. S.* What is the chief thing, that a man should observe?

*M.* Solomon said, "The fear of God is the chief thing."

*R. S.* Our book (Grunt Saheb) says the same.

*M.* I am very far from denying that there are not good things contained in other religions; but I will ask a question of your Highness.

*R. S.* Ask.

*M.* What is necessary to be done in order to come nigh to God?

*R. S.* To do good.

*M.* How can a man perform good, if his heart is bad? God searches the heart; every one, who examines himself, will find that

his heart is inclined to evil; if that be bad, how can we expect good fruits?

*R. S.* A medicine is necessary for the heart of man.

*M.* I am astonished at this answer, no Mullah has ever given me such an answer; but I ask now, what medicine is to be used for the heart?

*R. S.* Do you tell me the kind of medicine.

*M.* The Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

*R. S.* Have you a Persian translation of the Gospel, which the Fakeer could read to me?

*M.* I will send one from Simlah, as soon as I am with the Governor General.

*R. S.* Do so. How is it that you travel about for the sake of religion? for the English in general do not care about religion.

*M.* Your Highness would be surprised to see what activity of religious exertions there is in England. Thousands of sterling pounds of money are spent every year for the sake of religion.

*R. S.* Have you heard of my conference with the Nawab Lard Saheb, (Lord William Bentinck) held at Roopar?

*M.* I heard at Bokhara of that interview.

*R. S.* Is it likely that the Russians will soon come?

*M.* I do not think that they will come for the present.

*R. S.* Tell me sincerely, in what manner could I shew my sincere friendship to the English Government?

*M.* The Governor General of India is best capable of answering this question.

Immediately after my arrival, the dancing girls appeared, according to the custom of that country. His Highness asked me, whether I should like to see them dance. I replied, as I was an English Brahmin I could not find pleasure in such amusements. His Highness desired them to retire. He asked me then whether I drank wine. I replied, "Very little." He ordered wine to be brought; It was Runjeet Singh's peculiar wine, rather like a distilled spirit; it burns the mouth like fire. I wished to drink one drop of it to the health of His Majesty; but I was obliged to reject it.

*R. S.* Do you believe that nobody can die without the will of God?

*M.* Yes, I do.

R. S. Then, why are you afraid when crossing a river in a boat? I heard that you were very much afraid, when you passed the river at Attock.

M. I can give no answer but this, that God should be shewn to be mighty in my weakness.

His Highness gave me 1100 rupees, shawls worth 1000 rupees, and a horse worth 100 rupees. (pg. 278)

Personally these types of dialogues are the highlight of this journal, and I hope the leader can learn many lessons from them. Wolff leaves Amritsar and continues his journey. He is headed to Kashmir. He is now in territory that is less barren and difficult than Khorosan and Turkestan.

#### ARRIVAL AT LOODIANAH.

June 25. — I crossed the Sutledge, and arrived at Loodianah, the first English station of the utmost northern frontier of British India. "Now," I exclaimed, "through God's infinite goodness, I am safe! after so many troubles, I am safe! and the Lord has not permitted one hair to fall from my head; and the prophesy of those of Tehran, that I should not get beyond Mashhad, has not been fulfilled! "

Captain Wade, the political Agent of the Honourable E. I. [East India] Company, received me with great cordiality, and so did Dr. Murray; they introduced me to Major Faithful, where I met, for the first time after 18 months, with an English family, and this in the midst of Asia Major. This gentleman was of the greatest assistance to me, especially in giving me an exact information about the Seiks; he tells me their religion is a compound of the Christian, Hindoo, and Mohammedan religions, and he introduced me to both the Affghaun ex-Kings, Shah Zemaun, and Shujah Almulk. Poor Shah Zemaun was deprived of his eyes by Futteh Khan, one of his slaves, who experienced afterwards the same lot. (pg. 279)

Wolff here in the book gives letters from two men whom he was in correspondence with. The first is Captain Riley, "the best Arabic scholar in India." Wolff had asked Riley many questions, and I think the answers are not important except for one, which I share below, on how to answer

Muslims who say their Koran is pure but the Old and New Testaments are corrupt. From Aug. 9, 1832:

12. When Moosulmans say our present copies of the Scriptures are corrupted, they say only what their Koran inculcates, what Sunnis say of Shias with reference to the traditions and arguments of each other; we cannot therefore hope other treatment at their hands. The Koran however applies this stigma in particular to the Jews, with no other object, of course, than the depreciation of both Jewish and Christian doctrines, to operate on the minds of men as a sufficient reason to neglect them.

You ask: Is there any answer found to this objection in their commentaries? No, believe me, they are little accustomed to advance anything to the disparagement of their own faith! for my part, I would meet this frivolous exception by appealing to their own innate experience, in the following proposition: "Is it not clear to the conviction of you, Moosulmans, that your Koran treats of matters which Jewish and Christian Scriptures (acknowledged therein as sent down from heaven) teach at large as religious doctrines? and can you really bring yourselves to suppose it probable, the book of your religious Faith, i.e. the Quran Majeed, upon which depends your hopes of prosperity in this life, and your eternal happiness in the next, 5 or 600 years after its publication in different nations, could be easily corrupted, at the desire of certain of yourselves, at the same time professing their religious belief in it? Can you be ignorant of that sacred awe with which reverential Believers approach the foundations of their national Religion, of whatever kind it may be, and wherever found? or of the jealous watch kept by men upon their best and most precious records, in all ages? and if so, does it not concern you nearly, to ascertain whether some change, in after times, may not have taken place in the text of your word of God, knowing as you well do, that a fear, lest Moosulmans should fall (as is declared) into similar contradictions with those current among Jews and Christians, was the cause the first Mooshuf or Koran was compiled by the first Caliph Abu-Bakr, from unconnected writings left by your Prophet at his death, and produced by his wife Aisha: and the last or one now in use, by the 3rd. Caliph Uthman ibn Affan, expressly to

obviate the erroneous readings in different copies, without any divine revelation to these compilers ensuring its accuracy? you will answer, No, superstition in false Religions, and a conscientious dread of Divine indignation in the true, is an all-protecting guardian. Grant then that the Jewish Scriptures were not corrupted by Ezra [who compiled the Old Testament], nor that it was possible for him to do so, without being brought to shame: a man of such esteem among the Jews, that according to your word of God, the Jews have said of him, that he is the Son of God." [there is some Arabic here; the Koran says of [Ezra that the Jews revered him as the Son of God in 9:30 of the Koran](#)] (pg. 291-293)

In the Quran itself it mentions that the Torah, the Psalms, and the Gospels are inspired, being given to the prophets Moses, David, and Jesus. Yet they also believe these books have been corrupted. The question comes up, how is it that the Quran hasn't been corrupted? If they were so careful to keep preserve it, wouldn't the Christians and the Jews done the same? Which is very much the case, seeing the manuscripts are in many different languages yet remain the same. Would someone like Ezra really corrupt the manuscripts handed down to him? There are so many prophets the Muslims accept; would God allow all their writings over 1500-year period, which tell the stories mentioned in the Quran but in so much more detail, to be lost? To me this doesn't make sense for God to do so.

Wolff heads onto Kashmir, in the backdrop of the Himalayan Mountains. This is a long missionary expedition! I am not even sure where he plans to end, but mentioned so far is Tibet. On his way he meets a group of naked fakirs (religious ascetics who survive by begging; there are many in India) at the Beas River and has a dialogue with him. The date is September 24, 1832. (Below is a photo from 1910 of some Hindu mendicants) I have also included his interesting description of Hinduism.



I then proclaimed to him our Lord Jesus Christ, and asked him how many years he had been a Fakeer. He replied that he had always lived in God, and should never die; for that, as old garments were exchanged for better, so the man of God lays aside his old body, and puts on a new one. A beautiful answer! But there was in the man an overbearing pride; and a peevishness that ill-assorted with his speech; frequently when I wished to say something, he would exclaim, "Be silent and listen!" However, I found an opportunity of declaring to him, that 'there is only one name given under heaven by which men can be saved;' even the name of Jesus Christ our Redeemer, God blessed forever.

This unhappy peevishness exists more or less in all those who live in a continual mortification of their bodies; even the great St. Jerome was not free from it; therefore he said of himself that he was everywhere carrying about the old St. Jerome with him. True peace of mind dwells not in the cold seclusion of a cave. That joy, passing understanding, which the world cannot give, is yet to be obtained in the world, by those, who, renewed by the Holy Spirit, go actively about to do good to his fellow creatures; shewing the

wonderful things of God, and preaching the glad tidings of the Lamb that taketh away the sins of the world; either as Missionaries abroad, or as faithful servants in that circle, within which God's providence has placed them: the Monarch on his throne, and the poor man in his cottage, if they but love Christ, and live in Him, may alike feel that peace of mind, and "rejoice in the hope of the glory of God." (pg. 328)

This description of Jerome, who lived from 347-420AD, translator of the Latin Vulgate version of the Bible, is agreed upon by BJ Wilkinson in *Truth Triumphant*. His description of Jerome and his disputes with men Wilkinson believes more doctrinally accurate and godly than him (Lucian, intellectual head of the Syriac Church, and Vigilantius, leader of the Waldenses) are fascinating readings. Wilkinson quotes from a book entitled *Vigilantius and His Times*, by William Stephen Gilly, published in 1844:

While he was there, processions to the tomb of the saint were made, accompanied by the swinging of incense and carrying of lighted tapers; but Vigilantius said nothing. The gentle manners of Sulpicius and Panlinus coupled with their meek devotion softened their delusions. When, however, he encountered the fierce polemics of Jerome, the eyes of the Gallic reformer were opened.

Vigilantius, A.D. 396, was the bearer of a letter from Paulinus to Jerome, and this was the introduction which made him personally acquainted with the most extraordinary man of that age. Jerome was the terror of his contemporaries; the man above all others, who, in a mistaken attempt to do his duty to God, failed most signally in his duty towards men, unmindful of the apostle's words, "If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar," etc. The mortification of the flesh had tended to puff up his spirit, and of all the polemical writers of the fourth century, he was the most bitter and severe."

The first meeting of Vigilantius with Jerome at Bethlehem is described in this language:

A narrow bypath leading off from the street, at the spot where the tomb of King Archelaus formerly stood, conducted the traveler to the cell of Jerome; here he found the ascetic clad in a vestment so coarse and sordid, that its very vileness bore the stamp of spiritual pride, and seemed to say, "Stand off, my wearer is holier than thou." The face of the monk was pale and haggard. He had been slowly recovering from a severe illness, and was wasted to a shadow. Frequent tears had plowed his cheeks with deep furrows; his eyes were sunk in their sockets; all the bones of his face were sharp and projecting. Long fasting, habitual mortification, and the chagrin which perpetual disputation occasions, had given an air of gloominess to his countenance, which accorded but ill with his boast, that his cell to him was like an arbor in the Garden of Eden."

Vigilantius was at first warmly received by Jerome. The scenes at Bethlehem were the same as he had witnessed on the estates of his friends who had been drawn into the tide of asceticism. The sourness of temper and the fierce invectives of the editor of the Vulgate began to raise doubt in the mind of Vigilantius, however, as to the value of the whole system. The Gallic presbyter was especially incensed at Jerome's criticism of Panlinus; but it was when Jerome turned fiercely upon Rufinus, his former friend, that the break between Vigilantius and Jerome took place. (Truth Triumphant, pg. 66)

Wilkinson goes on in length at the dreadful legacy of asceticism and monasticism in Christianity. Vigilantius had huge effect on the free Alpine churches, but all his writings were destroyed. Wilkinson quotes the old 18<sup>th</sup> Century Anglican Historian Joseph Milner, that "For a single page of Jovinian or Vigilantius I would gladly give up the whole invectives of Jerome." Jerome's letters regarding Vigilantius reveal what it was Vigilantius was denouncing – "church celibacy, worship of relics, lighted tapers, all-night vigils, and prayers to the dead." (Truth Triumphant pg. 68) Are these not remarkably similar to practices (if not the doctrine) found in the:

## HINDOO RELIGION.

Being in the land of Hindoostan, and surrounded by Such Sanskrit scholars as [William] Carey, Wilson, Marshman and Mill, I am almost afraid to attempt any description of this great nation, especially as I am myself ignorant of the Sanskrit language. However, I will endeavour to state faithfully what I have learnt from different Brahmins about their religion, and should I have been misinformed, or should I have drawn false conclusions from the information I received, I shall be most truly obliged to the above mentioned masters for correcting me. I owe the following information to two Brahmins.

