

Izidian Religion

- Another Look -



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There are (600,000) people in Iraq who belong to this religion. Also there are thousands of Izidian people in Syria, Turkey, Iran and Lebanon. As it is said that, their number in Armenia and Russia is more than (300,000) while the report of Germany Migration Office indicate that their number is more than 75000 in Germany; as well as to some separated families that live in Canada, U.S.A, Australia, Sweden, Britain and other European countries.

This ancient religion, more than any other religion, was an subject either to extermination offensives for many centuries, or by accusing and suspecting their religion, thoughts and national identity. Izydians claimed that they

were exposed to 72 extermination offensives up to now (56 offensives are known and the rest might be directed to Assyrians).

The most severe and dangerous offensives were in the reign of Ottoman's occupation to Iraq. We can probably conclude the reason of the firmness of the Ottoman's offensives in Izydian memory is recent compared with other offensives which covered with the dust of forgetness and the passing of time. It is considerable to say that the Izydians are still having some popular tales and folklore songs which circulated up to now which shed lights on a side of that disasters which were about to exterminate Izydians for ever.

The suspicion in Izydian religion and the various accuses were as dangerous as the Ottoman's military attacks.

The most dangerous accuses which Izydians are still suffering from are worshipping the Satan, belonging to Yazid Bin Maawia (689 ٦٨٣ A.C) and the accuse of participating in killing Al-Hussein Bin Ali. Other accuses considered them _ the Izydians as a group seceded from Islam or the remains of Jewish while some considered them Christians had deviated from the instructions of the church and other accuses (we shall discuss them later).

It is worth to mention that the priest Inistans Al_ Karmali was the first writer who accused Izydian in worshipping the Satan followed by the Iraqi historical writer Abdul Razzaq Al_ Hassani. These accuses gained enormous spread in the middle of the preceding century but D. Rasheed Al_ Kha-joon said "the fame of the priest Al_ Karmali and Abdul Razzaq Al_ Hassani has covered a lot of defects of their fault judgments".

The suspecting in the national identity of Izydian was also as dangerous as what had preceded specially the intended tries to disgrace this religion by all means and ways.

There were political reasons and economical benefits beyond this suspicion in order to apply the Arabization politics which began by Saddam's regime from the middle of seventies of the twenty century to change the Kurdish identity of Izydians and to put Arab features on their Kurdish face by methodical and systematic ways.

Although most of Izydians do not accept the Arab identity which given to them coercively even some, as a result to that offensive - claimed that Izydi is a nationality by itself! That is less than what those who wanted to fuse or milt Izydians in the crucible of Arab identity, forgetting that the religious izyidian scripts, the daily speeches, popular uni-

forms and traditions are Kurdish completely. With our great respect to all the nationalities that live together with us, like Arabs, Assyrians, and Turkomans, but the obvious historical facts prove that Izydians are Kurds and the origin of Kurds. This of course is confessed by the best of historians, writers and even the Kurdish politicians. Some may accuse us with exaggeration if we say that the Izydian religion is a very ancient one, so we shall put forward briefly some facts that support our say about the deep roots of the Izydian religion which reach to Sumerian, Babylonian and Assyrian origins.

1. Everyone deals with old Iraq history finds that the most know temples of Babylonia are Izagela and Izyda temples (look at the syllable (Iza). It was rarely to find a Babylonian city with out these two temples. While Izagela Temple was being dedicated to worship great Murdoukh, the Izyda temple had been built to dedicate the worship of (Nabu) though worshipping Nabu had begun at the end of the third thousand B.C and separated and became larger until the falling of the Assyrians and Babylonian civilizations in 612 and 539 B.C successively.

2. The expert of ancient languages (Lavari Nabu)the teacher in Goutingin university in Germany discovered that the word (Izydi)in Sumerian language _ contains three syllables (I,Zy.Di) which mean the people who walking on

the right way or the non-polluted persons, or simply the pure people.

3. Wednesday was the holiday for the Babylonians and Assyrians, and it was also the day of the god Nabu. For the izyadians, Wednesday is the holiday which has a special holiness because it is the day of "Taous Malak".

4. The ceremonies of the new year (Akito) in Babylonians or Assyrians, (Zagmok) in Sumerians _start with the beginning of spring season. These large ceremonies start with the beginning of April in the Babylonian calendar. In these ceremonies, the king was sharing his followers and in this occasion there were rebuilding processes to the sacred temples associated with the tunes of the flute and drums and the wandering round those temples. The marriage was prohibited during the ceremonies of April because Babylonian thought that gods were getting married in this month. Concerning with Izydians, the new years day (Sari Sali in Kurdish language) is in the first Wednesday in the oriented April (which lags western April 13 day). The ceremonies and Tawafat (plural of Tawafa which means wandering around a temple) were in these days because all of izyadian (tawafat) are made near of the shrines of the good ancestors and sacred graves in izyadian areas as if these "tawafat" are a kind of ceremony of the marriage of gods according to the Babylonian concept. The Izydians also prohibited marriage

in April till this moment and the ancestors shrines are re-built again associated with the tunes of tambourines and fluets in the same period.

