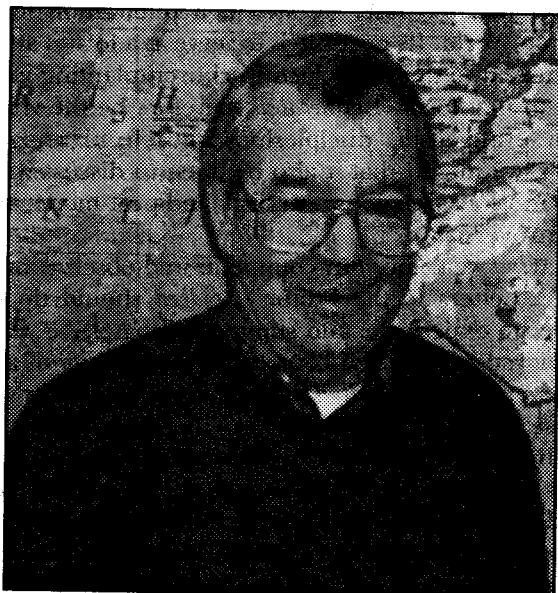




Wendell Evans

1935 – 2001

Editor, Seedbed

1996 – 2001

Editorial

The response regarding the imminent re-appearance of *Seedbed* has been very heartening. So after the two-year hiatus caused by the passing of the last editor, our beloved brother Wendell, we invite our friends to read, respond and react to Issue No. 1, 2003. The first editor of this magazine, Sam Schlorff, has reminded me of *Seedbed's* original purpose. "*Seedbed* is a publication focusing on church planting in the Arab World. Its purpose is to serve as a forum and channel of ideas and information useful to those involved in church planting in the Arab World." We intend to retain that focus. Let *Seedbed* therefore be the voice of AWM in the areas of Muslim evangelism, discipleship, church planting, missiology and Islamics. However, we intend that it also be open to discuss wider questions like globalization and missions, religious pluralism and post-modernism without being unnecessarily controversial.

Please note that we welcome your comments and observations and will reserve a section entitled "Letters to the Editor." *Seedbed* should do much more than inform; it must relate experience and stimulate debate. We will have missed the point if all men agree with us. Of course, the viewpoints of any article remain those of its author, and not of *Seedbed* itself. If there are issues you believe should be featured, please say so.

This first "revived issue of *Seedbed*" is purposely multi-faceted. Do take time to carefully reflect on the main articles such as the "Vulnerability and Genius of Christianity," and "God's Purposes for Jews and Arabs." Perhaps you will agree with Brent Mitchell who believes that "Missions Have to Change." And don't skip on the book reviews that introduce you to the learned doctors of script.

Finally, as David Lundy writes elsewhere, *Seedbed* is dedicating this issue to Wendell Evans. No one loved the Arab peoples more, worked more assiduously for their conversion, nor prayed more fervently for the Church of Christ in these lands. We honor your memory, Wendell, and shall seek to imitate your example.

Abe Wiebe (Editor)

a.wiebe@sympatico.ca

Why Resurrect SEEDBED ?

by David Lundy

Imagine my shock when, at my first set of Global Forum and International Council meetings as ID last November, I was informed by one of the leaders: "Oh, by the way, David, I hope you realize that you are responsible to edit our in-house journal, *Seedbed*, or find someone else to do it for you." My answer was, "What is *Seedbed*? I've never even seen a copy of it before ... and I'm not into gardening!"

Well, now I have been introduced

to it and note that there has not been an issue since 2001. Why indeed resurrect *Seedbed*? My simple answer is that I see it as one means of "sharpening the saw," to take an expression from Steven Covey in describing one of the essential ingredients for maintaining effectiveness in work and character development during adult years. Or call it another ingredient in what we now say we are embracing as a core value in our company, a commitment to life-long learning.

Not coincidentally, in my quiet time this morning I read Proverbs 28:17: "As iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another." This journal provides us with yet one more mechanism for sharpening one another in the areas that our company is particularly interested in, and where we are seeking to develop more insights or practical skills. That may be in Islamics, in contextualizing the Gospel in Arab cultures, or keeping conversant with current missiological issues with which the global church is wrestling.

I can think of no better person to pick up where Wendell Evans left off than Abe Wiebe. To me, Abe personifies what we are talking about. Now officially entering retirement years, Abe continues to engage in formal studies in Islamics. Any good leader has an unquenchable thirst to learn (documented by Warren Bennis and Burt

Nanus in *Leaders: The Strategies for Taking Charge*) as do effective, growing companies (documented by Peter Senge in *The Fifth Discipline: The Art and Practice of the Learning Organization*). Abe has graciously agreed to serve as our interim editor of *Seedbed* until we identify who should serve as our full-time missiologist.

May I be so bold as to dedicate this issue to the memory of Wendell Evans. He was the last editor of *Seedbed*. He kept his saw sharpened right to the end. Right now, our AWMJ Directors are revisiting our policy on church planting. More than one comment has been made that it will be difficult to improve on the document Wendell prepared on that subject some years ago. May *Seedbed* be one of God's tools to fashion many more Wendells in the years ahead.

I close with the example of the apostle Paul. Admirably, toward the end of his earthly existence, while languishing in prison, he still sought to love God with all his mind. He therefore instructed Timothy and Mark to bring on their next visit "my scrolls, especially the parchments." From this we pick up that he wanted to meditate on the Book of books and to keep learning by reading his other written materials. May *Seedbed* be instrumental in keeping us growing.

God's Purposes for the Jews and the Arabs

by G.D.

Introduction

For eighteen years I have worked among the Palestinians endeavoring to share the Gospel with them in a way that is both reasonable and persuasive. This is not an easy task, but I believe it has become a bit easier since I dealt with a theological problem that was hindering my efforts. The problem I am referring to is this: How do I reconcile two apparently contradictory scriptural truths? On one hand, God abhors injustice and on the other He has promised to bless Israel. Those of you who are familiar with the plight of the Palestinian people will appreciate the difficulty of reconciling these two statements.

What I am about to present then is the result of a personal quest for understanding to meet my own needs. However, I think that anyone who is trying to share the Gospel with Arabs in these troubled times will eventually have to deal with this issue. So I thought it might be useful for others who find themselves in a similar situation to have the benefit of the insights the Lord has given me on this subject.

The Correct Approach

Let me put this issue into perspective by making some general observations:

- 1) Christians often seem incapable of making objective judgments about Israel because of their failure to distinguish between the modern

State of Israel and the biblical Kingdom of Israel.

- 2) Christians often allow their perceptions of Israel and the Arab world to be colored by historical factors such as the Holocaust and political factors such as the current war on international terrorism.
- 3) Christians often formulate their views about Israel on the basis of Old Testament prophecies without giving due consideration to the teachings of the New Testament.

In view of these complicating factors let me propose what I believe to be a proper approach to this question. First of all, we should try to identify and set aside the theological, historical, and political influences that shape our views about the Jews and the Arabs and then evaluate and, if necessary, reformulate our views strictly on the basis of Scripture. Secondly, as Christians we should rely primarily on the New Testament to help us interpret what the Old Testament says about the Jews and the Arabs (based on the principle of progressive revelation).

