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**A WORD ABOUT SUBSCRIPTION RENEWALS:** This year we changed our procedure for sending renewal notices because the issues for 1991 have been behind schedule. Renewal notices are usually inserted in the last two issues of the year. This time, however, numbers 3 and 4 for 1991 are being mailed together, and the first number for 1992 will follow as soon as possible, in an effort to catch up. Renewal notices have therefore been mailed under separate cover [Air Mail overseas] to those whose subscriptions expire with the 4th number for 1991. This should give time to renew so as not to miss the first issue for 1992. If you did not receive a notice you may want to check the address label to make sure your subscription has not expired.

## THEOLOGICAL PRINCIPLES FOR EVANGELIZING MUSLIMS

by Chawkatt Georges Moucarray

As the messenger of the Gospel, Jesus Christ was the Evangelist par excellence. His example should hold our attention ahead of that of Paul or Peter. Moreover, we have four gospels dealing with Jesus while we have only the book of Acts for his two famous apostles.

Jesus' mission was essentially to the Jewish people. Judaism at the time was shot through with very varied threads (asceticism, nationalism, legalism and so on). This form of Judaism had some characteristics that we find in contemporary Islam: extreme monotheism, political messianism, Holy Scriptures codified by a centuries-old tradition, the centrality of the Law, etc. This similarity makes the example of Jesus that much more relevant for all who seek to proclaim the Gospel to Muslims. The gospels of Matthew and Mark, which appear to have been written by Semitic authors for Semitic readers, merit closer attention than the other two.

The following principles bring out some lessons that we can draw from evangelism as practiced by Jesus. Of course this is not an exhaustive list. The relative importance of any of these principles may vary according to the situation and the people concerned.

1. The revelation of God as Father is at the heart of the Gospel. From start to finish of his earthly ministry, Jesus affirms that God is a Father. He is a Father to all men, but especially to Jesus' disciples and in a unique way to Jesus himself.

The two characteristics of the fatherhood of God that stand out the most are on the one hand authority and on the other goodness. If the authority of God seems obvious, His goodness as shown by Jesus is not so self-evident.

Jesus demonstrated the goodness of God in many ways: he served men, notably by healing their diseases; he showed his love the his disciples by giving his life for them (cf. John 13:1; 15:13); he offered men forgiveness for their sins, the greatest service he rendered them, by the gift of his life.

Jesus used human fatherhood to speak about divine fatherhood, notably in several of his parables. This analogy is only valid, however, up to a certain point, because of the sin which characterises human nature (cf. Matt. 7:11). In Arab culture, for example, goodness is more a maternal than a paternal quality. Moreover we can see the Koran's vehement opposition to the concept of Jesus as Son of God, notably on the grounds of the connotations of human sonship that this raises.

2. The ultimate purpose of the Law is to lay bare the heart of man. In the Sermon on the Mount in particular, Jesus gives the Law a spiritual interpretation which is designed to expose man's sin. Jesus adopts the same attitude towards human traditions that are associated with the Law, for example the rules relating to purity (cf. Mark 7:1-23).

Without ever questioning the value of God's Law (cf. Matt. 5:17), Jesus constantly denounces a superficial understanding of, and outward obedience to, this Law. The dangers of legalism are many: hypocrisy, pride, activism, ritualism, a desire to justify oneself before God, among others. If the Law is good, and yet legalism exists, it must be the one who practises the Law who is evil!

Thus man cannot secure his own salvation by obedience to the Law, by his own efforts to please God. It is precisely in order to help him to become aware of this inability that the Law was given. Without understanding his, he will never be able to grasp the message of the Gospel.

3. The proclamation of the Gospel is inseparable from its outworking. Mark's gospel often shows us Jesus in action, but all the gospels recount numerous miracles performed by Jesus (cf. John 20:30). In other words, Jesus was not content to preach the Gospel; he accompanied his preaching with deeds illustrating the Gospel (cf. Matt. 11:5).

It is John's gospel that most clearly establishes the relationship between Jesus' words and his deeds. The latter are referred to as "signs" whose meaning is made clear by Jesus' words. He says that he is the light of the world before he gives the man blind from birth back his sight (John 9). He feeds the crowd before declaring that he is the bread of life (John 6). He states that he is the resurrection and the life before he brings Lazarus back to life (John 11).