To the one, named Dobnoo Shah, I presented a Hindoostanee New Testament. The other, Jouala Rena, was an old and venerable Brahmin, who had been at Calcutta some time.

Brahma was created by God before the world existed, and by Brahma the world was created. Vishnu is the Preserver, Shiva is the Destroyer; and these three are one. They asked me what religion I professed; to which I replied, "God is one, and Jesus is the Son of God. This Jesus died for our sins, and rose again, and he shall come again, and reign upon earth 1000 years, when all nations shall believe in him, and worship him."

*Jouala Rena.* To what quarter do you turn your face when you are praying?

*Myself.* Towards the East, and the West, and the North, and the South; for God is from the rising of the sun to the going down thereof.

*J. K.* The unlearned Hindoo turns his face towards the East; for the Ganges, Juggurnuth, Batra and Kashee (Benares) are toward the East; but he that is learned does as you do.

*M.* Why do you worship idols?

*J. R.* He that can realize in his heart the idea of God does not worship idols; but the unlearned remember God by means of an idol.

*M.* But I have heard Hindoos declare that the stone called Salgram was God.

*J. R.* (Pointing to a piece of wood) This is God; for you cannot look at anything where God is not; in which the power of God is not visible.

**M. God is everywhere, but everything is not God. You may as well say, that this couch is man, for it was made by the power of man and the power of man is visible in it.**

*J. M.* You yourself have images; for you have a book which is an image of the thoughts of God. (similar argument Catholics give to Protestants)

*M.* This image was given by God; but we do not worship God through the Bible, neither do we say that the book is God, on account of its containing the oracles of God.

*J. R.* The Chinese have images.

*M.* They are wrong.

*Dobnoo Shah.* There are many roads to Lahore; one is by the way of Buttaankot, another by Kishtewar, and another by Cashmeer. Thus there are many ways to God, and all will come to God who pursue a certain road.

*M.* But there are some roads to Lahore very dangerous; and there are some roads to God, especially those which He has not prescribed, very dangerous. (Wolff's footnote: A lady of great piety at Calcutta gave a still better answer; i.e. that one cannot reach Lahore, if he turns his back to it.)

*J. K.* By what mark can a man know the good road?

*M.* By its fruits may the good tree be known. The Christians in Hindoostan have abolished tyranny, and the burning of women.

*J. R.* The Lord Sahib (Governor General) has done a good thing in abolishing the Suttee, and it is true that tyranny does not exist among Christians.

I then spoke with them about the internal evidences of Christianity, how it fills the heart with holy love and adoration to God, and universal benevolence towards mankind, constraining them to go from sea to sea, and from shore to shore, for the good of their fellow creatures. May the one true God bless the labours of his servants, and in his own good season, turn the hearts of all nations to the knowledge of Christ their Saviour! (Wolff footnote: The more I converse with the Hindoos, the more I perceive the difficulty of convincing them of the absurdity of idolatry.) (pg. 329-331)

I have heard this statement “there are many roads to the same location” on numerous occasions, including from my mother. To some extent it is true, because Jesus leads men, who are of such varying dispositions and backgrounds, into all understanding and reconciliation with His Father. But there is going to be a point for each man where he must make a decision, whether he will move toward the light or stay in darkness – one cannot just live life haphazardly and expect to understand God.

Oct. 1. — I arrived at Khanpoor. Here I saw a Brahmin reading a book, and asked him what it was. He replied, "A portion of the Shaster" (Holy book). I looked into it; it was the Gospel of St. Luke in Nagree, printed at Serampore. In this way, one can see the use of Bible and Missionary societies, more than by individual conversions; for in the latter, it is often merely external *show*, whilst in the former instance **one sees the manifest effect upon the human mind**; for what worldly advantage could the Brahmin of Khanpoor have expected from reading the word of God with his disciples in a place where the British nation does not govern? In the “Lettres Edifiantes” many striking instances are related of Chinese idolaters converted to Christianity, by the loan of books, and thus in fact becoming Christians, as it were, unconsciously, without the assistance or benefit of oral instructors, or ceremonial admission into the Church; as Apollos, who knew only of the baptism of John. (pg. 332)

Oct. 2. — We marched on to Allee, where a Mussulman desired me to read some part of the Persian Gospel to him. I read Matthew v. vi. vii.

I personally was converted by literature. I believe in literature, and I also believe in study, and that God will reward those who study and seek. *I sought the Lord, and He answered me; He delivered me from all fears.* (Psalm 34:4) *He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him.* (Hebrews 11:6) Reading forces the mind to think, it cannot be passive, and though the effort is difficult, it has its reward. Wolff's point about

Chinese remains true to this day. See this touching video about Bibles in China: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q\\_4XbNmG5FY](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q_4XbNmG5FY)

A little more on the Hindu religion as we continue. I included this passage of how this assumption that the earth is millions of years old is a powerful tool for Satan to deny Bible history:

#### HINDOO RELIGION.

Monshee Djiam addressed me in the following manner: "You ought to try to read our Veds (sacred books). Adam, who you call the first man, was only of yesterday: the world was created and peopled millions and millions of years before Adam. You reproach us with worshipping stone: but there is no truth in the assertion that we believe it to be God: we worship a stone as we worship a plant, because the power of God is seen in both; we worship the cow, for God has displayed his power in her; she provides men with milk; we worship good men for God displays his power in them by making them good." I am daily more convinced how correctly the great Maimonides described the origin of idolatry in his book entitled, More Naboochim, that idolatry originally did not consist in believing the very creature to be God, but in worshipping the invisible Creator through a visible image. (pg 334-335)

## Arrival in Kashmir

Wolff arrives in Cashmeer [Kashmir] on Oct 16, 1832, and is sadly disappointed by a city that had many legends circulating about it in his time. This is the city that I formerly mentioned was connected to Solomon, they said here "Solomon did fly, carried in the air by one of the Genii..." The people are leaving the city because it is ruins due to the ruler, Sheer Singh, being a "great tyrant and oppressor". I think it not necessary to go into all the details that Wolff gives; he wants to paint a picture of a place few Europeans had ever been to.

Wolff is in continual talks with the Hindus Brahmins. He makes this interesting statement: "**Hitherto I have not met with a single Brahmin who would not agree in everything I told him**, and declare it to be also written in the Shastra [any old Indian books of knowledge];

and the only way to bring them to an argument is to attack their idolatry, and try to shew them that if their Veds [Vedas, old religious texts] approve of their idolatry, they must be false books, and not divinely inspired. I make it a point, as often as practicable, first to preach the Gospel, and then to ask for information.” (pg. 348)

They agree with all because their religion is incorporating in nature, absorbing all myths, making it highly varied and difficult to argue with. But Hindus are willing to discuss religious matters, and there is a sense of religious freedom in India in that each can worship whatever god they choose. But I’m not sure if directly attacking idolatry on first meeting a Brahmin in the way Wolff does is a good idea. The health message, prophecy, the character of God, and the great controversy might be better avenues to approach the Hindu.

Wolff also mentions this interesting point: “One thing forcibly strikes me, that the Hindoos speak more of internal devotion than I ever heard of Mohammedans.” (footnote, pg. 349) This may be because Islam (and oftentimes Christianity) wants to deal in state power and governance, whereas Hinduism is much more ascetic and individual, with less concern with how governments are run.

Wolff seems to have more success with those who are more educated and have some background in the Abrahamic faiths, who are open and curious to talk to a Christian, which many Muslims are:

When I was in Cashmeer, the Dewan Vesaka Singh put five Mohammedans to death, on pretense of their having killed a cow; but his object was to seize their property. I remember at Vuzeerabad, Signer Avitabile was about to execute a Mohammedan for killing a cow, according to the laws of the kingdom; I begged him not to do it, but to send the offender to Runjeet Singh with a recommendation for mercy, and I afterwards heard that the Maharajah was contented with cutting off the man's nose. Several Persians from Kaseroon, Hamadan, and Tabreez called on me; I proclaimed to them Jesus Christ, and Him crucified; the "man of sorrows and acquainted with grief." They listened for two hours. Futteh Khan, who was with Meer Syud Oollah and Mr. Morecroft, called on me, and attended to my preaching. I was also visited by Mohammed Shah Nakhshbande, the Moorsheed of the people of

Yarkand, and considered a holy man. He read in Persian to his disciples, Mullah Mohammed from Sheher-e-Subz, and several others, the 24th. and 25th. chapters of Matthew; we then spoke about the necessity of being born again, and read John 3. Blessed Lord Jesus, shed the light of thy truth upon their hearts, and be thou present in the power of thy Holy Spirit, wherever thy sacred word is proclaimed or read! (pg. 347)

Wolff has another discussion with a Muslim intellectual in Kashmir, and it is interesting because once again the reasoning for an ideology's truthfulness is power – he, like many others, assumes that winners in this world must be supported by God, seeing God controls man's destiny. This misunderstands God's character, His determination to allow freedom of choice, His will that man repent, the origin and end of sin, and His understanding of and use of power.

Moulavie Khair Addeen, writer of the history of Cashmeer, called upon me. He is in possession of the book written against Christianity by the unfortunate Nathaniel Sabat, well known at Calcutta. Moulavie Khair Addeen read to the Hindoos, who were then with me, Matthew v. vi. vii. I had then a discussion with him about the divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ, which lasted four hours. One of his proofs for the truth of the Mohammedan religion was that all the Christian Powers are subjects of, and give tribute to, the Sultan of Constantinople. I confuted him with mentioning the battle of Navarino. Pundit Rahan and another Brahmin present listened with great attention. (pg. 350)

...

Dewan Vesaka Singh, the Prince's Minister, called upon me, and I took a walk with him through the city. This town improves the more one sees of it; situated as it is in a large valley and surrounded by high mountains. It is not very wide, but it is situated in a broad plain through which a beautiful park extends, called Meisoome. There are 28 mosques of some note, the principal ones of which are the Juma Musjid, and the Musjid-e-Sung; and there are 14 Dhurmsals or Hindoo temples, the chief of which are Dar Matang and Shahabad. Afterwards I called again on the Prince Governor, who had his room illuminated. Mookhtarjoo, the

horsekeeper of Mohammed Shah Nakhshbande called on me; and again, Moulavie Khair Addeen. **They observed that since Cashmeer had existed no Frank [European] had come there for the purpose of talking about Jesus; and that they were convinced my coming was a sign that the Christians would soon govern the whole world. The last belief, they said, was warranted by the Hadith.** (pg. 351)

Wolff wants to go to "Little Tibet," as he calls it, 130 miles from Kashmir, but he cannot because of snow, and must return to India. In the middle of giving a lot of information about Tibet and China, including the words in their languages for numbers, places, and various words (like 'eat', 'drink'), their history and their culture, Wolff exclaims this:

#### MEDITATIONS.

Amongst all the researches and preachings, one cannot help exclaiming, "Oh! Lord Jesus! why is my heart so dry? Is the spirit of the Lord departed from me? certainly not! thou wilt never depart from me!" (pg. 357)

Wolff's has a good understanding of his own carnal heart, how it so easily dries up, and he doesn't want to lose touch with Christ, which could so easily happen when there are no other Christians and he is surrounded by the most alien heathenism. He relates a touching story that shows his genuine care for others:

#### KUNCHUNEE, OR THE BEAUTIFUL GIRL IN THE VALLEY.

There are throughout Hindoostan dancing women or prostitutes, called Kunchunee; most of them are girls sold by their cruel parents to a class of persons who educate them for this dreadful trade, dress them well, and carry them about to amuse strangers by dancing and singing. One of these unfortunate creatures came to the camp where I was seated with Hindoos and Mussulmans, and offered to entertain us by dancing. She was wonderfully beautiful;

'She was not in the valley born,  
Nobody knew from whence she came.'

I desired the Hindoos to tell her how much I disapproved of her manner of life, and to acquaint her that I was a follower of Jesus Christ, who tells us that people like her must go to hell if they do not repent.

*Dancing Girl.* What shall I do? I must live.

*Myself.* Why do you not work?

*D. O.* I have not learnt to work.