Does God Have a Plan for the Arabs?

Scripture does not have as much to say about the Arabs as it does about the Jews. However, what little it does say clearly indicates that God intends to bless the Arab people. The earliest evidence of this may be found in Genesis 17 where God tells Abraham, *"As for Ishmael, I have heard you: I will surely bless him; I will make him fruitful*

and will greatly increase his numbers. He will be the father of twelve rulers, and I will make him into a great nation" (v. 20). The fact that God chose to establish his covenant with Isaac rather than Ishmael does not invalidate or diminish the importance of this promise. Later on the prophet Isaiah provides us with a clearer picture of God's plans for the descendants of Ishmael. In chapter 60 Isaiah prophesies that *"All Kedar's flocks will be gathered to you, the rams of Nebaioth will serve you; they will be accepted as offerings on my altar, and I will adorn my glorious temple"* (v. 7). The fact that the offerings of Nebaioth (a descendant of Ishmael) are accepted by God indicates that those who brought the offerings offered them in faith and that they themselves were accepted by God. Based on these two passages then, we can conclude that God intends to bless the descendants of Ishmael, not only in an earthly way, but also in a spiritual way.

What is Israel's Current Status?

This is a more complicated matter than it may appear. On one hand, we know that God chose to establish his covenant with Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and their descendants and that He also chose not to establish his covenant with Ishmael and Esau. On the other hand, Scripture also tells us that Israel violated that covenant when it rejected Jesus and at that point ceased, in a sense, to be the people of God. This is what Paul means in Romans 11 where he likens Israel to an olive branch and declares that *"They were broken off*

because of unbelief" (v. 20). Paul then goes on to say that Israel will continue in this state of unbelief for a long time because, in his words, "Israel has experienced a hardening" (v. 25). If this is the case, how then should we relate to non-believing Jews? Paul gives us the answer in verse 28: *"As far as the gospel is concerned, they are enemies on your account; but as far as election is concerned, they are loved on account of the patriarchs."* To summarize, Israel currently finds itself in a strange situation – it has been cut off from God's covenant community and has ceased to be the people of God (i.e. partners in a covenantal relationship), but it continues to occupy a special place in God's heart.

Does God Have a Plan for the Jews?

While Paul's assessment of Israel's current status is rather bleak, his prognosis for the future is much more encouraging. In Romans 11:23 he offers this assurance: *"If they do not persist in unbelief, they will be grafted in, for God is able to graft them in again."* Paul is so positive about Israel's future, in fact, that he is willing to predict that *"All Israel will be saved"* (v. 26). Why is Paul so optimistic? His optimism, it seems, is based on a promise he found in Isaiah: *"The deliverer will come from Zion; he will turn godlessness away from Jacob"* (v. 26). And it's also based on his knowledge of God's character since, in his words, *"God's gifts and his call are irrevocable"* (v. 29). So on the basis of the assurances that Paul gives us in Romans 11 we may conclude that Israel's

hardening is temporary and that a remnant will indeed be reincorporated into God's covenant community.

Who Are the People of God?

It may sound confusing to say that Israel ceased to be the people of God but will once again become the people of God; however, this is the clear and unmistakable teaching of Scripture. How can we make sense of this? If we hope to unravel this mystery we must first try to understand what the Bible teaches us about membership in God's kingdom. In Matthew's account of John the Baptist's ministry we learn that there was a popular belief that membership in God's kingdom was a matter of natural descent and thus came about as a matter of course. But John corrected this misconception when he told the Sadducees and the Pharisees: *"Do not think you can say to yourselves 'We have Abraham as our father.' I tell you that out of these stones God can raise up children for Abraham"* (Mt. 3:9). Later on Paul picks up this idea and develops it in Romans when he writes: *"Not all who are descended from Israel are Israel. Nor because they are Abraham's descendants are they Abraham's children"* (Rom. 9:6). So if, as Paul asserts, natural descent is not the decisive factor, what is? Paul provides us with the answer to this question in Galatians where he writes: *"If you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's seed and heirs to the promise"* (Gal. 3:29). According to Paul then, it is faith in Jesus and not natural descent that qualifies us to enter God's kingdom. What is more, through faith

in Jesus we become partakers in the covenant that God made with Abraham and thus heirs to all the blessings promised to his seed.

If that is the case, who are the people of God? Based on Paul's teaching in Romans and Galatians, we must conclude that the people of God are simply those who have faith in Jesus whether they are Jews or Gentiles. Notice that I am not saying that the Church has replaced Israel as the people of God, but what I am saying is that the New Testament definition of God's people includes both Jewish believers and Gentile believers. In Ephesians Paul describes it this way: *"For he himself is our peace, who made the two one and has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility, by abolishing in his flesh the law and its commandments and regulations. His purpose was to create in himself one new man, thus making peace, and in this one body to reconcile both of them to God through the cross, by which he put to death their hostility"* (Eph. 2:14-16). What Paul is saying then, is that there is no longer any basis for separating believing Jews and believing Gentiles theologically. God does not have two different peoples with two different programs. These two groups who were previously hostile to each other have been reconciled and united in one new entity, namely, the body of Christ.

Does Israel Have Any Claim to the Blessings of the Covenant?

The modern-day nation of Israel is made up of a variety of subcultures with different customs and beliefs.

Nevertheless, the fact that they have chosen to make Israel their home means that the majority endorse the belief that the biblical land of Canaan or Israel is their homeland and that they have a historical right to reclaim it; in other words, they are Zionists. And those who describe themselves as religious Zionists would go even further and say that they have a God-given right and even a duty to reclaim the land on the basis of promises God made to Abraham when He, God, established his covenant with him. Now it is the beliefs of the religious Zionists that concern us here, because they are not satisfied with simply having a homeland but insist on reclaiming all of the biblical land of Israel no matter what it costs the Palestinian inhabitants of the land. The question that we must ask ourselves then, is this: **Can we, as Christians, endorse the claims of the religious Zionists and should we support their efforts to achieve them?**

As we consider our response we should keep in mind that we need to address two different audiences – Jews and Christians – and that each group will require a response suited to its own beliefs. What follows then are the arguments I would present to each group.

To the Jews I would say: No, I cannot endorse your claims or support your efforts for the following reasons:

- 1) Your appeal to the Abrahamic Covenant does not necessarily validate your claim to the land, because it is based on the assumption that God will fulfill his promises to this particular generation, whereas the

biblical record shows that God is free to discipline Israel by sending her into exile and then fulfill his promises to another generation that is more worthy than you are.

