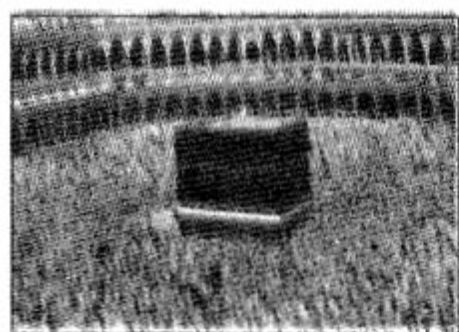


From potential to reality

By Maulana Wahiduddin Khan



Abraham was a great Prophet. As a tribute to his greatness, he was called Abul Ambia (Father of the Prophets). Born in ancient Iraq, he travelled to different countries, such as Palestine, Egypt and Syria. Lastly, he settled with his wife, Hajira and their son, Ishmael in the desert of Arabia, in a place near present-day Mecca. When the Prophet Abraham settled there, he said a prayer to God, which is recorded in the Quran:

O Lord! I have settled some of my offspring in an uncultivable valley near Your Sacred House, Lord, so that they may establish prayer. So, make people's hearts incline towards them and provide them with fruits, so that they may be grateful. (14:37)

I would say that this prayer was not a mysterious prayer. It was the invocation of a natural law: that is, God cre-

ated the present world with great potential and then He gave man the capacity to turn this potential into reality.

Four thousand years ago, when this event occurred, most of this area was a desert. This was the same area that is now in the broader sense called the Middle East.

It is now a land where there is greenery, agriculture and modern infrastructure. Four thousand years ago all these things were hidden in nature. Now they have become a reality.

The story of the Prophet Abraham was primarily a religious story, but it showed that our world is so full of potential that even a desert can be turned into a green belt. This is a lesson which is universal in its application.

God created man with a great mind. But the creation was based on what is called in education the discovery method. Everything was hidden in nature, but it was required of man to employ his mind to discover all those things.

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