*M.* You can easily learn, go to some service.

*D. G.* I will go with you.

*M.* I would lose my reputation.

*D. G.* Tell me what I must do, I shall follow your counsel.

*M.* Pray to God, and he will enlighten and assist you.

*D. G.* How shall I pray? nobody ever taught me to pray. I was sold by my father and mother, and brought up for this sort of life. I am now purchased by Sardars, and all kinds of people, like a bit of bread. Nobody taught me to pray to God.

*M.* Pray to God as a child speaks to its father; for God is our father. Pray, "Our Father, which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy will be done on earth, as it is done in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses, &c.

Poor girl! she expressed sorrow, and promised to follow my counsel. I relieved her with money, she wept and went away; her beauty was of a very superior order. She was not in the valley born, nobody knew from whence she came! (pg. 360-361)

In this next passage Wolff offers one of his most profound meditations on the church of God as made up of people, who though they may work in different organizations and nations, will be together with Jesus in Heaven.

#### CONVERSATION WITH TWO FAKEERS.

Two Fakeers came to beg charity: one was naked, and the other had dust on his face.

*Myself.* (To the first) What is your occupation?

*Fakeer.* The service of God.

*M.* How do you serve God?

*F.* By walking and dancing about like a fool, the whole day and the whole night; (and saying this, he began to dance about,

exclaiming continually, "Oh God! nothing but thou; Oh God! nothing but thou.")

M. (To the second). Why have you dust on your face?

F. I am a Moored of Imam Jaafar Sadek, buried at Medinah. Man is of dust, and therefore he must have dust on his face.

I proclaimed to them Jesus Christ, the man of sorrows, the man who died upon Calvary; and shewed them the unreasonableness of their present pursuits. The one washed the dust off his face with spittle, and the other ceased to dance, and exclaimed, "We have been convinced." It is striking, that as well in Persia as in Hindoostan, the Fakeers and Dervishes look with contempt upon every written word of God and every outward ceremony of religion, and believe themselves to have obtained such a degree of perfection that all these things, necessary for the generality of people, are not necessary for them. I think this is a great proof that all men descended from one common father, Adam; that the human mind, and human thoughts, are the same in England as among the Fakeers and learned men in Persia; though in different forms and shapes: in the one they are more refined and more clear than in the other. The system of Jacob Boehme, of Swedenborg, of Leibnitz, Emanuel Kant, Schelling, and Fichte, may be traced and surely discovered in Persia and among the Fakeers in the Himmalayah mountains; the law of celibacy, and in a great degree the spirit of Roman Catholics, are both to be found among the Lamas at Ladak (Tibetan Buddhists); and many a Catharine of Siena and many a nun like Theresa of Cordova may be found in the female convents of the Tshomo or Ane (Nuns) of Ladak and Lassa.

Thus it is with the relationship of human errors, and thus it is with the light of truth. The Spirit of God, I am convinced, now guides a Mohammed Shah Nakhshbande in the city of Cashmeer, and a Joseph of Talkhtoon in the desert of Mowr, in the same way as it did Cornelius and Job of old; for though the truth is incontrovertible, that there is only one name given by which men can be saved, the name of Jesus Christ, God blessed forever; I am convinced that He brings many to himself in a way that we know not; concerning which St. Augustine says beautifully: "Multae oves foris, multi lupi intus." "Many sheep without, many wolves within." And Thomas Aquinas boldly says that God sends to many a man in

the wilderness an angel from heaven to enlighten him. Thou silent sufferer, Job, though not a son of Abraham, thou knewest that thy Redeemer lived, and that thou wast to see him in the flesh; and I hope to see thee, oh Pius VII in heaven. Venerable old man! how often was I edified and inflamed by thy unaffected and heart-penetrating devotion! What a beautiful day shall this be, when Pius VII. and Luther, Count Stolberg and Huss, Ganganelli and Melancthon, Francis Xavier and Henry Martyn, leading each the flock which they have fed with the bread of life, and shining like the brightness of the firmament, shall embrace each other before Jesus the Lord and Saviour of all, sit down at his table, and enter into his eternal rest. Thou, O Lord Jesus, alone readest the heart. Thou only softenest it with the dew of holiness. Thou, Shepherd of the Israelite and the Gentile, alone knowest thy own sheep; shed light upon the paths of all those who wander in darkness, and gather quickly all nations into thy fold. (pg. 361-363)

Here Wolff expresses his understanding of Christ as the Lord of all men, unbounded by creeds, and the one mind of men as inheriting the fallenness of Adam. Man uses the same self-deceptions in such different cultures, and this we can easily see and readily accept. But to see the good in men, and how God leads people that we think are holding onto various forms of error, can be much harder to accept. That Augustine can declare that “there are many sheep outside, and many wolves inside,” when he himself we would consider potentially a wolf...Lord Jesus help us to be humble, to have discernment without judgment!

What about the Popes? Let us remember that Wolff is the man who said in the Vatican surrounded by ultramontanes that “the Pope is the dust of the Earth,” just like any other man, so let us not accuse Wolff of selling out or trying to attract Catholic fans. From my background as a Jesuit/Catholic historian the Popes he chose are interesting – Pius VII, chosen during the darkest days of the Papacy. Pius VI had been taken prisoner by Napoleon in 1796, and he died in France a prisoner in 1799; the next year Pius VII was elected Pope with 6 months without a Pope. He oversaw the Catholic Church’s healing of its “deadly wound,” and died in 1823. He restored the Jesuit Order in 1814.

This is interesting in comparison to the other Pope mentioned, Ganganelli, who suppressed the Jesuits in 1773. He was a liberal Pope and execrated by the Ultramontanes Party in the Vatican. I would suggest that these men are to be judged more as kings would be, as administrative heads of bodies and directors of forces that are greater than them. So will we see some Popes in heaven? Only God knows.

Remember that this is 1832, and bigotry and fear of the “other” is rampant. Wolff is to be praised for his empathy and faith in the ability of Jesus to uplift the Asian, and his strong belief that the Asian would hear the Lord calling. When a man is a soul-worker in such adverse conditions, one draws on the mercy of Jesus to keep him going that he not fall into despair at the multitudes that will be lost. Surely our God is a God that saves!

Thou, O Lord Jesus, alone readest the heart. Thou only softenest it with the dew of holiness. Thou, Shepherd of the Israelite and the Gentile, alone knowest thy own sheep; shed light upon the paths of all those who wander in darkness, and gather quickly all nations into thy fold.

## Wolff leaves Kashmir to British India

Oct. 26. — We arrived again at Rajour; I have already stated, that the Rajah of this place Raheem Oollah is the most intelligent and learned Rajah I have met with. He was again very kind to me. He himself, his son, Rajah Fakeer Oollah Gholam Ahmud Hakeem, and Mirza Ahmud Oollah, desired anxiously the Gospel, for the purpose of convincing themselves of the truth of it. **They asked me (for they were all Mussulmans) what was considered by the Christians to be Haram, and what Halal, i.e. unlawful and lawful. I replied, "In the Christian religion, Haram is to hate one's enemy; Halal, to love him."** I then proclaimed unto them Jesus Christ, and him crucified. They asked me whether in Hindoostan ever Mussulmans or Hindoos turned Christians. I mentioned to them the cases of Abd Almeseeh and of the Brahmin Anand Messeeh at Kurnaul. (pg. 367)



Ranjit Singh (1780-1839), leader of the Sikh Empire. He lost sight in his left eye due to smallpox

Nov. 14. — His Majesty Runjeet Singh wrote to me a letter, in which he thanked me for the Persian Testament I had sent him, and which Lady William Bentinck had got beautifully bound for me. This day I went 12 coss [kos, Indian unit of measure equal to 3 km] to Nangah. (pg. 368)

Nov. 15. — 14 coss to Lapoke. Here I met six travelling Mullahs, coming from Peshawr, and going to Delhi. I preached a crucified Saviour to them. This is the first time I have met with travelling Mullahs. Thus Rabbis wander frequently from place to place to preach the tenets of the Talmud. Oh Lord Jesus! **When shall the time come that we shall see hosts of preachers of the**

**everlasting Gospel go forth to the nations of the East, from Calcutta to Delhi and Peshawr, to the cities of Yarkund [Yarkant, in Uyghur China], Lassa [Lhasa, in Tibet China] and Antijaan [I'm not sure]!**

Nov. 16. — I arrived for the second time at Amritsar, 12 coss. I called on Fakeer Imaum Ooddeen, who wishes to get the whole Bible in Persian or Arabic. I also called on the Governor Futteh Singh, to whom, at his own request, I explained the tenets of the Christian religion. He desired to have a Testament in the language of the Shaster.

The Mussulman, Moulvee Gholam Mohammed Khan, from Delhi, and the Brahmin Sobera, entered into conversation about the Divinity of Jesus Christ. The first was in possession of a Persian Testament, received from Captain Murray of Umbala, and he gave me evidence of his having perused it.

Rae Ananderan, an Hindoo Colonel in the service of Runjeet Singh, called on me. I preached to him Jesus Christ our Saviour, God blessed for ever. He disavowed his veneration to idols.

Futteh Singh, the Governor, sent me 51 rupees and a shawl.

Nov. 21. — Shah Shoojah-ool Mulk, the ex-king of the Affghauns, sent for me. He told me that if he should again ascend the throne, the Padres (Missionaries) should have free access to his territories.

Dec. 5. — I was introduced to the celebrated Indian Catholic Princess Begum Sumroo at Sirdhana, near Meerut. She received me with great condescension; and I spoke to her about the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. The Princess made me a present of 500 rupees, which enabled me to make a repayment to my patron. (pg. 371)

The question of Wolff's finances is not one I have a good answer for. He seems to have gone as the disciples did in Jesus's time, mostly relying on those who love the Gospel to support him as he meets them. Many are like this Indian Catholic Princess who take care of him and pay off his debts. Once in a while English officials will help him. But in the

above text I am not sure who is meant by “my patron.” But I believe they are his benefactors in England, whom he will aim to repay maybe through the selling of his journals and other means – such as when the King of Oudh gives him 1000 pounds sterling which he used to “reimburse his benefactors.” (pg. 392) He preaches in the court in front of said king and all the mullahs, and tells the king of his travels. As is so often the case, the 53<sup>rd</sup> chapter of Isaiah comes up.

Wolff travels through India to Delhi, and he is now out of the wilderness and in territory where he is seeing many British people. I want to conclude this book soon, so pardon me for skipping most of this section. He is preaching everywhere and encouraging the missionaries. Here are some things he is sharing, the first is from a letter from a Baptist missionary to Wolff’s wife.

We regretted exceedingly that his stay with us was so short; but short as it was, he has, I trust, made an impression on the minds of some, which will be blessed to them; in as much as, like the Bereans of old, they will be more diligent in attending to the word of God, and search the Scriptures, to know if the things he addressed to them are so. All the British residents here were deeply interested, and no doubt Edified, both by his preaching and lecturing. He preached twice on the Sabbath, opening the Scriptures to a crowded congregation in our church Bungalow concerning the promises of a Saviour, as given by the mouth of Patriarchs and Prophets, and how Christ had completed his first advent in a state of humiliation. He shewed his threefold character of Prophet, Priest, and King, and enlarged boldly on the future glories of his second advent, which he strikingly contrasted with his first. The passages he brought to bear on this point were numerous and opposite, giving a turn to some texts, very satisfactory in the elucidation of his subject, which I do not remember seeing so applied before. The signs of the times he has also dwelt upon; warning his audience of the near approach of our Lord, who will consume that wicked one with the spirit of his mouth, and will destroy him with the brightness of his coming.

He also gratified us with three lectures comprising a summary of his travels. In the course of them he shewed the fulfilment of

several prophecies by the present state of many of the people he fell in with, and by the destruction of places once famous in the annals of the world. He gave us also an affecting account of the deprivations and perils he endured and passed through, which excited the sympathy of all. He remarked that his prayer to God, in times of his real exigency, was uniformly most graciously answered. This observation, I am glad to say, was particularly noticed by his hearers; for since Mr. Wolff's departure I have heard many speak very reverently of it, as showing the great degree of faith possessed by our dear friend, which could alone strengthen and encourage him in travelling in such an undisguised manner, through countries antichristian, and enslaved by the powers of spiritual darkness. (pg. 383-384)

On my [Wolff] return to the British residency, I met with the Jew Raphael Cohen, born in Aleppo, to whom I proclaimed the Gospel of our Lord Jesus. After having argued with him for a short time, he admitted that Jesus was the Messiah.