- 2) Your appeal to the Abrahamic Covenant does not necessarily validate your claim to the land, because it ignores the fact that possession of the land was one of the blessings of the Mosaic Covenant. And inasmuch as the Mosaic Covenant was a conditional covenant, you cannot expect to claim the blessings of that covenant unless you fulfill its conditions. However, by your treatment of the aliens living among you (viz. the Palestinians) you have violated the conditions of the covenant in the following ways:

- You have mistreated and oppressed aliens (cf. Ex. 22:21, Lev. 19:34).
- You have created one legal system for yourselves and another for aliens (cf. Lev. 24:22).
- You have illegally confiscated land (cf. Deut. 19:14, 2 Sam. 24:24).
- You have shed innocent blood (Gen. 9:5, Deut. 21:1-9).

- 3) Your appeal to the Abrahamic Covenant can never validate your claim to the land, because according to the Law the land belongs to God and you are merely his tenants (Lev. 25:23).

And to the Christians I would say: No, we should not endorse their claims or support their efforts for the following reasons:

- 1) The Mosaic Covenant is obsolete and defunct, and it has been replaced by the New Covenant.

Therefore it would make no sense for Christians to endorse claims made by Israel on the basis of the Mosaic Covenant (Heb. 9:26-27).

- 2) Under the New Covenant those who believe in Jesus are considered to be the true seed of Abraham and heirs of the promises. Therefore it would make no sense for Christians to endorse claims made by Israel on the basis of the Abrahamic Covenant (Gal. 3:29).

In light of the testimony of Scripture, we may conclude then, that Israel has no greater standing before God and no greater claim on his blessings than any other nation. Nevertheless, they do have a greater responsibility to do what is right because of the knowledge that has been entrusted to them.

**Is there any Difference Ultimately
between God's Plans
for the Jews and the Arabs?**

Once we recognize that Israel is a nation like any other nation, then we can appreciate the fact that God's plan for the nations of the earth, including

the Arabs, also applies to Israel. By this I mean:

- God's desire that all men be saved (1 Tim. 2:4).
- God's plan to save a portion of every nation (Rev. 5:9).
- God's desire that all men come to him through His son, Jesus Christ (Acts 4:12).

Conclusion

My studies on this subject have reinforced a biblical principle that I find particularly relevant here, namely, that **"God does not show favoritism"** (Rom. 2:11). To put it simply, He loves the Jews and He loves the Arabs, and He wants both nations to be saved. Therefore we should not apologize for taking the Gospel to the Arabs, as if they were obstacles to the fulfillment of God's prophetic plan. On the contrary, Jesus said that He will not return until every nation (including the Arabs) has heard the Gospel (Mt. 24:14). So it is my contention that the best way to speed the return of Christ is to continue doing the work I am already doing.

Recent or Old Approaches to Church Planting—Has Anyone Found the Key? Lessons from Tunisia

by I.L.

"When God moves we can expect to see almost overnight, not just a second home group started, but many started, maybe within a few months."¹

This is what has happened in Tunisia. These words were written in 1995. The reality then was that there had been over 100 years of work resulting in only one small group and a few scattered believers. Now there are over ten small groups and probably over 300 believers. What happened? What made the difference? No single factor or person was important. Instead, we saw the pulling together of many factors.

1. Vision for many small groups. Until the 1990s, the standard approach was of trying to witness, leading people to Christ, then linking them up with other Christians. Then over several years the vision changed. Tunisian believers were involved in the change. The vision changed to working towards many small groups. Some foreigners started 'model' groups in Arabic, to train for the future and to which locals could be invited. With this was a much greater number of foreigners who became fluent in Arabic and had the vision for small groups. Probably the most important factor though was that the vision was effectively taught to the Tunisians, because when God moved, it was they who were most involved in doing the work.

The growth has been mostly in and near the capital. But there are still major cities without a group, or with an embryo group. The awakening has yet to touch the whole of Tunisia.

2. In forming the vision for small groups, the input from Scoggins² was important. In particular, we saw how the church could exist and grow as a network of home groups which changed with time, need, people and task. These groups form the basis for nurture, teaching, fellowship and prayer. Because there are many informal contacts between the groups, ministry such as music, teaching and witnessing can take place using members of more than one group. Sometimes they come together in larger gatherings.

3. The new groups have worked hard on community. Scoggins encourages people to work along the natural lines of contact—friendship, family, work—that a new believer has, to see nuclei of people find Christ, nuclei who already know each other and can work together. This was, and to a large extent still is, the vision, but because it did not happen that way, and many of the new believers have lost the closeness of their human families, the work put into creating new communities was vital.

4. Tunisian Christians worked towards a united but decentralized

leadership. At one time a few older believers in the original group dominated, and everything was fitted into the existing mold. Then slowly, and often painfully, this changed to a stress on small groups that are interrelated. Decisions concerning more than one group, ideally, are taken by consensus, not by pyramid-style authority.

5. The foreigners were united. Disagreements were worked through. The local believers were able to see this, and two were inspired by the example of cooperation. It has been extremely difficult at times to work through the differences, but groups which have isolated themselves have not grown.

6. God gave some people a vision for prayer that resulted in 'Awake Tunisia'. The credit for this goes to God not man. This prayer impetus grew out of people seeking God and following what He wanted to do.

7. Greater availability of the Word of God. Radio was added to by satellite TV and easier availability of the Bible.

8. Prompt followup of those who showed any interest without waiting to see if the interest was sustained or not.

9. Praise God that there has been a relative period of calm in the country. This has permitted growing space. It has been helped by the wise, stable government and the non-involvement of Christians in politics.

10. Various people started teaching the difference between essential and primary truth which is common to all Christians and on which we are united, and secondary matters where we can agree to differ and maintain unity, love and respect. Not everyone

used this terminology, but the principles were taught and are being patiently applied.

11. Boldness. Some of the new believers decided not to give in to fear, and said that they were ready to suffer for Christ. Therefore, they stood up to intimidation with the effect that the whole church was encouraged and more people became bold in their witnessing.

12. Meaningful worship, with new songs and music, has become an important feature of meetings.

13. There have been various active programs of teaching. The practicalities have varied, but teaching at various levels has been maintained.

14. God has raised up capable visionary leaders among the new believers.

What then Are the Current Challenges?

The basic requirement now is to both consolidate and go deeper, and to continue the challenge to reach out to the lost. A country of ten million needs more than ten or so small fellowships. There are large towns and cities still untouched, let alone the countryside. Tunisians will have to learn to work cross culturally: to communicate to oral rather than literate people, by stories and images rather than by books.

The task appears overwhelming. The existing groups are mainly young. Although the number of families is growing, there is so much to do and not enough time to go deep. Many are overstretched. Many know too that

hard times will come, sooner or later, and they must be ready for them.

In addition to potential future pressures from the society, there are at least four additional pressures waiting in the wings. First, dealing with outside Christian groups who wish to muscle in on what is happening, and who come with their own agenda. However well meaning this is, it often distracts and takes from the growing church. Second, the church must prepare to counteract influence from the sects. Third, it must master the issues which threaten to divide. Finally, out-

side Christian agencies must be convinced that they must stop offering to pay locals to do ministry in country, and must not offer attractive salaried posts abroad. Such financing promotes division, jealousy, dependence and idleness, as well as providing good justification for detractors and severely weakening work in the country.

