

In chapter 11 and the Postscript more of God's gracious purposes are recounted and, finally, don't forget to read the Notes and Acknowledgements.

This is a book about a family's love and their expression of forgiveness. Ray's raw vulnerability provides us with insights that all working in today's volatile Muslim world need to process for themselves, with their families, their churches, their organisations and their national partners. As an almost life-long advocate for partnership, I too affirm that receiving from those whom you love and serve is the greatest privilege.

This is a 'must read' for anyone with a heart for missions in the Muslim world. It is a book that will prepare families, couples and individuals for potential crises and trauma. Missionaries and mission leaders will be reminded of the multifaceted nature of crisis management. Supporters and sending churches will be better equipped to understand and empathise with those with whom they partner when crises arise.

It is a book about the sovereignty of God in the most unexpected places.

Reviewed by Keith Fraser-Smith

Muslims of the Arab world have been Keith's focus for more than 40 years. He has served in a variety of leadership roles with AWM in Media, the Middle East, Arabian Peninsula, Globalization and UK ministry and he recently retired after leading a local CPM team in the UK. Among his many interests is his pleasure in writing book reviews.

Fighting Shadows: When the secret police are above the law, what chance does a victim have?

by Ali Marzouki

U.K., FeedARead.com Publishing, 2015. 289 pages. ISBN: 978-1786100320.



In February 2011, the 'Arab Spring' reached Morocco and demonstrators took to the streets to voice their dissatisfaction with the ruling system. Set during this time period, *Fighting Shadows* follows the experiences of one fictional character who was assaulted and beaten up during the protests on the street. The story follows his search to obtain justice from the Moroccan criminal justice system, eventually leading to a court case against the feared DST, the country's secret police.

Written by Marzouki, a pseudonym for the writer who now lives in the UK, the story focuses primarily on the justice system of Morocco from the standpoint of one young man hoping to see change in a country where the populace lives in constant fear of the secret police. While

fictional, the author points out that many of the general events detailed within the book are in fact true. The practices observed within the criminal justice and national security system are similar to real life events that have come to characterize the Moroccan justice system over the last few decades. Recently, I travelled to Morocco for an educational tour and discovered that the story draws upon significant realities facing the Moroccan people. I found the book helpful for obtaining insights into Moroccan culture, particularly about practices and attitudes that will never enter guidebooks.

In February 2011, a young man in Sefrou by the name of Farid awakes in a hospital bed with short-term amnesia. Unable to remember how he got there, the last thing he recalls was his involvement with protests with many thousands of others that month that were part of the Arab Spring, calling for reform. Returning home, he spends his days healing and staying under the radar of the authorities, who view the protests as a threat to their control of the country. One night however, he captures video footage of a strange man arming four men with clubs who then go out to wreak havoc among protesters. Upon posting the video to YouTube, he discovers a second more sinister video, on YouTube, of *himself* getting beat up by the same four thugs during the events of the February demonstration, finally explaining his stint in the hospital. Unable to endure both the constant fear of the authorities that he has lived under for so long and the humiliation of a brutal beating by shadowy forces, he finally takes the matter to the courts in a bid for justice. However, the pursuit of justice will come at a high cost. Farid may discover that unveiling the miscarriage of justice is very different than having justice served.

Omar is a budding young detective who clearly stands head and shoulders above his colleagues by dint of his natural talent and keenly observant eye. Temporarily stationed in Sefrou on assignment, he must deal with the rigors of police work and the internal corruption of the system within which he works. When a man by the name of Farid walks into the station with a report of assault and presents video evidence that suggests DST involvement, Omar is caught between his desire to pursue justice as an officer of the law and his fear of a ruined career in the police. Even worse, when shadowy forces frame Farid and Omar is forced to take the case, he must decide between ducking his head and obeying the powers that be or risking his career on hapless Farid by exposing the frame-up for what it is. All too aware of the corruption surrounding him, Omar had hoped to change the system from the inside when he would eventually rise to the top, but is helping Farid now worth sacrificing his chance to change the system later?