*Jan. 29 (1833).* I preached again on the prophecies respecting the second coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. In these lectures I demonstrated: 1. The necessity of studying the word of prophecy. 2. Of understanding the prophecies literally. 3. The establishment of Christ's kingdom upon earth. 4. Restoration of the Jews to their own land, and their conversion to Christ. 5. The resurrection of the saints. 6. The personal appearance of Elijah. 7. The rebuilding of the temple. 8. Judgments upon all nations. (pg. 392-393)

This is a succinct summary of Wolff's understanding of the order of end-time events. There is still some confusion there, but the key point is the focus on understanding the prophecies literally, reclaiming them as being understandable, and also on Jesus's coming and the resurrection rather than on death going to heaven and hell.

In the Great Controversy Ellen White quotes pg. 404 of *Missionary Labours*, the book we are going through.

Wolff believed the coming of the Lord to be at hand, his interpretation of the Wolff believed the coming of the Lord to be at hand, his interpretation of the prophetic periods placing the great

consummation within a very few years of the time pointed out by Miller. To those who urged from the scripture, "Of that day and hour knoweth no man," that men are to know nothing concerning the nearness of the advent, Wolff replied: "Did our Lord say that that day and hour should never be known? Did He not give us signs of the times, in order that we may know at least the approach of His coming, as one knows the approach of the summer by the fig tree putting forth its leaves? Matthew 24:32. Are we never to know that period, whilst He Himself exhorteth us not only to read Daniel the prophet, but to understand it? and in that very Daniel, where it is said that the words were shut up to the time of the end (which was the case in his time), and that 'many shall run to and fro' (a Hebrew expression for observing and thinking upon the time), 'and knowledge' (regarding that time) 'shall be increased.' Daniel 12:4. Besides this, our Lord does not intend to say by this, that the approach of the time shall not be known, but that the exact 'day and hour knoweth no man.' Enough, He does say, shall be known by the signs of the times, to induce us to prepare for His coming, as Noah prepared the ark."—Wolff, *Researches and Missionary Labors*, pages 404, 405.

Remarkably, the quote is an answer to questioning Wolff received, not from a Christian, but from Emir Sayd Ahmed, a Shia Mujtahid, or a person accepted as an original authority in Islamic Law. I would like to quote some of this man's letter to Joseph Wolff and also Wolff's response to show the great interest Wolff had raised in the minds of men.

"I have received your second epistle, and perused its contents. You say that it is mentioned in the 8th. chapter of Daniel that Christ would descend upon earth after two thousand three hundred years from the time of Daniel, which was 453 years before Christ; that having deducted 453 from 2300, there remained 1847; and the present year is 1833, from which the latter sum having been deducted there remained 14 years, which is the period of Christ's coming.

*First.* In the above quotation the name of Christ is not mentioned, nor is Christ's coming alluded to. On what ground have you therefore assumed, that it has reference to that event? In the first place, state fully by what arguments you bring this as a proof

of Christ's coming, and also detail fully how you prove your argument from the Ram, the He-Goat, the first high horn, the four other horns; and the country, and what the things are to which they refer, that it may be known how this is applicable to the coming of Christ...You say that it is written in the book of Daniel that Christ will come in 2300 years; it is not so in the chapter already quoted; it mentions 2300 days, and not years, which makes a great difference. You mentioned at one meeting that; "days" means years; this is not the case. If such should be the interpretation in one or two places, it is of rare occurrence and metaphorical, and not as a plain fact; to assume a fact to be metaphorical, is not allowed to any but to one who is apt to make an interpretation which suits his own purpose.

... [skipped some]

*Thirdly.* To fix years is contrary to the words of Christ, for it is written in the 24th. chapter of Matthew, verse 36, "But of that day and hour knows no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my father only." You said in answer to this, at the conference, that the meaning of this verse is that no one knows the day and hour except God, but it does not say that the year cannot be known. This is surprising, because the first and last period define the day and hour also as it does the year. If the people of the present age do not know the day, those that lived in those times knew it, and the angels certainly know it. How can therefore the saying of Christ, that even angels are not aware of it be correct?

The mention of day and hour in the said quotation is by way of example, and the meaning is, that the period cannot be fixed at all. For instance, if it is said that nobody knows the day of judgment, it does not follow that the year and month of that event is known, but not the day; this is often used in colloquial discourse. Besides, let it be as you say, that day means year; Christ must also have meant by day, year. (pg. 396-402)

He then mentions many verses that Muslims claim prove the point to Mohammed. These include, for those curious, John 5:32, Isaiah 21, John 1:26-27/Matt 3:11, and Rev 2:26-27. He also makes some other critiques, which can be inferred by Wolff's response. It must be admitted to this Mullah's credit that he definitely took Wolff very

seriously, read Wolff's letter carefully, and took time to give a detailed rebuttal and critique of his position – something that is rarely done.

Here is Wolff's answer, a part of which was quoted by Ellen White. The fact that Ellen White quoted so deep in this book means she had read it all, and therefore is much better acquainted with Islam, Hinduism, and oriental culture than I realized. I quote it in full because it is powerfully written:

#### ANSWER.

This is the answer of Joseph Wolff, to the learned Emeer Sayd Ahmed, Mujtehed of the Sheah at Lucknow [large city in Northern Indai].

You say:

*First.* "In the above citation the name of Christ is not at all mentioned, etc."

If you were to prove to me something from a certain text in the Coran [Quran/Koran], and I were to answer you in the manner in which you answer me, you would tell me, "read the whole contents of the preceding chapter, which are in strict connexion with this verse." I give you now the same answer. The contents of Daniel ii. and again vii. 1—28, are a fourfold succession of kingdoms, which should arise out of the earth, but which should not endure forever; whereas the kingdom of the *Son of Man and his saints*, of whom Daniel speaks, *should endure forever*. That the "*Son of Man*, coming in the clouds of heaven," mentioned in verse 13, is Christ the *expected Messiah*, is not only admitted by Christians and Jewish commentators, but must be likewise admitted by you, as an orthodox Mohammedan; for according to the Coran and your Hadiths, *Christ*, not Mohammed, went in the form of the *Son of Man* to heaven, and therefore he only can return in that form. Now all true Mohammedans believe what the Koran contains, and the Koran says that Christ was not actually crucified, but that it was merely a likeness of Christ, and that Christ himself was translated to heaven in the body in which he shall reappear on earth.

The eighth and following chapters of Daniel contain a succession of events which shall precede and follow the coming of that *Son of Man*; one of them is in chapter viii. 14: "That the

sanctuary should be cleansed," i.e. Jerusalem, called in Hebrew --- [Hebrew script] a name which the Jews gave to that place from time immemorial, and on which account it was called by the Mohammedans --- [Arabic script] i.e. holy. It is therefore clear that the cleansing of the sanctuary shall be concomitant with *those wonders*, (vii.13.) when the four empires shall be broken to pieces by that "Stone" which shall descend from heaven, i.e. the *Son of Man*, in order that He, the Lord of glory, may enter into that cleansed sanctuary. By that "*Ram, He-goat*," etc. to which you allude are here meant different Kings, which is explained in the text itself, i.e. of the Babylonian, Persian, Grecian, and Roman empires.

*Secondly.* "As to your writing that the time of Daniel was 453 years before that of Christ, etc."

If you read over my letter, you will perceive that you have mistaken me. I said, that I reason from analogy. The number 1260—1290, as well as the seventy weeks, (which latter relate to our Lord's first advent) clearly specify some great public transaction, from which we are to commence dating. The 1260 prophetic days, or years, are dated then from the "giving the saints in to the hands of the little horn;" the seventy weeks from the issuing forth the commandment to restore and build the temple are dated from the only remaining great event, which is farther recorded in Scripture, Nehemiah ix. and xi. and that is the complete reestablishment of the daily sacrifice: now this reestablishment of the daily sacrifice took place 453 years B.C. So that the whole of your second objection falls to the ground, as not applicable to my former letter. Beside this, you should have mentioned the names of the translators of the English authors alluded to, for I am sure that there is not one English book in which you will find the numbers you mention, nor is there an English book about Daniel translated into the Persian language.

*Thirdly.* "It mentions days and not years."

I answer, that by a *prophetic day*, a year is meant, this is clear by Ezekiel iv. 4, 5. And that Daniel took this method of counting days for years, according to Ezekiel, his contemporary, is clear by Daniel ix. for both profane and sacred history teach us that "from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem,

unto the Messiah, and the cutting off of the Messiah," as many years did elapse as Daniel prophesied days should elapse. (Daniel ix. 25, 26.) You cited above English authorities without giving their names; I now give you English authorities with their names, i.e. the famous Doctor Scott in his answer to the Jewish Rabbi Crool; Doctor Mant, in his commentary of the Bible; Newton, Hooper, etc. and I would quote also the Italian and Spanish authors, Cornelius a Lapide, Bellarmin, and Ben Ezra.

*Fourthly.* You cite Matt. xxiv. 36. [Here is where Ellen White cited]

I ask you, did our Lord say that that day and hour should never be known? Did he not give us signs of the times, in order that we may know at least the approach of his coming, as one knows the approach of the summer by the fig tree putting forth its leaves? Matt. xxiv. 32. Are we never to know that period, whilst He himself exhorteth us not only to read Daniel the Prophet, but to understand it? and in that very Daniel, where it is said that the words were shut up to the time of the end, (which was the case in his time) and "that many shall run to and fro," (an Hebrew expression for observing and thinking upon the time) "and *knowledge* (regarding that time) shall be increased. Daniel xii. 4. Beside this, our Lord does not intend to say by this, that the *approach* of the time shall not be known, but that the *exact "day and hour* knoweth no man;" enough, he does say, shall be known by the signs of the times to induce us to prepare for his coming, as Noah prepared the ark; (for he compares those days to the days of Noah. Matt. xxiv. 37—41). Enough is revealed to us in the Scripture to know by all that has come to pass in the Eastern and Western Roman empires, that He, Christ, will soon set up the ark of his Church as the only possible place of safety. When you say that angels ought to know it, you presuppose that we ought to believe in the omniscience of angels; but omniscience is the exclusive attribute of God.

*Fifthly.* You then come to the prophetic office of Mohammed, and say, "although there are many prophecies respecting him, yet to avoid lengthening etc. a few are mentioned;" and then you cite Isaiah xxi. 7.

1st. If Mohammed be meant here, the Prophet does not make mention of him to his advantage; for he would then be described not as a Prophet, but as a "burden," i.e. misfortune to the country, Isaiah xxi. 1, (the burden). 2, "A grievous vision," 3. 4. 2ndly. You have not one proof that Mohammed was to ride upon one of those "camels." Every attentive reader of this text will observe the description of such a concourse of nations only as is to be found in the East. And again, should he be meant here, he would be merely described (as I believe him to be described in other parts of Daniel) as an instrument for chastising the sins of men; as one, as Daniel saith, "who devoured much flesh," Daniel vii. 5. But this argument alone will refute the hypothesis that Mohammed and his Caliphs were the persons spoken of in chapter xxi. 9. as "coming with horsemen and crying, Babylon is fallen, is fallen, etc." Mohammed was not in existence till very many (about 12) centuries after the destruction of Babylon. Thus I have answered all your citations from Isaiah xxi.

You produce John v. 32, and say, "this alludes to the testimony of the last of the Prophets (Mohammed) in favor of Christ."

Christ himself mentions in John viii. 18, with the very name the Witness he meant. "I am one that bear witness of myself, and the Father that sent me beareth witness of me."

Mohammed contradicted the witness of Christ in the Coran. Christ witnessed that he himself was the Son of God. Matt. xxvi. 63, 64. John i. 34. Luke i. 35. etc. this the Coran denies.

*Sixthly.* You say, that "in John 1. 26, 27, and Matt, iii. 11, you have a convincing proof in favor of a Prophet greater than Christ, and who else, you add, but our Prophet is endowed with such attributes?"