Footnotes:

1. I.L. *Seedbed* Vol. X/2 21-24, 1995.
2. Dick Scoggins. "House churches in the Muslim world." *Seedbed* XII/4 3-13, 1997.

Why Missions Have to Change

by Brent Mitchell

Brent Mitchell served as a pioneer church planter and Bible translator in Senegal, West Africa for 18 years among the Malinke people group. His experience included cross-lingual communication of the biblical message into syncretistic and Sufi brotherhood worldviews. He is presently working with Partners Int'l as Director of Overseas Operations.

Engaging the Changes in Missions

At a recent gathering of mission leaders I made the statement, "Missions, as we know it, needs to change in order to meet present reality." That comment is the basis for this article. At the outset I should state that I am assuming that the reader recognizes in one way or another the cultural, social and world-view shifts occurring in Canada and around the world. There is little question that change will and is taking place. The critical question then is, what are mission agencies doing to embrace the change and to facilitate the Good News going out into all the world? A great deal is being said and written about the major shifts going on in the western world. However, many mission agencies and leaders sense these changes as a threat rather than an opportunity. This I believe is due to an underlying feeling that the structures we have created do not integrate well with the expectations of new recruits and an increasingly skeptical and jaded donor base. The answer does not lie in continuing to dissect

the negative perceptions regarding change but to create an awareness, and where possible, a plan to engage these changes.

Which Model to Use?

The pattern presently used by many mission organizations originated in the post-World-War-II era. It grew from a great influx of missionaries available for world outreach because of the increased world awareness acquired by many while on overseas military duty. Naturally, this model used a lot of military structure and language. And, it proved to be a relevant and resilient format for mobilizing large numbers of missionaries into areas where communication and supply lines were long—as they were in most parts of the world at that time. Over the last 50 years this model has been refined and modified somewhat to give consideration to people's increasing discomfort with the assumptions of hierarchy intrinsic in a military model.

The rise of technology aided the accomplishment of mission goals and structure. Small planes, personal computers, bank wires, medical laboratory equipment all have proven useful in making the missionary's task achievable in a shorter time. But, these same tools have created a visible chasm of wealth disparity between the missionary, his organization and much of the world they serve.

In today's world, the postmodern viewpoint has all but annihilated any

acceptance of the individual working under a top-down leadership structure. If a mission agency has a centralized leadership (at country or world level) with a high degree of authority on the placement of the mission worker, his or her associations (religious or otherwise), and a rigidly defined ministry role, the agency's days are numbered because the recruit base will very soon be drying up.

Which World Are We Serving?

The Third World, the Developing World, the Two-Thirds World—the title continues to change as does the reality. Most mission endeavor occurs in non-Western countries, meaning that these countries have a large percentage of poor among their populations. While the percentage of those living in absolute poverty has diminished over the last twenty years, those living in poverty has increased. The gap between the wealthy and the poor continues to widen. Most importantly, the poor's awareness of the disparity between themselves and the wealthy has become exponentially greater through the media, creating serious tensions in this area. The reality is that missionaries are coming increasingly into contact with violent crime around the world because they are perceived to be part of the wealthy elite upon which the desperate poor prey.

Shifting demographics has created a burgeoning urban poor in all of the world's cities. This occurs as rural people migrate to urban centers because of war, lack of opportunity, drought and so on. Missiological stud-

ies show that these are some of the most receptive people in the world to accepting a new worldview. This is especially important in areas of the world where world religions are synonymous with the people's perception of who they are as a member of their culture. Yet, an incarnational outreach to them means that most of our present models, where we minister from a secure and wealthy neighborhood into their poverty, will be ineffective. They know who we are and what we have. The unavoidable issues of dependence and attempted manipulation of missionaries by the group that they seek to reach have created immense obstacles and difficulties. This has caused many missionaries to focus increasingly on more manageable population groups.

Globalization continues to impact all aspects of large parts of the world's populations experience. Alliances change, markets dissolve, many immigrate to the West; all of which have an impact on the awareness and perceptions of population groups. Paul Borthwick states in a PULSE interview, "Globalization is a force over which we have no control, and which benefits or hurts different sectors of the global population disproportionately. Christian Westerners who serve in contexts of relative poverty must grapple with the issues in one way or another, since the Bible's teaching must always be applied to specific situations within particular contexts. Reading the Bible in a setting where one is regarded as spectacularly wealthy is pretty uncomfortable..." (*World Pulse*, Oct. 18, 2002; "Missions and Money Revisited").

The point of discussing the shifting world stage is that present mission structures, administration and strategy are, in many cases, not in sync with what the world is today. Effectiveness of missionary effort will continue to decline until the issues of perceived wealth, disparate opportunity and structure that divides wealthy, elite mission personnel from those they are to serve are addressed.

Who's Paying for All of This?

Increasingly, those who would go out as new missionaries are struggling to raise enough support to cover all of the expenses for overseas mission service. There are a number of reasons for this, one of which is the unfortunate way in which public speaking ability is tied to willingness to support an individual. However, the purpose of this paper is to discuss potential change which can overcome some of the hurdles. I am basing my following comments on discussions that I have had with close friends, mission boards and pastors.

Many churches and individuals raise difficult questions when they discover the global income needed to keep a missionary family in a ministry context. Many feel manipulated by the fact that the costs continue to rise and it seems that there is little affirmation for the costs they are bearing. In addition, many have visited missionary compounds and private homes in overseas contexts and find themselves raising their eyebrows at the level of comfort that missionaries live in.

Others have mentioned to me that they question the fact that there must be

so many expatriate office or support staff when qualified national people can be hired for a fraction of the cost of a missionary sent by Canadian churches.

In saying these statements, it is not my purpose to paint all individuals or organizations with one brush. In the experience of my family, the bedroom that we slept in for fifteen years had grass and bamboo roofs. But there is no question that the Canadian donor base is rather jaded about the cost of overseas missions.

Who's Leading Anyway?

The face of those available for mission service is changing rapidly. Increasingly, western and local highly trained national lay and clergy are emerging. The original paradigm of the western agency being the one who determines strategy and operational programs is coming under criticism.

While serving in Senegal, five out of thirty families in our mission were from Brazil. They had a much easier time envisioning Senegalese leadership on our Field Council and in helping us develop effective programs and strategies for outreach. The predominately American leadership had a very hard time envisioning people who did not share their crisis and task orientation as having a credible and viable voice in directing Western personnel and resource in their native country. The reality, however, is that many of these individuals had more education and relevant experience than the western missionaries did.

A good friend of mine from a Central African country recently

returned extremely "burned out" from his last term. This emerged from a conflict with national church leaders who did not agree with the western mission's priorities and strategy in their outreach program. Increasingly, national churches and leaders want to have a say in how the development of the church occurs in their home country.