5. At the beginning of each spring the Babylonians had used to make (the sacred cake) which consisted of barley flour, date emulsion, sesame seeds and rose water. The Izydians today are still making what they call it (Saweeek) in Arabic or (Pekhoun) in Kurdish, which consists of flour, molasses and sesame seeds to have the bless of the Prophet (Khider Elias). It is worth to mention, here, that the fest of (Khider Elias) is in the middle of February according to Izydian calendar.

6. The river was regarded as a god in Babylon concepts, therefore, urination in it was prohibited and considered one of sins. The Izydians are still prohibiting urination in any current water.

7. The job of (Al_Qaual) in Izydian religion is like the job and the name of (qalo) in Babylonian time which means the chanter of the elegies.

8. In the latest Babylonian periods, there were two ceremonies for the New Year's Day, the first was in spring and the second was at the beginning of autumn. It is known that a big side of Babylonian philosophy depended on the base of the death and the birth of nature. The sun (the god Shamsh) had a very important place in Babylonian my-

thology. The point here is that the correspondence is not just found between the festivity of (Sarei Salei) and (Akito) of Babylonia but the festivity of (Aed Al_Jamayia) which is at the beginning of October corresponds with the Babylonian festivities of autumn which are essentially the continuity of the story of creation which is recited in (Akito fest) and how the universe is submitted to the Divine Will, and the domination of god (Shamsh) on the destinies of nature and its affairs. There is a sculpture in Britain museum (a copy of it is found in Iraqi museum) shows us a huge ox kneeling in a very submitting way under the foot of the powerful god Shamsh. Also we find a scorpion snapping the sexual organs of the ox. There are also grasses and yields rounds the blood that bleeding from the ox. The significance of this carving is that the ox tower had faced the sun in autumn before 4000 years. The ox here is the symbol of fertility while the domination of god (Shamsh) indicates its control on the fertility and everything produced from fertility (the destinies of nature and human beings). With the death of the ox, the seasons of dryness and barrenness have ended and the seasons of rains are undoubtedly coming. In Izydian side and as a part of (Aed Al_Jamaya) which lasts seven days, an ox is led by some strong men (in the fifth day of the festivity) to the shrine of (Sheikh Shamsh) where it is slaughtered there in cheerful and noisy ceremonies.

There are other elements of similarity between the Izydian religion and the Assyrian and Babylonian religions which had the Sumerian origins. George Habeeb, the historian, said (the religion of Izydians and Assyrians is the same with over looking some changes and if it is possible for people to claim that they come from an Assyrian origin, the Izydians only have that right. With our gratitude to the efforts of Mr.Habeeb, but we see that his sayings would be more accurate if he did not monopolize its opinion only in (Assyrians) because we know well that the religions of Assyrian, Babylonian and Sumerian are alike in spite of some differences required by political benefits and interests, also we must take care of Mr.Habeeb's try to connect Izydian religion to Assyrian net. In regard with accusing Izydian of worshipping Satan or with relating them to (Yazid Bin Muawia) we see that it is unreasonable for any fair writer to believe these two accuses together because if we suppose that the first charge is right, that will mean the Satan's worship was a spreaded phenomenon in the Amawi state.

Of course, there is no Arabic or foreign historian _ however he hated Yazid Bin Mawaya _ indicates that Yazid has contrived a new religion during the period of his reign which lasted three years and some months .No one has ever hinted at a new worship intensified during the period of his reign. Concerning with the first accuse of worshipping Sa-

tan, I would like to show my personal opinion in this subject. First, I ask: where did the accuse of worshipping Satan come from? Who are the first people that this accuse caught them first? Are there historical roots to this accuse? The persons who read the books that shed lights upon the ancient civilizations will find that some priests of old Egypt were the first who had been accused of this charge though the Satan we know now differs from the one of the old Egyptians. There is an old Egyptian myth says that the god (Set or Seth) was a minor god in the old Egyptian religion and he had not any popularity compared with his brother Izyres (note the syllable "IZY"again). One day, Set prepared banquet and invited his beloved brother to it. After they had had the banquet, Set brought a well-made coffin and asked his brother to enter and check the coffin from inside. When Izyres entered inside the coffin Set harried and locked the coffin forever. Thus, with the death of Izyres, Set had the right to take his place so the priests and the people had to give the sacrifices and vows to Set instead of the dead brother. Thus, some priests and simple people believed the myth and gave in fact their sacrifices and vows to Set while the biggest part of the priests supported by a lot of people who loved Izyres (the god of the light, agriculture and the water) accused them of worshipping Set the devil who killed his beloved brother due to his canning benefits.