These are very unfortunate citations indeed for corroborating the prophetic office of your Prophet; for John the Baptist spoke of one who was then "among them," and in verse 29. the very person is mentioned, (Jesus ;) and the same is maintained in Matt. iii. 13, 14, 15, where it is again distinctly shewn that Jesus was the very man to whom John alluded.

You say that "in Rev. ii. 26, 27, either Mohammed or the promised Mahdi was meant."

1st. That Mohammed cannot be meant, is clear by this, that Mohammed did not "keep the works of Christ;" for in this very book which you cite, Christ is called the Beginning and the End, which Mohammed frequently denied.

2ndly. Mahdi cannot be meant, for he is only to be found in later and not inspired writings of the Mohammedans, and not even alluded to in the Coran.

*Seventhly.* You ask, "How can the remaining signs take place within this limited period?"

I answer with your Coran: --- [Arabic writing] i.e. "God said: Let it be, and it was." To God everything is possible, He said: "Let there be light, and it was light."

*Eighthly.* You say, that "to give weight to a sign, it is requisite that it should be accompanied with the thing signified." This is absurd; for instance, if I were to say that the death of such and such a King, or the war with such and such a nation, should be a sign that any particular dynasty should begin to govern; it does not follow from this that the dynasty alluded to should begin to govern at that very moment in which the sign was given. [note: connect this idea to Ellen White quote on the tall buildings falling in New York a sign of the beginning of the loud cry]

*Ninthly.* "These changes have always taken place, etc."

That the changes which shall take place will be analogous to the changes of past events was predicted by our Lord himself, that it shall be "as in the days of Noa ; but woe unto those who will on this account ask, "where is the promise of his coming?" You Mohammedans do not seek a God who reveals himself in the works of nature, and who from one period of the world to another demonstrates by the events of the world the truth of revelation; but you have an imaginary God, who, as you justly say, is a contrast to the works of nature. Yours is not a God who "sends rain upon the just and upon the unjust." Your Prophets are not natural characters, but all immaculate; yours is not a religion of love and of mercy, but a religion of persecution and of hatred. And I must observe that it is highly inconsistent of the Mohammedans to prove the divine message of Mohammed from our books, which you declare to have been corrupted, whilst you admit that they contain most stupendous prophecies.

*Tenthly.* You say that "Christians are at present in the height of their glory, etc."

This is the more awful for you Mohammedans; for those very judgments are predicted to break out over those portions of the earth which are partly ruled by Mohammedan powers.

*Eleventhly.* "The spreading of the good news by the angel flying, etc."

I answer that the expression good news is in the original, Revelations xiv. 6, [---Hebrew word---], and means the very word Gospel. As to Mahdi, I have already said, that he is a personage not even mentioned in the Goran.

*Twelfthly.* "On what ground do you call the new Testament the Word of God? etc."

I answer first, that we call it the Word of God, because it contains the words of Christ, who was God, and the words of His Apostles, who were inspired by him. It seems that you are not aware that the whole of the Old Testament is also considered by Christians to be the Word of God; your asserted reason why the Coran must be the word of God is not convincing; for there are wicked people, even infidels, who composed books with wonderful elegance, and perspicuity, and strength. Moreover many of the Persians declare that Saadi [Persian Poet in 1200s] is written with superior elegance; and some of the Arabians assert that the Mekamat Hariri [Al-Hariri, 1054-1122] is written in far superior language than the Coran.

That the *sun* and *moon* are *metaphors*, as applied in Joseph's dream, is confirmed by the very words of Christ; for I must repeat what I have already observed as an answer to your first objection, that in order to understand well the meaning of a verse, one must read the preceding chapter or chapters connected with that verse; so we must do here. In Matthew xxii. Christ begins to speak about the future kingdom to be established, not in plain terms, but in *parables*, called in Arabic --- and in Hebrew ---. And that sun and moon is an oriental imagery for King and Queen, you yourself will admit. I would also remark that it is necessary to hold in connexion the Old and New Testament. Christ, in speaking to the Jews, was accustomed to refer to the Old Test. Now there is a connexion between the parabolic language of Christ in the 22nd. chapter of

Matthew, and the parabolic language of the Prophet Isaiah in his 34th. chapter, 4th. and 5th. verses, both use the imagery of Eastern idiom. Isaiah's "host of heaven" signifies royal power, as the King of Babylon was called " the morning star," Isaiah 14; and as the King of Persia is called the "sun of the empire;" and as the empire of China is called the " celestial empire."

Thus my assertion is borne out by texts in Scripture, by Christ's word, and by the language of Oriental literature. Yours truly,  
JOSEPH WOLFF. (pg. 402-409)

I will leave it to the reader to work out the idiosyncrasies of Wolff's answer. What I admire is his respect for those dialoguing with him while still be incredibly blunt; he is forceful without being condescending. He is able to use the Quran against his interlocutor without saying that it is in any way legitimate. Regarding his doctrinal positions remember this is 1833, William Miller has only just started his ministry, and while to us some of Wolff's points are off they are remarkably ahead of his time. He is pointing people in the right direction and causing people to think, putting scriptures people had seen for a long time in a "new setting." This we also want to do, so that the scriptures come alive for those who in anyway relate to the 3<sup>rd</sup> Angel's Message.

Another difficult we have (or at least I have) is making these difficult subjects simple and concise to the non-intellectual, and in this we can learn many lessons from Wolff. Take for instance this next text, that shows Wolff's mastery of the aphorism/analogy:

Feb. 6.— I lectured in the tents of the English officers, and preached to several native officers who professed the Mohammedan religion. One of the Subdars, i.e. native officers, made this enquiry: "If Jesus Christ was a King, why did he not coin money?" Another replied that he came not as a King, but as a Fakeer (poor man). **Another said he would die in the religion in which he was born. I replied that his ancestors did not think so, for they were idolaters and became Mohammedans; and no man says that he will die poor because his father has been poor.** (pg. 409-410)

What a true statement! The religion of our fathers we claim is good enough, but rarely do we say that the standard of living of our fathers is good enough, especially if they were poor! That is why the first thing that Jesus said in His Sermon on the Mount is – “Blessed are the poor in Spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.” We must recognize and be dissatisfied with our level of spiritual wealth, and must strive for a richer life, full of the grace and truth that comes with more Spirit. May God give us eyes to see and ears to hear.

Wolff continues onto the, also known as Varanasi, a city on the banks of the Ganges River in Northern India. It is the holiest of the seven sacred cities of Hinduism and Jainism. In this next passage we see how the reincarnation system of Hinduism (adopted by Buddhism also) incorporates ideas of heaven and hell.



Pilgrims to Varanasi

## BENARES (Varanasi).

The mythological reason given for the sanctity of Benares is that during one of the great periodical deluges, termed Muhaprulugas, the space forming the holy ground was raised by supernatural means, so as to remain above the waters, which had drowned the rest of the world. The Hindoos in general believe, that as the fruit of pious pilgrimages, they will after death be translated into one of their heavens, "Deva Soku [deva loka]," in consequence of their virtuous acts, obtaining for a limited period the preponderance over those of an evil tendency. The length of their abode in Deva Soku will depend upon the number of their good deeds, and of the pilgrimages made, each of the latter conferring its distinct blessings: when the value of virtuous actions and pilgrimages is expended, they must be born again into this world.

Those, dying at Benares, obtain Inokhshu [moksha], or absorption into the Deity; for it is necessary to have attained "gyan," or a perfect knowledge of the Godhead &c. and Bueragyn, or a total indifference to all matters, mundane and celestial, to be qualified for absorption; all which is of very difficult acquirement, in the prescribed way of hard study, penances, &c. (pg. 411)

I don't want to get too much into the details of the Hindu faith, but I want to point out one thing – that it is theistic, its plurality of Gods are all emanations of 1 God, named Brahma. This is in contrast to Buddhism, which is at heart atheistic; Buddhists may worship idols of Buddha but he is still a man and not a God. There is no teaching of creator or creation in Buddhism unless inferred from Hinduism – Buddha himself doesn't talk about a creator or a creation. Both religions have the term oneness, but it means something slightly different. I quote Mahatma Gandhi here:

The *nirvana* of Buddhists is *shuntaya*, emptiness, but the *nirvana* of the [Bhagavad] Gita means peace and that is why it is described as *brahma-nirvana* [oneness with *Brahman*]. We need not concern ourselves with this distinction. There is no reason for supposing that there is a difference between the *nirvana* mentioned by Lord Buddha and the *nirvana* of the Gita. Buddha's

description of *nirvana* and this other description of *nirvana* refer to the same state. A number of learned men have shown that the Buddha did not teach a doctrine denying the existence of God; but all these are pointless controversies. What can we say about a state which is so different from anything known in our life that we cannot describe it even when we have attained to it? If it is agreed that our bodily existence is not a thing to be cherished, all these other controversies are un-meaning. *The Bhagavad Gita According to Gandhi*, Mahatma Gandhi, pg. 34

Christianity is different than these religions in that it sets out with the goal to know the *character* of the “kingdom of Heaven,” along with knowing the character of the God of Heaven, as well as His law and manner of governance. Christianity is forthright in its diagnosis and cure; what went wrong in God’s creation of this world (The Fall) and how it is to be saved (Plan of Redemption). To the mysticism and uncertainties of the Hinduism and Buddhism this can be perceived as arrogance, who claim such things are beyond us – especially Buddhists who think there is little light to be had on that matter; that is why the creator and how he created is not brought up in the teachings of Buddha. I share all this not for us to judge, but for us to understand and think how it to reach people who are brought up in such an intellectual and cultural environment; then we may share in a manner that fits their worldview.

This is not doing disservice to truth, but rather allows the truth to work on the mind of the listener in a way that it wouldn’t if the truth is given without any context. We know this is how Jesus worked; and we have a great example of that in the parable of the rich man and Lazarus which seems to teach that there is an eternal hell:

And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham’s bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried;

And in hell he [the rich man] lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. And he cried and he said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus,

that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame. Luke 16:22-23

**In this parable Christ was meeting the people on their own ground. The doctrine of a conscious state of existence between death and the resurrection was held by many of those who were listening to Christ's words. The Saviour knew of their ideas, and He framed His parable so as to inculcate important truths through these preconceived opinions.** He held up before His hearers a mirror wherein they might see themselves in their true relation to God. He used the prevailing opinion to convey the idea He wished to make prominent to all – that no man is valued for his possessions; for all he has belongs to him only as lent by the Lord. (Ellen White, COL 263)

Paul does something similar on Mars Hill when he states:

“Ye men of Athens, I perceive that in all things ye are too superstitious. For as I passed by, and beheld your devotions, I found an altar with this inscription, TO THE UNKNOWN GOD. Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you.” Acts 17:22-23

God reaches people where they are, and in this manner also shows that He understands the way of thinking, and therefore the problems and troubles, of those who are unreached and far from God.

Wolff gives us many examples of how to express the Gospel in a manner that reaches the individual where he is at. This need not be only cultural, but also positional – to fit the needs of the king and the peasant the same Gospel must be expressed differently. Here is a letter that Wolff sends to a king of one city-state in India. Notice how he appeals to the heart of the King by touching on his responsibilities as a ruler:

March 5. — I preached on the subject of the future glory of Christ's kingdom; and addressed the following letter to the King of Oude.

"Most Potent Jehaan Penah!

"Your Majesty has overpowered me with your benevolence and generosity, so that feelings of gratitude compel me to write to your Majesty those truths which will render your Majesty happy and your Majesty's subjects happy, here upon earth, and eternally in heaven. My earnest wish is, that your Majesty and your whole court should enquire into the truth of the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, with prayer and supplication; and your Majesty will be then convinced that Jesus Christ was the Son of God, born of the Virgin Mary, by the power of the Holy Spirit; and that the fulness of the Godhead was in Him bodily; and that He died for our sins, rose again, and went to heaven; from whence he will come again in the clouds of heaven. **In believing this glorious doctrine, your Majesty will experience joy, peace and love in your own heart, and begin to diffuse among your Majesty's subjects, that peace, joy, and love by means of which your Majesty will become the father spiritual and temporal of your subjects;** and your Majesty will one day shine like the stars, and like the brightness of the firmament for ever and ever.

"Your Majesty's most obedient and  
humble servant,  
(signed) JOSEPH WOLFF.  
Missionary."