Moving Forward

Often, times of change represent opportunity for the people of God to look outside of their own experience and viewpoints to new vistas of expression of Christian outreach and commitment. I believe that the opportunity is now upon us to do this very thing. However, to engage on the basis of today's realities, the issues mentioned in this article must be addressed. While by no means being comprehensive, I would suggest consideration of the following ideas:

1. Mission agencies must accept the different expectations and assumptions of today's young adults. Often called "post-moderns," the recruits of today and tomorrow are usually very aware of the global village and have a sense of responsibility regarding how their actions impact people in other places. This can be maximized when integrated with a theology of mission that is described in terms that resonate with their heart. Most of these people will be very concerned that their involvement is holistic and does not have an exclusive focus on worldview transformation without community transformation as a part of its ethos.

But, as mentioned above, the kind of structure that missionary agencies usually have about determining where and how an individual will minister will not be accepted unless it comes about through dialogue. This dialogue must clarify the rationale of the placement and how this best expresses incarnational witness to the community.

New recruits will not necessarily commit to a long assignment. Therefore a mission posting is better filled through assuming that there will be a number of people rotating through to accomplish what was formerly done by one individual staying for an extended period. While this has important implications, demanding that people who do not work under the same framework of assumptions submit to mission leadership will mean that new, young recruits will not be accessed. The mission structure must be seen as facilitating the vision of the recruit rather than determining the parameters and policies of his/her ministry.

2. The cost of running a western mission agency, and more specifically, accessing funding for a missionary has no easy solution. However, I would recommend that a variety of models be considered. Some of these may conflict with the ethos of a "faith mission," but I believe that some of the theological underpinnings for such an idea need to be revisited.

It may be that in many contexts, one of the team members or spouses should work in an available position in an embassy, an NGO office or an international school. The benefit of this is two-fold. First, costs of keeping

a missionary in the field are greatly reduced and secondly, the missionary is seen as belonging to a broader reality in the host country's landscape.

I feel that missions must address head on the reality of donor-base fatigue that they have caused by filling posts with supported missionaries that could much more economically be filled with hired nationals. A parallel reality is that many mission agencies need to address their entrenched paternalism, which operates on broad assumptions of the character and capabilities of the national people in their host country.

3. I strongly believe that the day has passed when mission organizations can operate independently of the national church and para-church in their host country. The credible and qualified leadership that exists in practically every country should be integrated into planning and leadership of the mission agency's operations.

Secondly, missionary postings should be very strategic in their intent and goals. This means that individuals should be carefully selected and placed in a way which will cause the greatest sustainable impact. This will cause some tension regarding the viewpoint of post-modern recruits but ways must be discovered for crossing the bridge.

I have spoken frankly and as an insider into the debate relating to changes in missions. It is my great desire that the issues discussed are taken seriously. Many agencies are living on borrowed time as their ranks thin through attrition and their donor base evaporates as the donors who accepted the earlier model of mission, age. I believe that God still wants his people to engage the world, laying down their lives for the Gospel's sake. But this can only take place as we abandon much of what we have created in the past and move forward, boldly engaging the change that is upon us.

Globalization and the Changing Face of Missions

by Howard Jones

*Many of our readers will recognize that this article is in some ways a critique of David Lundy's book, entitled **We are the World**. But Howard Jones gives us more than a book review here. Beginning with Lundy's thesis he adds his own insight and observations.*

We Are the World

Globalization is an 'in' word. Coca Cola, McDonald's and Microsoft are brand names of the global village. Communications, travel and world-wide marketing are connecting the peoples of the planet. And the spread of English is undoing Babel. So how should missions react? In *We are the World*, David Lundy asks many important questions and answers some.

The word itself is in need of definition, since it has been captured and used differently by many different groups. For missions, Lundy stresses that globalization goes beyond internationalization. To internationalize a mission is to include workers from many parts of the world. But the structure, leadership, language and decision-making styles of the mission can remain western, leaving non-western workers to adapt, and often condemning them to a supporting role. To globalize means to remove the privileged position of any one culture in the organization. "This means that true partnership and synergy emerge between the divers sides of the world-wide church in the task of world evangelization."

The centre of gravity of the Church has passed from the West to the vibrant churches of Asia, with Latin America and parts of Africa in hot pursuit. Missionaries from these countries, called the 'Two-Thirds World' by Lundy, now outnumber those from the West. But mission agencies started in the West have not kept pace with these changes. They are led by westerners and do their business in western ways. So how does Scripture address these issues? Some things are clear:

- God's love and salvation are for all the world.
- God's desire is for all Christians to evangelize and to give financially. This is a normal part of being a disciple.
- God's plan is for all to be involved in the great commission to take the Gospel to the ends of the earth. Emerging churches will become involved in cross-cultural mission as they move towards maturity.
- God's church is to display an evident unity (John 17:23).
- There is a scriptural mandate for rich churches helping poorer ones (Acts 11:27-30).
- All should consider others better than themselves (Phil 2:3). There is no room for cultural imperialism in the Church. We all need to examine our attitudes here.

Some conclusions are inescapable. Growing maturing churches in the Two-Thirds World will send their members to the unreached, and so they

should. Western missionaries will increasingly find themselves working alongside Koreans, Africans and Latin Americans. All will need to find ways to express the unity of Christ. And the unity they display should give a powerful message to those they work among, especially where Christianity has the reputation of being a western religion.

So far so good. But it is in the practical outworking that the difficulties arise. Lundy presents three areas.

Adapting Mission Agencies

The author draws deeply on his experience in OM and charts the progress of this organization towards true globalization. The tension is shown between a desire to move quickly towards a globalized ethos, structure and strategy, and the need for a realistic pace of change to avoid dislocation. Globalization takes a lot of communication: communication in styles which suit everyone. The result is an organizational culture which is global, an amalgam of the cultures of the world. The book dwells on the struggles faced in moving towards this and helpfully identifies many aspects of the needed change, such as flatter structures, localized decision-making and a positive promotion of leadership from the Two-Thirds World.

Models of co-operation between smaller missions are mentioned. The book's emphasis is, however, on large globalized missions organizations. I felt uneasy when comparing this with the simplicity of Acts 13 and the activities of Paul, Apollos and friends. Although mission 'from the West to the rest' has gone, does the emphasis need to move

to 'from everywhere to everywhere' in mega-organizations, which require time consuming international co-ordination? And although such organizations can help others identify ways to relate cross-culturally, is it necessary to create an organizational global culture which is removed from any one location?

For those working in the culturally cohesive Muslim nations from Mauritania to Pakistan, is there an opportunity to move towards the culture of our field as our organizational culture? Cannot field languages become working languages of the mission, without necessarily adopting a completely multi-lingual position?

Partnering with the National Church

The form of this partnership is carefully analyzed. Arguments for and against the financial support of national workers are presented. After weighing the dangers, we are urged to "err on the side of supporting nationals if we are not clear which way to go." Missionaries will need to address these issues in their own contexts. Perhaps we will need different approaches in Casablanca, Cairo and Kuwait. The prior need is correctly identified for missionaries to empower local leaders and to be servants to the emerging national church.

So is this best done by encouraging local leaders to function independently of missions, or as members of those missions? Was Evans right in *Church Planting in the Arab Muslim World* that "The only viable model, at least for the beginning of the Muslim-convert churches, is that of self-supporting national lay leaders"? How do missions

co-operate on this, so that agencies which are reluctant to employ nationals are not bypassed by those who rush to do so?