In the synoptic gospels, the miracles of Jesus are rarely preceded or followed by any commentary. Thus, deeds don't necessarily need words to explain them; they speak for themselves. Conversely, preaching doesn't always need deeds to confirm it; the power of the Spirit is sufficient. However, seen as a whole, Jesus' mission consisted in proclaiming the Gospel and in putting it into practice in order to demonstrate its truth.

4. Dialogue is the preferred means of evangelism. All the gospels show Jesus in dialogue with his contemporaries. This is obvious in his personal encounters with Nicodemus, the Samaritan woman, Simon the Pharisee and others, but it is also true of his discourses. In the rare discourses recorded for us in the gospels, Jesus' teaching is related to his listeners' religion, to their experiences as human beings, or to their individual interests. He responds to their preoccupations and takes their objections into account, even if it's in a way that may be disconcerting at times.

5. Parabolic language is particularly suitable for expressing certain truths of the Gospel. In the synoptic gospels in particular, Jesus often has recourse to parables to proclaim the Gospel. His disciples were struck by this and asked why. Jesus' reply was one of his most disconcerting (cf. Matt. 13:10-17). In his frequent use of parables Jesus has two goals which are apparently (but only apparently) contradictory: to make the Gospel easier to grasp for those who are open to it and more difficult for those who have decided not to accept it. To the first group, the Gospel in fact becomes clearer when it is compared to the events of everyday life. By contrast, the

second group will always find additional reasons to reject it in such comparisons.

In John's gospel, Jesus explains his use of parables by the fact that the Holy Spirit has not yet come down on the disciples to give them the ability to understand certain truths (cf. John 16:12, 25, 29). Today, chronologically, we are in the post-Pentecost era, but aren't those who don't believe in Jesus Christ in the same situation as prior to the day of Pentecost? This is why parabolic discourse is particularly appropriate to evangelism.

6. The death and divinity of Christ which are at the centre of the Gospel are implicit in evangelism. Jesus' divinity and the necessity of his death for the salvation of men are among the truths which are at the heart of the Gospel. But they are also truths which are no easier for today's Muslims to accept than they once were for Jesus' own disciples.

It's surprising to see that Jesus only started to speak to his disciples about his death quite late, when they had already discovered that he really was the Messiah (cf. Matt. 16:13-23). In spite of their discovery, or because of it, his disciples struggled greatly with this idea. Jesus only returned to this subject twice, and his disciples still has the same difficulty imagining that their master could be nailed to a cross.

In the same way, Jesus' disciples probably didn't have a very precise idea about his divinity. The title "Son of God" that they used for him on several occasions was a messianic title and it quite possibly had no other significance for them. Moreover Jesus was as discreet about his divinity as about his being the Messiah.

However, Jesus acted and spoke in a way that made his contemporaries think. Neither Moses nor Abraham dared to do as Jesus did. This roundabout fashion of revealing who he was shows Jesus' humility, but it also demonstrates his teaching methods, since he didn't want a head-on confrontation with the passionate monotheism of his fellow Jews. Even his enemies managed to understand that Jesus implicitly claimed divine status, which motivated the sentence they passed against him.

7. The resurrection of Christ testifies to his divinity and to his superiority over all the prophets. With the crucifixion of Jesus, all the hopes and dreams of his disciples collapse in ruins. They are in complete confusion until they discover that, contrary to all expectations, his tomb is empty. Their encounter with the risen Christ fills them with joy but, more specially, it give them a new understanding of the Scriptures. Thus, the reality of the living Christ on one hand and the testimony of the Scriptures on the other combine to reveal the mystery of Christ to the disciples. From now on, and especially from the day of Pentecost onwards, all the events of Jesus' life, as well as his death, make sense in the light of this event, unprecedented in history: his resurrection. He is the promised Messiah who fulfills the hope of Israel, and the eternal Only Son sent by God to bring man back from death to life.

## FROM THE ARABIC LANGUAGE PRESS

## An article attacking Christian media in the Arab world

[Here is another interesting article translated and sent to us by an Arab Christian brother who wishes to remain anonymous. A virulent diatribe against the Christian use of mass media to spread the gospel, it records the comments of five Muslim intellectuals, mostly from universities in Cairo.]