Wolff writes in a way that makes it difficult for this King to be offended, while making the Gospel a blessing in precisely the thing that a King needs blessing in – how to rule in a manner for the good of his subjects. Wolff doesn't make the letter too long. He addresses only the very point that he thinks the King would be benefited most by the Gospel. It shows much wisdom on the part of the gospel preacher, and when the reader reads it he will be touched by that wisdom and his curiosity awakened. I think this is a great lesson for us.

Wolff travels through India preaching everywhere and to all types of people. His ability to make profound points simply and concisely never ceases to amaze me.



March 10. —I preached in the forenoon at Patna, in the evening at Dinapore, only 2 miles distant from each other. The Rev. Mr. Stevens, the Chaplain of this station, became my very intimate friend. Messieurs Elliott, Templar, Douglass, Dr. Clarke, and Mr. Stuart, assisted me in collecting the Mussulmans, 2000 in number, with whom I had public discussions. **They often cited texts as from the Gospel, which were not to be found there.** Mowlvee Ahmede, the most learned Mohammedan, called on me.

In the afternoon I called on Mr. E... a very open hearted and excellent gentleman; he shewed me Middleton's discrepancy in the genealogy of the Gospel. I told him, "Difficulties are yet no proof that it is not true; for all ancient genealogies have difficulties." **E....'But a revelation ought to be clear.' Myself: "It is clear to many, but you must have observed that a man reads a book under different circumstances, with different feelings and sentiments; the mind may be clouded with passions so that it will not see the beauty or propriety of any passage; therefore we must read the word of God with the simplicity of a child.** (pg. 420)

This is an excellent description of how different people see different things in the Bible. I remember when I was alienated from God I could open anywhere in the Bible and read it with scorn and disdain, seeing only harshness and foolishness in its sayings. But now I think how true this important quote from *The Great Controversy* is:

The mystery of the cross explains all other mysteries. In the light that streams from Calvary the attributes of God which had filled us with fear and awe appear beautiful and attractive. Mercy, tenderness, and parental love are seen to blend with holiness, justice, and power. While we behold the majesty of His throne, high and lifted up, we see His character in its gracious manifestations, and comprehend, as never before, the significance of that endearing title, "Our Father." *GC 652.1*

Let us be very careful in how we judge, for without the mind of Christ we judge as men with limited knowledge and subconscious biases, swayed in the wind by whatever news is in the mass media. Nowhere is this truer than in depictions of people who are different to us, or are to be declared our enemies. Earlier in his travels Wolff remarked on how illiberal the Muslims were; here now he remarks how liberal they are. People are a multiplicity; generalizations can be helpful but also must be dealt with carefully.

#### LIBERALITY OF MOHAMMEDAN PRINCES IN INDIA.

The native Mohammedan Princes shew sometimes singular liberality.

Akbar Shah, for instance, had a great many Christians and even Jews at his court, and open discussion was permitted. The Nawab of Bhopul, who maintained his dependence since the day of Arungh Zeeb, surrounded by the Mahratta and other Hindoo Powers, had Christians in his service. The influential person at the court of the widow of Naser Mohammed was Belshazar Bourbon, or Shah Zadeh Bourbon, a descendant of a Frenchman, Bourbon by name, who came to India in the time of Akbar; he was in high favour with the Princess, and all the intrigues of the courtiers could not succeed in inducing the Princess to remove that able Christian, so sensible was she of his merits and integrity. Madocks gives an interesting account of him. This liberality towards foreigners seems to have existed in the East from time immemorial. Joseph experienced it at the court of Pharaoh, and Daniel from Nebuchadnezzar; and frequently Jews meet with it in the Turkish empire and in Persia. (pg. 424-425)

#### INFIDELITY AMONG HINDOOS.

There are a great many Hindoos who have rejected their own religion, and have turned infidels; they occupy their time in reading "Paine's Age of Reason," and the writings of Voltaire. A wretched merchant of Boston in America, either from a vile speculation, or satanical spirit of infidelity, has sent over to India a whole cargo of copies of Paine's Age of Reason, which are sold among the Hindoos at Calcutta at a very cheap rate.

EXTRACT OF A LETTER ADDRESSED TO ME BY  
DOCTOR CLARKE AT PATNA.

"Since you left Patna, I have had a visit from your antagonist Wazool Huy, and three or four young Mussulmans; thus you see a spirit of enquiry has been excited by your conversations with the natives, to provide for whose spiritual wants a supply of the HoJy Scriptures has been applied for. May your labours of love, my dear sir, be abundantly blessed, to your joy and consolation in Christ Jesus, and the eternal welfare of those whom you address. The Starts are still with us, and unite with Mrs. Clarke in very kind regards to you. I am, my dear Mr. Wolff,

Yours very sincerely,  
(signed) A. C. CLARKE."

I went during my stay at Calcutta twice to Serampore, and have seen both veteran Missionaries, [William] Carey with his silver gray hair, and [Joshua] Marshman nearly as grey, in the service of their Lord; and I have lectured in their college in the presence of both veterans, the younger Missionaries, and all the members of the Danish Serampore Government, for two successive days. I have seen their labours in the vineyard of the Lord. I have seen their village, inhabited by Hindoos, who never have heard an idolatrous drum. Old Marshman assembled them in my presence, and [prayed with converted Hindoos, with poor, old and young, men and women, precious in the eyes of the Lord; more precious than the wise and mighty of this world. I have seen the base whom God has chosen to confound the nobles; the weak, to confound those that are mighty, in order that no flesh should glory in his presence. **The power of God is more displayed in the conversion of a poor peasant, than in the creation of heaven and earth; for at**

**the creation no power opposed, but at the conversion of an old woman, devil and hell, and even fellow creatures, are opposed, as the editors of the Calcutta Newspapers sufficiently testify.**



William Carey, 1761-1834, founder of the *Baptist Missionary Society*. Translated the Bible into Bengali, Oriya, Assamese, Marathi, Hindi, and Sanskrit. Translated the Hindi book the *Ramayana* into English. Founded Serampore College and repudiated caste distinctions. His printing house distributed the Bible in whole or part in 44 languages and dialects. Adoniram Judson, Congregational missionary who would do great work in Myanmar, through his study with Carey became a Baptist. Referred to as the “father of modern missions.”

Wolff travels down from Varanasi to Calcutta [Kolkata] on the map above where William Carey resided. Interestingly I learned in my research that while William Carey may have only converted 700 Indians, his work there was partly responsible for starting the Bengal Renaissance of Art and Culture and a new reformed and revived Hinduism, through his connection with Raja Ram Mohan Roy. There is also much debate at this time in India between Unitarians and Trinitarians, Ram Mohan Roy becomes involved in Unitarianism against Trinitarianism.

From Calcutta Wolff travels south to Hyderabad, one of India’s large cities that has a massive Muslim population (almost half), and

then on to Madras [now known as Chennai]. On the way to Madras Wolff nearly dies of Cholera. It takes him over a month to get better.

From Madras, which is on the east coast of South India, Wolff heads West to Cochin, or Kerala, which is on the west coast of South India. Many people help him and take care of him along the way, for he is well-renown for his travels. It is 1833, and Wolff had been on the road nearly 3 years. Missionaries had set up schools and missions all over India, and most all were eager for Wolff to come and visit them and give an encouraging word.

A man who has neither silver nor gold of his own, is not attached to any [missionary] society, and has solemnly vowed that of his wife's portion he will appropriate a single farthing [penny] for his own use and Missionary labours, will not surely be taxed with meanness for having accepted, as I had, with feeling gratitude, the assistance of other in the course of my travels, especially from those Christian friends, who deemed the workman worthy of his hire. (pg. 459) (Wolff survives off the kindness of others)

Sept. 10, 11, 120, — I lectured again to a crowded congregation. When the last lecture was over, I set out for Madura. Arriving at Mellore, I received a letter from Mr. Hooper, the Judge of Madura, inviting me to take up my abode with him; **a brotherly letter was enclosed from the Rev. Mr. [C.T.E.] Rhenius, the greatest Missionary, I believe, who has ever appeared since the time of the Apostles; more enterprising, more bold, and more talented than even [Christian Friedrich] Schwarz himself: the number of Hindoos to whose conversion he has been instrumental, amounts to 12000.** He kindly invited me to come to his station Palamcottah.

Who is this man who Wolff considered “the greatest missionary...since the time of the Apostles?” I had never heard of him. On googling him I learned the C.T.E. Rhenius was a German-born missionary who was ordained as a Lutheran presbyter who at a young age wanted to be a missionary, and went on to work the Church Mission Society of the Anglican Church in the very south of Tamil Nadu, India.

He was known as the “Apostle of Tirunelveli.” During his 15 years there he had set up as many as 371 congregations. Sadly in the end he would have problems regarding his Lutheran beliefs and the fears of Anglican authorities that his converts were not coming under Church of England rites.



The Tomb of C.T.E. Rhenius

The other man mentioned by Wolff is his forbear as missionary in Tamil Nadu, another German by the name of Christian Friedrich Shwarz. Maha Raja Serfojee, a King beloved by his people, had this written about Shwarz on the memorial he commissioned:

To the memory of the Reverend Christian Frederic Swartz. Born at Sonnenburg of Neumark in the Kingdom of Prussia, the 26th of October 1726, and died at Tanjore the 13th of February 1798, in the 72nd year of his age. Devoted from his Early Manhood to the Office of Missionary in the East, the similarity of his situation to that of the first preachers of the gospel, produced in him a peculiar resemblance to the simple sanctity of the apostolic character. His natural vivacity won the affection as his unspotted probity and purity of life alike

commanded the reverence of the Christian, Mahomedan and Hindu. For sovereign princes, Hindu, and Mahomedan selected this humble pastor as the medium of political negotiations with the British Government - Maha Raja Serfojee

These were great missionaries, who won the hearts of the people they served. One of my aims in writing this book is that we may walk in their footsteps in faith and doing the works that they did through having their example. Wolff meets Rhenius:

#### RHENIUS, A PRUSSIAN.

This is indeed a Missionary! I lived in the same room with him, and saw how one after another of his congregation came to consult him as a spiritual father. To give some slight notion of what he has done, I will only mention that at the end of June 1833, the congregation from among the heathen at Tinevelly amounted to 10,694 souls, belonging to 238 villages, who were instructed in the word of God by 109 catechists. Those 10,694 souls are comprised in 3075 families, who have renounced idolatry, and are under Christian instruction and discipline. 2086 souls are baptized, the rest are candidates for baptism. During the last 6 months, ending with June, the increase in the congregation was 1388 souls. Nearly every month, a number of heathen families of a village, or a whole village, renouncing idolatry, and ask for a Christian teacher. There are 111 schools, superintended by Rhenius, Schaffter, and Mueller, his worthy fellow labourers. In these schools are 2553 boys, and 146 girls, who receive Christian instruction.

The seminary contains about 40 native youths, who are boarded and instructed in the mission premises in theology and various sciences. Pious converts are always chosen for teachers.

Sarkoman, a convert, is Professor of mathematics. 50000 tracts have been printed in the Tamul language. John Dewa Saghaym, whose grandfather was converted from Hinduism by one of the Missionaries at Tranquebar, was ordained by Bishop Turner, and superintends now the native congregation.

Rhenius went to see a dying woman at Courtalem. The husband was brought by this affliction, and the instrumentality of Rhenius, to a saving knowledge of Christ. Oh that this might be the happy

condition of everyone who enters into the state of widowhood! Blessed are those who do not put off till the hour of death! Blessed those who do not from afar only, as Balaam did, see the Lord, but who are made nigh by the blood of Christ; for He is our peace, who hath made us one. I have heard, when at Musulipatam, dying souls declare, "If I should be spared I would serve the Lord all the days of my life." But there is a moment, after which we can no longer serve the Lord; a night cometh in which no man can work. Blessed are those who have the Lord always before them, in every object, on every occasion; who perceive him in the melodious voice of the nightingale, at the recollection of a beloved departed wife or brother in affection. In every event, in every object, He ought to be recognised; for the Lord reveals His wisdom, goodness and power at all seasons: in the nocturnal sky, with its innumerable stars, no less than in the glorious light of the day. The moon proclaims His grace, and the sun His glory. On every page of His revelation He has made known His goodness. His presence brings a presentiment of that bliss, which our departed friends enjoy, who dwell with Him [note: immortality of the soul]. Our destined portion, the portion of all redeemed souls is, to be partakers of His glory, to sit in heavenly places with Christ Jesus !