In a mega-agency, it seems one route to empowerment of national leaders is to join the agency, learn its culture and become a leader within the agency. The danger here is of extractionism: the new leader has to learn to operate outside his/her culture before being a leader within it. Although such skills could be viewed as useful, given the globalized mission-force, I struggle to accept that such an approach is advantageous in building a thoroughly indigenous church. The national leader outside a mission agency, however, is left to deal with a plethora of missions. The arrival of numerous mission groups from the Two-Thirds World makes his/her position ever more difficult. If globalization creates difficulties for those trained in cross-cultural work, it presents even greater challenges for the national! Hence the cry from one worker in India, quoted by Lundy: "What we need is a mighty thrust in the direction of particular cultures."

Working Together

Lundy is surely right to stress that in working together with Two-Thirds World missionaries, westerners will need to function relationally. We fear what we do not know or understand. We trust people we know. If younger generations of westerners are more relational than older ones, there is hope for the future! There is no scriptural suggestion that all the spiritual gifts needed by the Church can only be provided by international teams. But if "in the multitude of counselors there is wisdom," the perspectives brought by the nations working together must surely be valuable. And surely it is in the local expression of the body of Christ that unity is seen by the world, not in our international structures. I left the book completely convinced of the need to put effort into building relationships and working closely together on the local level, uniting to proclaim Christ. At the international level, Lundy has offered key insights: perhaps different ways are best for different missions.

The Vulnerability and Genius of Christianity

by Dale Martin*

Missiologist Andrew Walls points out that as Christianity was disappearing in one place in history (Palestine, North Africa, Europe, etc.) it was crossing cultural boundaries and appearing in other cultures and places. This is the reason that Christianity survived being wiped out. Unlike Islam, Christianity rarely remained strong in its centers of origin. "When it comes to sustaining congregations of the faithful, Christianity does not appear to possess the same resilience as Islam. It decays and withers in its very heartlands, in the areas where it appears to have had the profoundest cultural effects. Crossing cultural boundaries, it then takes root anew on the margins of those areas, and beyond. Islamic expansion is progressive; Christian expansion is serial."¹ Walls alludes to an inherent vulnerability in Christianity which appears to predispose it to being eclipsed without continual interaction with culture. "Christian faith must go on being translated, must continuously enter into vernacular culture and interact with it, or it withers and fades. Islamic absolutes are fixed in a particular language, and in the conditions of a particular period of human history."¹ In other words Christianity is vulnerable once it has been established. It withers and fades without continuous interaction with the culture it finds itself in. "It is as though there is some inherent fragility, some built-in vulnerability, in Christianity."¹

What are the characteristics responsible for Christianity being so vulnerable? I believe there are five factors responsible. However, these same characteristics are also part of Christianity's ability to translate itself into new cultural situations at any place and in any time in history. These aspects of Christianity's vulnerability are also part of its strength, resilience, and genius. *The first characteristic is that being Christian is independent of national identity.* There is no Christian national identity to reinforce or require adherence to the religion as there is in Islam. The picture of Christianity in Revelation 7:9 is that there are people from many nations together who worship the one true God. All national identities stand as equals in the Christian faith. Christianity is thus forced to define its own existence and reinforce itself independently of any one group identity.

Over the past several years the fact that there are Christian Moroccans and Algerians has appeared in the national press in those countries. In Morocco it began with an article in the Political Weekly Arabic newspaper which described the arrest of a family in Marrakech because they had become Christians. Letters to the editor came in over the following weeks stating that once a person had converted they ceased to be Moroccans. A Moroccan Christian began writing in under the title, "I am a Moroccan Christian." He

* pen-name

asserted that he was still a loyal citizen, a loyal family member, and ethnically proud to be an Arab Moroccan. His position clearly showed that he was not rejecting his identity or commitment to his people and culture since conversion. He was only rejecting the religion. This is an example of Christianity's ability to penetrate a culture and ideological system independent of one's ethnic identity, national identity and political position.

The second characteristic is that Christianity is never meant to be a state religion. Ultimate loyalty is to the kingdom of Christ which is not part of this world. There is no biblical political system discernible from the pages of Scripture which one would automatically adopt as a practicing Christian. Biblical principles in the Scriptures, while clear, must be applied to the particular situation in which Christians find themselves. In contrast, Islam comes within a complete ideological package containing the expression of a political system which results in an Islamic political state.

Third, Christianity changes its cultural clothing as it jumps from one culture to the next. It does not bring along with it a standard biblical culture which every Christian must adopt. This often leads to a complicated and confusing process as Christians attempt to discern which elements of their culture are positive, neutral or evil. The Bible contains principles, beliefs and values which can be the basis of any culture. However, these principles, values and beliefs are supra cultural. They are not tied into or limited to any one culture.

These same beliefs, values and principles could be adopted simultaneously in a myriad of places, and each culture would develop unique characteristics according to the time, place and people group.

Fourth, unlike the Qur'an, the Bible is intended to be translated into the vernacular language of the people where it will speak to the hearts of people. Since the Bible was given within cultural contexts, it must first be translated out from its contexts before it can be translated into the new linguistic and cultural situation. This requires a knowledge of the original languages as well as the new receptor's language. This process is vulnerable to multiple interpretations and unclear meanings in the new translation. The Qur'an, always in the Arabic it was revealed in, is safe from all the potential ambiguities and problems of translation and interpretation.

Fifth, the failure of Christians to recognize the radical nature of Christianity and its demand on us as disciples can also account for its disappearance.

After an idea or behavior becomes fixed in a culture, it gradually leaves our daily view and becomes a background assumption, hidden from conscious view. Where Christianity became the official or established religion, this provided the opportunity for people to gradually ignore the radical claims of the Gospel. This also leads to the fading and eclipse of the Church in a culture, time and place. Walls refers to the necessity of the process of continual interaction of the Gospel with vernacular culture. Each generation must

rethink the Gospel within its own cultural context, bringing the application and understanding progressively deeper. Islam, like other totalitarian ideologies, relies upon enforced conformity of the people it dominates to maintain everyone in their place. Christianity calls for radical departure from conformity. Christians must at times live in radical opposition to their communities and cultures.

These five characteristics make Christianity particularly vulnerable between generations. The failure of a generation to pass along its faith can account for the disappearance of Christianity at any moment in history. There is no state requirement to be a Christian, no cultural reinforcement, and no national identity which can make up for the failure of the fathers to pass their faith down to their sons. This danger is multiplied when states pass laws against the practice of Christianity and outlaw Christian conversion, meetings for worship and the sale of Bibles. Cultural alternatives and worldly temptations also provide continual competition for the minds and hearts of people. Film industries present sophisticated images of alternative lifestyles clothed in an ideology of pluralism and tolerance. Christianity must continually compete on its own in the world against philosophies, world views and other religious beliefs. One begins to see just how stacked the odds against Christianity's survival really are.