**"CHRISTIANIZING BROADCASTS HAVE INVADED OUR HOMES."** Dateline 11 January 1990, from the Cairo bureau of Al-Muslimoon, an Arabic-Islamic journal published in the United Kingdom.

Should you happen to be a radio fan, you must have had this experience. You scan the radio dial looking for interesting programs. Suddenly you hear a voice welcoming you in good classical Arabic. The speaker begins to talk to you in clear and attractive tones as if he were your friend. Soon afterward, you discover that this broadcast is nothing but a broadcast preaching Christianity!!

What is the truth about such Christianizing broadcasts and what are their goals? Do they constitute a danger to young Muslims, and what is the nature of this danger?

AL-MUSLIMOON has taken the initiative to deal with this subject. It is concerned about the dangers which these questionable broadcasts constitute as they address themselves to the sensitivities and inner feelings of our youth in a language which is acceptable by them.

How are we to face this challenge? What is the best way to confront this "Christianizing" informational war? Here is how a number of Muslim intellectuals answered these questions.

Dr. Atef al-Iraqi: "Modernize the Call (Da'wah)"

Dr. Atef al-Iraqi, professor of Islamic philosophy at the College of Arts, the University of Cairo, confirms the fact that "Christianizing" broadcasts are not merely transmitting in Arabic, but in other languages as well. They cover large areas of Asia and Africa including the Arab World.

These broadcasts are primarily aimed at Christians, especially those who follow the type of Christianity most common to Europe, i.e., Catholicism. Now if we consider a country such as Egypt, we would notice that 80% of its Christians follow the Orthodox and not the Catholic tradition. Only about 10% of the Egyptian Christians adhere to the Catholic or the Protestant and Armenian traditions. It is a well known fact that Catholics are followers of Pope John III [sic!] whose headquarters are at the Vatican. As for the Orthodox, they follow Pope Shenoudah, whereas Protestants and Armenians follow Father George Qanawati [sic - Anawati is a Catholic priest:].

(...) Even though these "Christianizing" broadcasts are primarily aimed at Christians, yet they constitute a fearful weapon which is being used against Muslims, with the aim of changing their allegiance to the Christian religion. This is especially true for those Muslims living under difficult conditions and lacking some basic necessities, such as food and medicine.

Dr. al-Iraqi adds: The real danger in my opinion resides within us, as we seem to have a wrong and closed understanding of the Islamic religion. This causes many people to be repelled by it. Just look at these Christianizing broadcasts! They present their programs in an attractive way using the most up-to-date broadcasting methods and potentials such as offering books and pamphlets to the listeners. In our case, we still maintain a close-minded understanding of religion.

If we really want to face these "Christianizing" broadcasts, Dr. al-Iraqi continues, we must resort to the same weapon which these broadcasts use. As is well known, iron can only be met by iron! The weapons used by these Christianizing broadcasts are weapons of addressing their audiences through speeches. We must use the same weapon - speeches - in order to make people come to Islam and not flee from it. (...) They resort to scientific methods in calling people to embrace Christianity. Therefore it is incumbent upon us to call people to Islam using the best methods such as they do, namely through the use of science.

Islam, in his opinion as well as in the opinion of foes, friends and neutral people, is a religion of clarity and simplicity. This is why I hope that the Imams of our mosques would tone down their harsh and severe Friday morning sermons. They need not fill people's minds with fear. After all, Islam is a religion as well as a guide for a life right here on earth. It should not be portrayed as a religion which simply instills fear; it is after all a religion which must be described in such a way that people are eager to embrace it.

Dr. Abdel-Jalil al-Shalabi: "Christian books as well"

The real danger of these attempts to Christianize Muslims, according to Dr. Abdel-Jalil al-Shalabi, the former secretary of the Academy of Islamic Research, is not simply confined to the multiplicity of Christian hymns and songs which are beamed by these broadcasts. The most serious danger is to be found in those Arabic books which are printed to look like the Quran. At the head of each chapter, we find the title bracketed within two frames in exactly the same way as the various headings of the Surahs of the Holy Quran. The chapters also begin with, "In the name of the merciful and compassionate God" [i.e., the opening words of all but one Surah of the Quran, and placed at the beginning of all Muslim books.]