## Kerala

Wolff goes west to Malabar, now called Kerala, which is where Thomas the Apostle was said to have gone and preached. There is no doubt that it is an ancient church. I added a short section from B.J. Wilkinson's *Truth Triumphant* which chronicles the fascinating history of the Syriac Church in India in detail, from its moving its intellectual center in Baghdad to India during one of the Muslim Caliphates to the Inquisition being brought there by Portugal and the Jesuits. Wolff talks some about it, but I'd recommend that book for those interested.



Oct. 3. — I called with Mr. Ridsdale, a very active Missionary, on Mar Dionysius, the Metropolitan of the Syrians, a venerable old man. He informs me that they have 70 churches on the Malabar coast, and their nation amounts to 50,000. He related that 345 years after Christ, Toma, a Canaanite, came from Syria, and

converted many to the Syrian religion. They speak of Antioch as the Jews do of Jerusalem, and they believe that the chief seat of the Syrian Christians is still at Antioch. In the year 1825 a Syrian Bishop was sent to them by the Patriarch of Merdeen; he was received with joy, but as he with great zeal attempted to take down the Hindoo idols, which they had in their churches, they exiled him with the aid of the British Resident.

Mr. Baillie, the Missionary of the Church Missionary Society, has translated the New Testament into Malayalem, and taught them the art of printing.

They, like the Syrians of Mesopotamia, have a great veneration for Ephrem the Syrian, and Jacob of Nisibin; they are well acquainted with the account of the conversion of Behenam and Sennahereb, mentioned in the second volume of my journals. They abstain, like their brethren in Mesopotamia, from pork and every other meat prohibited in the Law of Moses...

Here is Wilkinson:

Naturally, the Church of the East looking back to Thomas as its founder, placed no value on the claim that Peter was the “rock” upon which Christ would build His church and that He would give the “keys” to Peter only. The difference between the Church of India in dating its origins from the apostle Thomas and the Church of Rome in dating its origins from the apostle Peter, is a difference of doctrines and practices. This contrast appears in the account given by the historian Gibbon of the first meeting between the Jesuits when they arrived on the coast of India, and the St. Thomas Christians.

He [Gibbon] writes: When the Portuguese first opened the navigation of India, the Christians of St. Thomas had been seated for ages on the coast of Malabar.... The title of Mother of God was offensive to their ear; and they measured with scrupulous avarice the honors of the Virgin Mary, whom the superstition of the Latins had almost exalted to the rank of a goddess. When her image was first presented to the disciples of St. Thomas they indignantly exclaimed, “We are Christians, not idolaters!”

**How much the world owes to the brave stand made by Christianity in India, man will never know until the judgment.**

For the first six hundred years the churches of southern India grappled successfully with dominant Buddhism; then for the succeeding one thousand years they contended with a degraded and wily Hinduism. But the real struggle began in the seventeenth century when the Jesuits, supported by the guns of Portugal, entered their parishes. It was not the missionaries from Rome, therefore, who first entered India. The type of New Testament faith first planted on the Malabar Coast nineteen hundred years ago is still there and is similar to that of the rest of the Protestant world.

The last sentence is a stretch I think, Gibbon himself in the very next line of the quote above states: "Their separation from the Western world had left them in ignorance of the improvements, or corruptions, of a thousand years; and their conformity with the faith and practice of the fifth century would equally disappoint the prejudices of a Papist or a Protestant." But maybe to certain open-minded Protestants... Gibbon takes an idealistic view of the Church there following Claudius Buchanan, from whose book I quoted earlier about Juggernaut. Wolff has this to say.:

That the Syrian Church in India is essentially corrupted, there can be no doubt; but a judicious Missionary might make them what Buchanan in his researches imagined them to be, for they are a mild and kind hearted people, and I hope that Mr. Baillie will do a great deal of good among them. (p. 470)

Anyways, they like most other churches are surely corrupt at this point due to the modern era causing most everybody to forget their history. Wolff then gives a lot of history regarding the Portuguese and the Dutch in Kerala, and also the Jews there. But I found this section fascinating:

ACCOUNTS OF THE WHITE AND BLACK JEWS.

In the land of Hindoostan, the Malyalem metropolis Cochin [capital of Kerala], those are called white Jews, who came after the

destruction of the second temple, from the Holy Land, and they have only one synagogue.

Those are called black Jews, who became Jews of their own accord in the land of Malabar at Cranganore, and those who were dispersed in the country, of black and half black colour. And for this reason the white Jews do not intermarry with them. And they have neither Priests nor Levites, nor families, nor relations in foreign countries, as they are merely to be found in the Malabar coast. They observe the Law, as we white Jews do; there is a little difference in their prayers and ceremony of marriage; but they differ entirely from the religion of the land...

**Several of the black Jews themselves assert that their ancestors became Jews in the time that Haman fell into disgrace at the court of Ahasuerus, and they prove it by affirming (what the white Jews deny) that they were already there at the time the white Jews came to Hindoostan; (see Esther viii. 17). Their complexion is like that of the Hindoos; indeed, even at this time many of the Hindoos at Cochin become converts to Judaism.**

They consider themselves as slaves to the white Jews, paying them a yearly tribute, and they are bound to pay them a small sum for the privilege of circumcising their children, and for being allowed in prayer time to wear the frontlets (Tefilin); they do not sit down in the presence of the white Jews, nor eat with them, as they acknowledge them as their masters; they are however richer, more industrious, and more moral than the white Jews. The white Jews are too proud to work, and live chiefly upon the jewels and valuables they have inherited from their ancestors. They are very immoral, and give not only their daughters, but frequently their wives for hire to the Europeans, Parsees, and Mohammedans; and fathers frequently desert their reputed children, knowing that they are not really their own. They are beautiful in countenance. They behave towards the black Jews with the arrogance of masters.

Mr. Ridsdale has two daughters of a white Jew in his house, who freely consigned them over to him to be baptized.

The white Jews have rendered, at different times, great services to the Dutch, as may be seen by the printed patent of the Dutch Government of Colomba.

It certifies that a Mr. Ezechiel Rabbi, a member of the Jewish nation, a merchant employed by the trading company, by whom the certificate is given, being invested with the honourable office of Ambassador under the Kings of Cochin, has proved himself to the honourable company by his efficient, faithful, laborious, and good services under various circumstances, to be a man of integrity &c. (Dated) Kolomba 28th. Nov. 1750.

The white as well as the black Jews of Cochin are very much prejudiced against the Gospel of Christ; and are anxiously expecting the coming of the Messiah. I met amongst them a Polish Jew who was a great drunkard, but a man of extraordinary talents in acquiring languages; he knows about 18 languages.

It is extremely praiseworthy in Mr. Ridsdale that he takes a very lively interest in the Jews of Cochin. (pg. 476-477)

Fascinating dynamics here between the Jews and the converts. Notice even the black Jews accept the white Jews superiority to them due to bloodline, even though they are more moral and industrious than them. Also notice that many people converted to Judaism in the time of Esther; the religion was Judaism was known far and wide. B.J. Wilkinson argues for the huge influence of Daniel on the whole Asian continent, that the law and teachings of Daniel's God were well known and influenced Buddhism, Confucianism, Hinduism, and Zoroastrianism. We remember Paul's famous verses in Romans 2:

<sup>28</sup>For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: <sup>29</sup>But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God.

Wolff leaves Kochin and travels north up the west Coast of India, heading for the famous beach town of Goa, a former Portuguese colony.

Oct. 29 – From thence I set out for Conaconum, where I was most hospitably received by the Portuguese Commandant (for this place belongs to the territory of Goa). The Priest of the place, Pater Antonius Cajetanus of Culinho, a Portuguese, agreeably

disappointed me: I found in Father Antonius a liberal minded and kind-hearted Priest, and one not destitute of general knowledge. I made him a present of a Portuguese Bible; several other officers of the Portuguese army entered the room, with whom I conversed in French about the Gospel of Christ. The Priest, and every one of these, told me with delight that the inquisition was abolished at Goa. (pg. 478-479)

Wolff says "it was in the year 1810, at the suggestion of the British Government, that the inquisition was abolished" in Goa (Britain having control over India). The Portuguese inquisition was terminated in 1821, and in Spain was not definitively abolished until 1834 (the year we are in is 1833). When the deadly wound heals the inquisition will return.

Wolff, knowing Latin and well-read in Catholic works, is able to connect and share with the Catholic priests. He spends many nights talking to them of prophecy, but also bonding over certain writings of their saints. For example:

Nov. 3.—I was up in the night time with the Provincial, Fre Juan a Santa Rosa, and the Prior, Fre Jose de S. Agostino, and read with them in the beautiful and heart elevating writings of St. Austin, and his pious exclamations taken from the Psalms of David: *Salvum fac populum tuum, Domine, et benedic hereditati tuae, et rege eos, et extolle illos usque in eternum!* " thy people, oh Lord, and bless thine inheritance, feed them also, and lift them up forever!" **I regret that formerly I lost much time in exposing errors, instead of shewing the light; by which I often only exasperated the minds of the opponents.** I cannot forbear adding here the beautiful prayer of S. Bonaventura, which we read together in that solemn night. (pg. 485)

Nov. 8. — I lectured in the chapel of Mr. Taylor, where I mentioned several instances of scriptural descriptions of manners, as illustrated by the existing customs of the East, such as are the following.

SCRIPTURAL ILLUSTRATIONS.

Gen. x. 25. "Peleg, for in his days was the earth divided." The Arabs and Toorkomauns often receive names from certain events, which took place in their time: thus the father of Ali in Yemen received the name of Almujuddal, from his father conquering the Imam of Sanaa: Mujuddal means conqueror.

Gen. xviii, 2. " And he bowed himself with his face toward the ground." Thus the Arabs still bow down before great men.

Gen. xix. 2. " We will abide in the street all night." Strangers frequently say this in the East, when they are invited."

Gen. xxiv. 2—10. Thus Syrian Christians frequently send their servants with their sons in search of a wife, and the servant settles the affair.

Gen. xxiv. 11, 12. Thus throughout the East the camels always kneel down near a well, and one sees the women (Kurdish or Arab girls) come out with their pitchers upon their shoulders to draw water. I saw this frequently in the valley of Cashmeer. I can in imagination hear an Arab slave exclaim, "Ya Allah," &c. (Oh God! which they always do after they have made their camels rest) and make vows after prayers for the success of his undertaking.

Gen. xxiv. 65. "Therefore she took a veil and covered herself." I frequently saw an Arab, Curd, or Eastern Christian travelling with his wife and relations; the females were uncovered until they perceived at a distance some stranger coming.

Gen. xxvii. 41. "The days of mourning for my father are at hand, then will I slay my brother Jacob." It often happens in the East that the brothers wait for the death of their fathers, to avenge among themselves their private quarrels.

Exodus iii. 5. " Put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground." Neither Mohammedans, nor Hindoos, nor Christians enter their places of worship without having first put off their shoes.

Gen. xlvii. 7. "And Jacob blessed Pharaoh." This custom of an old man blessing a King or Governor is especially observed in Toorkistan. I was frequently asked by Jews and Mohammedan Princes to bless them, being considered as a Mullah, and having a venerable beard.

Deut. xxxii. 32. "For their vine is of the vine of Sodom." I saw at the Dead sea a fruit growing on a sort of bramble, in the form of a grape of a yellow colour, looking beautiful externally, but as soon

as it is crushed, it is found evidently poisonous. This explains the meaning of the reproach made by Moses to the Jews; in their external appearance (having been taken as the chosen people of God, and His tokens being bestowed upon them) they were beautiful; but their interior (their moral) character was bad, like the fruit of Sodom.

Joshua xvii. 6. The Jews object to Jesus being the son of David, saying that Jesus was only the son of David from the mother's line, and a woman does not inherit the right of a man. This verse in Joshua refutes their objection; for the daughters of Zelophehad inherited the rights of sons. They were ladies in their own right.