Andrew Walls is careful to describe Christianity's 'eclipse' in its centers of origin rather than referring to its

'disappearance.' Christianity did not disappear completely from Palestine and North Africa as the surviving communities of Ethiopian, Coptic, Syriac and Orthodox communities would attest. Thus, while various forces converged in history to extinguish Christianity, it was never completely or permanently suppressed in most places even when Communist or Islamic forces sought its complete demise. Often it reappeared immediately and more strongly than it had existed beforehand. In Russia, 70 years of communist rule was not able to destroy the Church. Despite its weakened state, the Church survives as a remnant through which the nation is rediscovering itself, being regenerated and making a new beginning. History demonstrates that Christianity can only be temporarily suppressed, repressed or excluded but that it cannot be completely or permanently extinguished in any given place or culture. It will reappear. Jesus pointed to this characteristic of the Kingdom in the parable of the mustard seed (Matthew 13:31) and yeast (Matthew 13:33). It starts small, it is unseen, it continues growing and it cannot be stopped. Once the yeast has been put into the lump of dough, it will continue to divide and spread until the whole lump of dough has been leavened. Like the image of the rock in Daniel 2:35 which grows to fill the whole earth, the advance of God's kingdom can not be stopped.

The good news is that the factors which make Christianity vulnerable are also part of its genius and strength.

Whereas Islam is a complete ideological system of community (*Umma*), politics/state (*Watan*), group identity (*Mujama*) and religion (*Deen*), Christianity is not tied or limited to any of these in the same way. Christianity is able to penetrate independently of state systems, political parties, ethnic communities, cultures and organized religions (denominations). Islam as a religion is dependent upon the Islamic State and its fixed revelation and Islamic culture for its survival while Christianity is not. Identity as a Muslim is synonymous with membership and loyalty to the Islamic State. Islam is thus limited in ways the Christian faith is not. Christianity can diffuse across cultural boundaries without bringing with it a complete package of culture, politics and national identity from the outside.

The Gospel has been remarkably adaptable in being able to penetrate cultures and find meaningful ways of expressing itself without losing its identity or changing its essential values. If this were merely a story repeated from one culture into another, we would expect distortion at each step of the way until the tenth culture in the chain would have a meaningless and distorted version. However, each time Christianity crosses into a new culture, new questions are asked and our picture of the Gospel is built up, resulting in a more complete understanding. This creative interaction between the Gospel and new cultures demonstrates that the Spirit of God is

able to find new points of contact and meaning in cultures previously unexposed to Christianity. Unlike Islam, Christianity requires translation and is able to find the ways to express itself within the new points of reference, resulting in many different expressions of Christian faith. Islam is still wearing the same clothes it had on in the seventh century. Christianity has changed its cultural clothing each time it has diffused into a new culture.

The factors which were responsible for the eclipse of Christianity even in its centers of origin are also the very characteristics which allow it to move into new places, ethnic groups and cultures. That it does so independently of reinforcement from a cultural or national identity and without the protection of a political state make Christianity unstoppable. These characteristics are part of its genius and its vibrancy. They are the reasons why Christianity, unique among religions, is so able to translate across cultural, linguistic, national, geographic and religious boundaries as no other religion ever has. God has chosen what appears to be a weak and vulnerable process to advance his kingdom into the whole world. This should not surprise us however, as God often chooses the 'weak' things of this world to confound the wise.

Footnotes:

1. Walls, *The Cross-Cultural Process in Christian History*, page 13.
2. *ibid*, page 29. 3. *ibid*, page 29.

Summer Teams: What is the Point?

by Chris Ford

After eighteen months in Amman, Robert enlisted me to help with the summer team. We drove to Queen Alia Airport and I heard some of Robert's pilgrimage while we waited for the *jahiliin* (the innocent ones) to de-plane.

They were easy to spot.

We consolidated and drove into Amman. The taxi drivers wanted lots of money but Robert declined, so they took the scenic route even though it was 2 a.m. By now the meter on the taxi was about what the driver wanted in the first place.

During the next two weeks, we heard from Yoanna and Mansour about Palestine, took side trips to Jerash, sat through Arabic church and at night, I sat with my two temporary boarders and talked. We talked about boys, missions, missionaries, Arab culture, where to put your hands, where to put your feet, the length of your skirt and the correct response when someone hands you a *demi-tasse* of coffee. When it was all over, we hugged, promised to write and waved good-bye.

What was the point of all that?

I cannot speak for all the summer teamers I have met, but I can speak for one: me. As a student I was challenged by the needs of the Arab world and eventually found myself boarding a plane for Paris, France.

From Paris we made our way south to Marseille where the warm, humid air embraced me from Bonnie

Drudge's balcony. We car-pooled Sumene in someone's ancient Peugeot and I soaked up everything I saw and heard: prayer times with Brenda Grady, celebrating "Air Bear's" birthday and talking with Shaline about being a single missionary in the Arab world. French bread and bowls of *café au lait* in the morning, afternoon cross-cultural games, Arabic lessons from Bob Cox and someone snoring in the next bed are lasting memories—and this was just the orientation!

In Grenoble we watched TV with Algerian families, learned English/American/Canadian dialects and went swimming with the French – another eye opener. I began on the long road to learning about Arab politics with the demonstrations of the Lebanese students on campus. On to Morocco where we lived with language students, met Moroccan girls who taught us how to make bread and sat at Lois' feet while gleaning from her wisdom. We quizzed us about Morocco and told us about the troubles of the Muslim converts. Did I mention the melting staring, the 50° C heat and the smell of the Fez tannery in mid July?

Again, I ask, what was the point?

Going on a summer team to France and Morocco was a pivotal event for me in deciding whether or not I wanted to pursue work in and around the Arab world. I said, "Yes." Other summer teamers have made the same decision. And that is the point.

Book Review: The Sword of the Prophet

Reviewed by Rick Bailey

The Sword of the Prophet: the politically incorrect guide to Islam; history, theology, impact on the world by Serge Trifkovic. Foreword by James Bisset (former head of Canada's Immigration Foreign Service and Ambassador to Yugoslavia, Bulgaria and Albania). Regina Orthodox Press, 2002.

Copies can be ordered at www.reginaorthodoxpress.com (\$19.95) or www.amazon.com (\$13.97).

Review

In this 300-page book, Serge Trifkovic (PhD. University of Southampton, postdoctoral research on a State Department grant at the Hoover Institute at Stanford, reporter for BBC, VOA, *US News and World Report*, *The Washington Times*, *Philadelphia Inquirer*, etc.) writes an uncompromising description of the core motivations and goals of Islam that should make anyone shudder. His approach is primarily historical, though he does also give considerable attention to the theological foundations of Islam. Serge is the closest thing to a Christian version (Eastern Orthodox?) of Daniel Pipes that I have so far been able to find.

The first four chapters of the book convincingly argue that the problem we are facing since September 11th, 2001 is not terrorism, but orthodox Islam. In light of this conviction, the last two chapters discuss Islam's recent relationship with the West ("Western Appeasement" and "Jihad's Fifth Column"). These chapters show how

the level of trouble we are experiencing with Islam today is, to a very large degree, the result of choices made by the West over the past half a century. It also shows to what degree orthodox Muslims control Islam's agenda in the West today.