The author approaches the story as if telling a factual account. Though much time is given to examining the character's thoughts and motivations as they see their world spinning and collapsing into dust around them, the tone maintains somewhat of an aloofness from the events of the story. Not capitalizing on the emotions that

such a story could potentially conjure, the author tells a story in which he wishes the reader to develop a working knowledge of the characters' minds and the flow of events around them but does not seem to want the reader to relive the experience themselves. This recounting of the story shapes the story so that it has the feeling of a documentary, a realistic and factual account of events. It gives it legitimacy as the reader realise that their emotions have not been manipulated. Rather, the story speaks for itself and, suiting the context of the injustice of a criminal justice system, the reader follows the story eager to see the injustice of the situation righted, hoping for a favourable verdict.

The author clearly has a mastery of English vocabulary and knows quite well how to move the story along. Though not a difficult read, the author has managed to pack a good deal of information into a relatively few number of lucid words. It reads quickly. The author alternates between quick brief summaries of events that also convey a great deal of information while driving the story forward and fairly in-depth accounts of critical moments where the author includes even seemingly unimportant information. It is only upon reflection however, that one realises that the latter enables the reader to form his own perception of events, allowing him to place the story in both the culture and the immediate events around the moments of importance. Like Omar, the brilliant detective who is capable of picking the other characters apart, the reader is allowed the opportunity to analyse the story within its context without being swamped with unnecessary information or by being given inadequate access to cultural and event markers.

The story also excels at giving a good feel for Moroccan culture. The author, though clearly familiar with that culture, gives the reader specific details and an insider's commentary on the cultures and systems. Rather than telling the story without the cultural context (highly critical for this story and often left out by authors who simply assume audience familiarity with the subject matter), the author has the skill to add commentary and social insights that make the story simultaneously more believable and an educational experience. This book conveys a significant amount of cultural information. Doing so through a story makes it all the more valuable.

I read a good portion of the book while I was in Morocco and discovered that it gave me a good deal of insight into certain behaviours I observed. While Moroccans will champion the wonders of their security system, the book allowed a glimpse into its darker side – a side that would come out only in more intimate conversations. Listening to a local professor speak on how the government has manipulated the religious system within the country to maintain power, I realised the parallel insight the book offered on the legal manipulation by a justice system that seeks to operate in a semblance of legitimacy while operating in unlawful ways.

On another occasion, we were told that the police were there for our protection as foreigners. The book offered insight into the situation – we had to be protected because the system needed a good face to present to the world. How would the world see Morocco? Through the eyes of the many tourists who provide critical revenue into the country. Morocco is a country keen to present the right image to the rest of the world. The book illustrated just how deeply that characterises the culture. It also helped make Moroccans believable. The book shows how Moroccans would act in various situations. Though running the risk of stereotyping, the author manages to bring the individual characteristics of Moroccans to the surface and I saw many of those traits myself during my brief time in the country.

I also discovered that the author did his job well. I found myself growing increasingly more frustrated towards the end, knowing that the injustice the author spoke of was almost certainly real. The powerlessness and the hypocrisy felt by the characters had a way of leaving the pages and coming alive despite the story teller's apparent aloofness. If one desires a happy ending to the stories of lives in Morocco, the author does not provide it, in keeping with the reality of the situation. Despite being fictional, I found that Marzouki succeeds in making his story hit uncomfortably close to reality.

Reviewed by Micah Coats

Micah, a student at Houghton College, took 'Islam: A Christian Introduction' course with Don Little in 2015 and then accompanied him on a seventeen-day intensive tour of Morocco in May 2016. An earlier version of this review was written as an assignment for the Morocco May term course. Micah is happy to have it published here in SEEDBED.

Identity Crisis: Standing Between Two Identities of Women Believers from Muslim Backgrounds in Jordan

By Sarah Yoon

Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2015. 208 pages. ASIN: B00VF7KSIQ.

Through research and analysis, Sarah Yoon investigates the topic of identity and how a Muslim woman's understanding of herself, her roles and her worldview impact her ability to make a decision for Christ and how it impacts her ability to remain abiding in him or leave the faith. She focuses on the topic of conversion and defining it. She studies the background of these women through the lens of culture, history and religious perspective and how these affect her view of herself and her willingness to change her