2 Kings ii. 13. "He took up also the mantle of Elijah that fell from him." The mantle of a Dervish is considered as sacred: the Dervish with whom I travelled from Balkh to Cabool was very angry when an Affghaun by chance sat upon his mantle, and exclaimed, "Is this mark of the Prophet no longer esteemed?" (pg. 487-493)

This is just a selection from examples shared by Wolff of how practices in the Bible still exist in Asia. Wolff continues onto Pune, near Mumbai (Bombay). Notice here where Wolff preaches:

Nov. 21 – At Poonah, where I received a most cordial reception in the house of Colonel Wood. Majors Morse, Mountain, and the rest of the officers kindly called on me, and Col. Wood introduced me to General Sir James Barnes, the Commander of the station, by whose permission I was allowed to lecture in the cantonment in the Freemasons hall. (pg. 494)

Wolff meets with an ancient group of Jews named 'Bene Israel'. Many of these have settled in the modern state of Israel now.

#### BENEE ISRAEL.

Nov. 23. — I went with Mr. Stevenson among the few Benee Israel, Children of Israel, who are resident at Poonah: they are totally distinct from the rest of the Jews in Europe and Hindoostan. Soon after the destruction of the first temple, they came in 7 ships (thus they relate their own story) from Arabia into Hindoostan,

where they have since forgotten their Law, but continue to repeat in Hebrew certain prayers, which they have learnt from the other Jews; they also read the Pentateuch, but without understanding the language. They have synagogues; but they have not in them, like the rest of the Jews, the Sepher Torah, or the five books of Moses written upon parchment; for they say, "As we are soldiers, and do not keep the Law, the Sepher Torah may do us harm if it stands in the midst of us." They serve the English as volunteers in their armies, and are esteemed the best native soldiers. They possess great simplicity and honesty of character, are faithful to their wives, and by far more moral than the Jews of Cochin. But they keep hidden in their houses some Hindoo idols, and beside this a great many charms, which they wear like the Kemas of the Jews. I conversed with several of them about Jesus Christ our Lord; they produced objections against his divinity, which they have evidently heard from the other Jews. They know the Ten Commandments of our Lord by heart in the English tongue; and they begin now to send their children to the schools of the Scotch Missionaries. (pg 494-495)

Wolff leaves Bombay for Yemen, his last stop before the end of his travels. Yemen is just South of Saudi Arabia, and is currently going through a terrible civil war in which Saudi Arabia is greatly involved.



## Final Stops (Yemen and Saudi Arabia) and Conclusion

### ARRIVAL AT MACULLAH.

Dec. 23. — We anchored near Macullah on the Arabian coast; here is the land of Hatramawt, called in Gen. x. 26, Hasermaveth. This place is inhabited by Bedooeens (Bedouin) from the interior of Hatramawt. The Bedooeens of Macullah are of the tribe of Yaafa, perfect savages.

Dec. 24. — I went on shore with my friend the Purser, and preached to the Bedooeens Christ, and Him crucified; they listened, but with barbarian indifference. I called on the Sheikh of the place, where I met with several Bedooeens of the interior of Hatramawt. (pg. 500)

I added this to show that Wolff didn't always meet with success, here he meets with indifference. He continues on to Sana'a, the largest city in Yemen with 4 million people presently. I added this to coincide with the verse in Titus 3:9 – “But avoid foolish questions,

and genealogies, and contentions, and strivings about the law; for they are unprofitable and vain.”

Fifty years ago, the Jews at Sanaa pretended that they could ascertain their genealogy, and were in possession of ancient documents; but a dispute having arisen among them as to whom the superiority ought to belong, Shalom Ben Ahron, Kohen Araki, being at that time their great Nassi, and Rabbi Yahyah Salekh, their Ab Beth Din, both of them highly respected on account of their learning, came forward, and said, "Children of Israel, hear the words of your elders, and listen to the advice of your old men: through the jealousy, hatred and enmity among ourselves, and on account of our impiety, our ancestors lost all their privileges, and were driven away from the land of Israel, and we, their children, are sighing in captivity; why should we now quarrel among ourselves? have we not trouble and tribulations enough? We live in the midst of Ishmaelites; of what use is it that one should pretend to be of the tribe of Judah, and the other of the tribe of Reuben? it only excites hatred. Let us then root out at once the dispute, and cast into the fire our doubtful documents; for when the Lord shall be pleased to gather the scattered sheep of Israel, then every one of us will know of what tribe he is; Jehovah himself will reveal it to us, and Messiah the Son of David will reign among us, even at Jerusalem, and upon His holy hill of Zion. No disputes will then take place among us, but there will be peace, quiet and harmony." They had scarcely finished, when the whole congregation of Israel at Sanaa burnt the genealogies of their tribes, and the congregation exclaimed, "Peace, Peace for ever in Israel! " (pg. 502)

### THREE PILGRIMS FROM YURKAND.

I learnt to-day that the three pilgrims from Yurkand in Chinese Tartary, who went with me from Cashmeer to Delhi, had safely arrived at Mecca, and that they shewed about at Mecca the Persian New Testament which I had given them, relating the kindness they had received from me on their way from Cashmeer to Shahe Jehaan Abad, i.e. Delhi; they remembered it at the tomb of the Prophet, and the Mussulmans observed: "The Christians in our days have often more pity and compassion than the followers of Islam. Allah Kibir!" (God is great). (pg. 515)

Here shows how the far-reaching influence of compassion and kindness in the relationships we have with those we meet. Wolff travels through western Saudi Arabia, known as Hejaz, where Mecca and Medina are, back to Egypt. The year is no 1834.

March 15. — I arrived at Alexandria, 3 years and one month after my departure from that place for Antalya. I was received with open arms by my old friend Mr. Gliddon, who I had found again raised to the dignity of American Consul. We talked over the goodness of our Lord in bringing me safely back to this place, after such a dangerous expedition, in which I had met with so many adventures. (pg 519)

I conclude this book with an excerpt from Wolff's own conclusions. I hope the reader has been blessed in taking this journey with me.

#### RESULTS OF MY EXPEDITION TO BOKHARA, BALKH CABOOL, CASHMEER, AND HINDOOSTAN.

In taking a retrospective view of my expedition, the following seem to me to be the results.

1. To have obtained, and given to the world, a more clear insight into the state of the Jews, from Constantinople to the utmost bounds of Turkey, Persia, Khorossaun, and into that of all the Jews in Tartary, than has hitherto been given.

2. I have given an insight into the state of the Christian Churches from Alexandria to Anatolia, Armenia, and Persia.

3. Into the state of Mohammedanism, as far as the utmost boundaries of Turkey, Persia, and even to Chinese Tartary.

4. I have given an idea of the creed of the Ali Ullahi in Persia, such as never was given before. (worshippers of Ali, Ali-Illahism)

5. By having circulated the Word of God at Burjund, bordering on Beloojistan; and having conversed openly with the Mohammedans in their most bigotted town, even in Meshed, as it was testified by Mirza Baba, the chief physician of Abbas Mirza, I have solved the problem whether it may be possible for a Missionary to preach the Gospel in barbarian Mohammedan countries.

6. And as I have shewn to the Churches on my former mission, that Missionaries may be stationed not only in the Mediterranean, but likewise at Jerusalem, in Persia and Kurdistan; they will now see that missions may be established likewise at Mashhad, Bokhara, Kabul, Kashmir, and Lahore.

7. The proclamations which I issued at Meshed and at Lahore, calling on the people to turn to Christ, and which I fixed up in the streets, the latter of which was sent officially to the Governor Gen. of India, may encourage a Missionary in working boldly in Christ's vineyard.

8. The liberality of the Jews of Teheran has been ascertained.

9. The most intellectual Jews of Meshed, who never gave attention to the Gospel before, have now been induced to study it, and to enquire into the truth of it.

10. Mullah Yakoob at Sarakhs, has avowed his belief in his Lord Jesus Christ.

11. The pious Joseph of Talkhtoon in the kingdom of Khiva is enquiring into the truth of the Gospel with prayer, in the company of all his disciples.

12. Mullah Pinehas Ben Simha, Mullah Meshiah Serkar and several others at Bokhara have declared their belief in the Lord Jesus Christ.

13. A great number of other Jews of Bokhara and Balkh have anxiously desired to have New Testaments in the Hebrew tongue.

14. The Jews of Bokhara, Samarcand, Meshed, Balkh and Cabool were astonished to see one who was himself a Jew, going about to preach Jesus Christ as the true Messiah, and thus their attention has been strongly attracted to the truth.

15. The Mohammedans in Khorossaun and Toovkestaun, and the Seiks in the Punjaub, were thus convinced that there are Europeans who fear God, which before they could not be persuaded of. "How is it (said [King] Runjeet Singh [of the Sikhs] to me) that you go about for the sake of religion? for the Franks have no religion." And when I related this to a great statesman in India, he observed, "This is the prevalent opinion of the natives here."

16. The Toorkomans at Sarakhs were struck with amazement at seeing a man go about preaching the Gospel of Christ, and the inhabitants of Cashmeer expressed a desire to be visited by more such Europeans.

17. By having given a simple statement of the traditions of the Affghauns; having ascertained their total unlikeness to the Jews in their physiognomy, and also the total discrepancy of their language from the Hebrew, I think I have demonstrated that the Affghauns are in no wise descendants from the Jews. The assertions of a few of them that they are of the Children of Israel does not prove anything; for they themselves, as well as all the Mohammedans, make a great distinction between Jews and Children of Israel.

18. I have shewn that the idea of the Jews of Bokhara, that the Ten Tribes are around Lassa and in China, is highly probable.

19. A spirit of enquiry was excited among the Hindoos and Mohammedans, from Loodianah (the utmost northern frontier of British India) and from Cashmeer to Bombay. This they have manifested at Delhi, Lucknow, and Cownpore, by their writings.

20. Whole families of Europeans in India have by God's grace been brought from a state of indifference or infidelity to the saving knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

21. I have proved by experience that a Missionary, under the protection of the Highest, may have grace to persevere in preaching the Gospel of Christ, through good report and evil report, under afflictions, illness, poverty, and persecution.

22. By having spoken truly of the labours of Rhenins at Palamcottah, La Croix, Duff at Calcutta, and Wilson at Bombay, &c. I hope to have placed in clearer light the futility of the observations of those who say that the Missionaries are doing no good.

23. And I hope to have proved by the simple fact of a Brahmin in the Himmalayah mountains, beyond the reach of British influence, reading the Gospel of St. Luke in the Nagree characters, with crowds of his disciples around him, that the exertions of the British and Foreign Bible Society are not in vain; and that the Lord is making an overturning, until He comes whose right it is, and who will take possession of the earth in his royal and sacerdotal character.

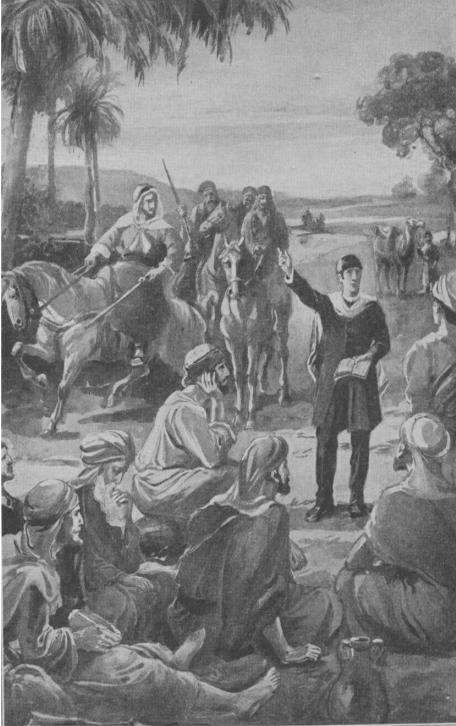
Here ends Wolff's 1835 book, *Researches and Missionary Labours*.

# Missionary to the World

## The Adventures of Joseph Wolff Vol. I

In the lead up to 1844 the 2nd coming of Jesus was preached

all over the world. One man, unconnected with the Millerite movement in the United States of America, was more influential in preaching the literal prophetic understanding of Daniel and Revelation than any other - Joseph Wolff - known in his time as "Missionary to the World," a moniker agreed to by Ellen White, who used it in her book *The Great Controversy*.



Joseph Wolff in Palestine

Joseph Wolff preached in lands who hadn't heard the gospel preached in centuries. He spoke to kings and peasants, slave raiders and prostitutes. We have much to learn from him if we want to take the last message of mercy to a dying world.