But Serge does not just describe; he also suggests a way out of the present mess. The most important change that Serge believes is needed is a change in the West's worldview away from secularism.

"Before its self-destructive civil war of 1914–1918, the Christian world was as sharply defined as the Muslim world. Both were perfectly capable of defining themselves against each other in a cultural sense, and keeping their tolerations and rejections in useful order. What secularism has done, since replacing Christianity as the guiding light of "the West," is to cast aside any idea of a distinctly "Western" social, geographic and cultural space that should be protected. This was obvious in Europe by the early 1960's, and for the past quarter-century, at least, it has become obvious in the United States. Patriotism rekindled after September 11 is a reminder that, at the grass-roots level, the capacity for instinctive self-definition is still alive, but it cannot be sustained if the dominant outlook is that of cultural relativism and anti-historicism" (from the Introduction).

Without a return to a Christian worldview, Serge believes that there

are good reasons to fear that the forces of orthodox Islam will, in the end, succeed against the technologically advanced, but spiritually dead West.

At the practical level, Serge provides several examples of what kinds of things he believes should be done. His solutions include:

- the ending of orthodox Muslim immigration into the West.
- the demand that until Christians can freely build churches in Muslim lands and openly proselytize Muslims, no Muslim should be allowed to build mosques or proselytize in the West.
- the expulsion of any Muslim (possibly including citizens) who believes in physical *Jihad*, or the establishment of *Shari'a* law.

Serge does not appear to believe that it is possible for a practicing orthodox Muslim, in good conscience, to be a citizen of the United States.

Serge clearly believes that Islam presents every bit as serious a threat to the freedom of the West, and the world, as the Nazis and Communists did. Just as during the cold war, Serge says that the West must practice a form of isolationism towards Muslim countries and a degree of intolerance towards the religion of Islam. The reason for this intolerance by the West towards Muslims is their doing, not ours.

"Islam, in Muhammad's texts and its codification, discriminates against us. It is extremely offensive. Those who submit to that faith must solve the problem they set themselves. Islam discriminates against all "unbelievers." Until the petrodollars support a

Koranic revisionism that does not, we should go for it with whips and scorpions, hammer and tongs. Secularists and believers of all other faiths must act together before it is too late" (from the Conclusion).

Serge does not lose sight of the individual Muslim. He agrees with Ernest Renan that "Muslims are the first victims of Islam" and that, therefore, "to liberate the Muslim from his religion is the best service that one can render him" (from the Conclusion).

Analysis

One of the things I like most about the book is that it is a political book about how to respond to Islam that includes a role for Christianity. As Evangelicals who are steeped in how salvation is a decision that must be made on the individual level, and who unquestionably believe in a separation of church and state, we tend to have great difficulty knowing how to deal with political Islam. I think we need to struggle more with the question of whether it is possible, when orthodox Islam and Christianity meet, to continue to have a separation of church and state. I don't think it is. And so this leaves us in the West with either the choice of playing politics against Islam or expelling orthodox Islam from the West. We should not lose sight of how bad it can get for Christians under Islamic rule. Would anyone like to volunteer a Christian answer of whether we should submit to a government that requires us to give some of our children to the state in order to maintain the right to remain Christian?

Should we submit to such a state knowing that those children taken by the state would be raised as Muslim soldiers whose job would be to repress us? This "Christian tax," practiced in the Balkans for about 300 years (75 years longer than the United States has existed as a country), should not be forgotten.

My criticisms of the book are that:

1) *As bad as Islam can be, I think he overemphasizes the negative qualities of Islam.* At times he fails to mention other motivations or details in situations that would make the behavior of Muslims more understandable. At times he is unfairly critical of them. Islam is not 100 percent bad. After reading this book you would think that

it was. In fairness to the author, he is trying to make a case against the misdirection of the present Bush administration's "war on terrorism." As such, it is not surprising that he should focus exclusively on the points that favor his side of the argument.

2) *It is not a missionary book.* While addressing the religious dimension of how to respond, the positive Christian motivation of love and concern for the welfare of Muslims are not as clearly emphasized as they should be. At times it borders on creating an irrational fear and hatred for Muslims.

(I do not personally know if he is a true believer or just a "Christian." Perhaps someone else on the forum can answer that question.)

Book Review: Daughters of Islam

Reviewed by Joyce Wiebe

Daughters of Islam by Miriam Adeney.

Have you ever asked yourself such questions as: Who exactly are Muslim women anyway? How are they different from their western counterpart? Where do they come from? What are their public roles, their role in the family and community? Given their religion and society, can they really become believers in the Lord Jesus Christ? What can we do to help them see Jesus?

The book *Daughters of Islam* addresses these questions and many others in a very thorough and careful way. It is documented with true stories

of Muslim women in Islamic countries around the world with five chapters alone of case studies on Muslim-background women believers. Miriam Adeney finds the good and beautiful in these women and treats them with respect and compassion.

The author has investigated, interviewed and researched the subject for some seven years, as well as drawing upon her anthropological background of cultures and people groups. She is eminently qualified to write a book such as this, and does so in a clear and sympathetic manner. By that I mean

that she puts across the Muslim beliefs and viewpoint in a kind and non-judgmental way, then sets it in contrast with the truth of Christianity and the beauty of Jesus Christ—which is, after all, what women everywhere need.

One of the more thought-provoking chapters for me was that on money matters (chap. 10). In many economically impoverished countries women have been helped to discover their own resources and to use them, becoming breadwinners in their own right. Micro-loans are often needed to help the poor get started in such enterprises, but as accountability, simplicity and community are encouraged in each case, the dividends have more than paid off.

The chapter on family (chap. 6) gives a survey of women's rights in the *Qur'an* as set out by the Prophet Muhammad, followed by the ways these have been interpreted and expanded upon in various Muslim countries. What emerges as the main reasons for limiting women is that: (1) women are polluted and polluting, and (2) women are passionate, not reasonable, thus leading men astray. The author then discusses how these views of her femininity affect a woman

when she comes to Christ, either as single woman or married, (in which case she may lose her children) and how the family of God can make a difference.

Chapter 8 gives helpful ideas of how to share the Gospel with Muslim women. The way a Muslim woman learns is different from western methods. Many learn more from imaginative forms than in formal Bible study. Teaching must be brought in through inconspicuous ways—as one tells Bible story (Chronological Bible Storying is a good example of this) or through songs, memorizing Scripture, skits and plays and even debate (chatting back and forth on the Internet, for example). All of these and more are crucial ways in which Muslim women learn.

Each chapter is full of relevant issues which can help us to understand and reach out to our Muslim neighbors or believing sisters from this background. The stated aim of the author of this book is to educate her reader about important parts of Muslim women's lives, to elucidate some mission strategies, to offer examples and to encourage. In my opinion Miriam Adeney has done just that. *Daughters of Islam* is a book well worth reading.