The old Egyptian symbolized Set as a red donkey because they hated that colour. The word (Set or Seth) is too near to (Satan) in pronunciation and the qualities of (Set) correspond with the present Satan in a way or another. As it is hard to deny or neglect the influence of the Egyptian religion on Jewish religion and the influence of the latest on the following religions, so we can understand the beginning of the story of the growth and development of this phenomenon _the accuse. It is worth to say that this accuse is still stucked to the people who believed in a god that differs from the god of the majority. This accuse made a wonderful success among simple people who received it with reassured hearts and satisfied souls because the majority felt comfort when it know that it's god is the god of goodness and the good features belong only to him while the god of others is a hateful god and those who believe in it are sleeping in a deep ignorance and they must be woked up either by false talks or by the edge of the sword if it is necessary! Also we must not forget the role of this accuses of degrading the thoughts of others and of conspiring the public opinion against them when ever that was necessary. I wonder without any bad intensions: does the biblical Satan correspond with the Angelic Satan and the Satan in Quran? Can't we see the development in building the Satan's character? Why is the Satan's picture drawn having two horns

on his head in paintings and caricatures? I think the two horns refer to the oldness of the character because the people of ancient religions and civilizations drew their gods having horns to prove their divinity and that means Satan was a god one day and he deserved to be in hell for a certain sin he had committed and gained the curses of mankind. In brief, Satan is not the production of the divine books only and he might be older than them! I hope not to understand from that any defense on Satan's personality but I am trying to follow the first sources of the growing of this dangerous character. This accuse makes simple _minded people ready to invade and exterminate others and to legalize robbing, killing and stealing properties of others without having the feel of guilt or fear and that is exactly what happened to Izydians during many many years. In return to the main subject, I d like to give my opinion about those two words (Izydian and Yazidian). The distinguished thing here is that the Izydians insist on the first word that begins with (I) while some Arab writers are still insisting on the use of the second word (Yazidian). The reader may be astonished if I say the words (Izyd,Izydian,Yazid and Yazidian) are never found in the religious Izydian texts which are circulated up to now but it comes in the form of (Izy)! Someone may ask here: so, where did the word (Izydi) come from? How did this word become (Yazidi)? There is no

doubt that it is impossible to neglect or avoid the right way of understanding the different terms and names according to the original language of certain people. Izydians always say that "we are kurds and our religious texts are written in Kurdish "and from this point we have to analyze the difficult terms and words according to the language that people have used. If we examine the words "Ezi or Izi" as they come in the religious texts of Izydians we shall discovered that these two words mean very simply "the Creator". The letter "d" that comes at the end of the word "Izyd" is an ascription letter according to the grammar of Kurdish language. It functions like the letter "I" in English language which we add it to some words to get an adjective indicates the nationality like "Iraq. Iraqi" The letter "d" in Kurdish has the same function and purpose, so the word "Izyd" will be in its correct meaning "Izydians" which refers to those who belong to "Izy or the Creator. "Thus, adding the Arabic letters of ascription to the Kurdish suffix of ascription has led the Izydians themselves as well as many of historians and writers into mazes they could avoid if they have examined the word "Izy" without preceding thoughts which don't have any relation with the fact. To support my sayings I give these examples:

1. The word (kur) is used by Sumerians to name their relatives who lived on mountains. (kur) in Sumerian lan-

guage means "mountain" and by adding the letter "d" the word will mean "the mountaineers or the people who live in mountains".

2. The word "Yahod" Jews in English "has also the letter of ascription "d" at its end. When we delete it, we get the name of the oldest god of Jews "Yahou or Yaho: thus the word "Jews" means "the followers of Yaho".

3. The word "sourth" in recent concept means "Syrians or Assyrians" to the people who live in the south of Iraq. The sound "th" dose the same job of the letters "d and l" in Kurdish and English excessively. Finally, our goal is to say that the Izydian religion is a very ancient one and its roots reach the Sumerian and Babylonian periods. To make sure of that we must study objectively and carefully the traditions and rites that Izydians are still keeping them and we must compare them with the rites, traditions and liturgies of other people that alternated Izydians the living in Mesopotamia. We must also accept objectively the idea which assures that Izydian religion has been influenced by the religions and thoughts that blew like wind in their areas for more than 4000 years which is the supposed time of Izydian religion. This will not be defect, but it will be an evidence that Izydians have reacted with their environment and they have given to others and taken from them in return.

The Izydian religion we see today has not been crys-

tallized to its recent form in one day so we must take this into consideration and never belittle it because there are many rites and taboos in Izydian religion which considered mysteries that are too hard to be understand . Surely, the passing of time and the disasters that afflicted Izydians are the direct reasons of our disability to catch the pure roots of Izydian religion or to comprehend and perceive some traditions that similarize the traditions of all old Iraqi people. May be, the future will reveal to us more but the determination of Izydian historians in researching and investigating will be the pick that removes the dust and accumulations of 40 centuries . It is necessary to pay attention to some of the serious and honest studies which have been written by fair writers and to neglect what some biased writers who did not aim the fact and the objective honest research but to distort the Izydia religion and to belittle it.

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