There may even be a brief Quranic quotation and then begins "Christianizing" propaganda. In this fashion, it seeks to make the impression on the minds of the readers that the Quran approves the call to embrace Christianity. For example, at the beginning of a certain chapter, one would find: "The Messiah, son of Mary, is the apostle of Allah and a word which he cast on Mary and a spirit from him." After quoting this Quranic verse with chapter and verse, the

propaganda book adds that the Word of God is eternal. It also mentions that once upon a time there arose a controversy among Muslims regarding the eternity of the Word of God. Eventually, the victory was won by those who affirmed that the Word was eternal. (...)

Since the Messiah is called Word of God in the Quran, he must therefore also be eternal and co-equal with God [i.e. according to these books]. Of course, such reasoning is obviously wrong. Actually, what the Quran really means when it says that the Messiah is a word from God, is simply that he was created by divine fiat. It does not mean at all that he is the Son of God, nor that he is divine.

Dr. al-Shalabi adds: These books are spreading among the Muslims of South Africa, India, East Asia and the isles of the Philippines. They lead Muslims astray as they induce them to doubt their doctrine.

Dr. Ahmad Shalabi: "Christianizing activities ... an octopus"

We turn now to Dr. Ahmad Shalabi, professor of Islamic history and civilization at the College of Sciences, the University of Cairo.

Throughout Islamic history, there were several attempts to "Christianize" and to engage in anti-Islamic propaganda. When Western colonialism came to the Islamic world, the efforts were doubled. But thanks to the various liberation movements, Western imperialism has come to an end. Now, the anti-Islamic propaganda has been left in the hands of the "Christianizing" organizations. These choose their fields of activity in those Islamic areas where resistance does not happen to be strong or decisive. We may point to such areas as southern Sudan, Indonesia and certain other countries.

Regardless of the fact that these "Christianizing" efforts may become widespread, they will eventually weaken as they face Islamic forces which will succeed in lessening their influence and in stopping their advance. Unfortunately however, these missionary organizations still find wide areas for their activities such as in those regions of poverty and educational backwardness. There, they rely on schools and hospitals to spread their thoughts. They open schools where they offer free education. Students come and find nothing but "Christianizing" teachings. As they are weak, they cannot offer resistance. As for the missionary hospitals, their doors are open to receive the sick. It is a well known fact that sick people have very low resistance. Since they have no choice when seeking medical help, they attend Christian hospitals and receive Christian instruction. Eventually, they may even believe what they have been told. Dr. Ahmad Shalabi adds: We plead with Muslims everywhere to be on guard against this perfidious and difficult octopus.

Dr. Inshirah al-Shal: "Use the best audio-visual potentials"

Dr. Inshirah al-Shal [first name indicates a lady], professor of radio and television at the College of communications, the University of Cairo, says: We must distinguish between religious broadcasts and "Christianizing" broadcasts. Religious broadcasts offer religious programs, whether Jewish, Christian or Islamic, to adherents of these heavenly religions.

Take for example the Station of the Holy Quran [station in Mecca broadcasting on both medium and short wave]. It is a religious broadcast which is aimed at Muslims in Egypt and throughout the Arab world. Also, the Christian radio of the Netherlands which is beamed at Christians in that country or throughout Europe. [The implication is that these are merely religious and do not aim at conversion!]

On the other hand, let us have a look at those "Christianizing" stations; they proselytize. They engage in crusading activities ["Crusade" is a loaded word]. Their goal is to bring Muslims who are within the reach of their signals into the Christian religion.

As we take a look at the Christian broadcasting stations which reach us, whether they are using radio or television, it is incumbent upon us to mention certain facts which constitute a great danger to us. It is obvious that their source of income is definitely Christian. The Church is the one which plays the role of gathering the funds. Quite often, the source is the Vatican, which is the stronghold of Christianity within the whole world.

When we come to the transmission sites, one happens to be in Africa and the other in Europe. The one is in Ethiopia [sic - the RVOG ceased in the 70s after the Marxist coup!] and the other in Cyprus or some other region close to the Arab world. These places afford the best place for the transmissions to reach us. Some people claim that the "Christianizing" stations are located in America. I find this very difficult to believe. "Christianizing" broadcasts and telecasts reach us clearly throughout the day. They could not originate in America and perform so well, the distances are too great. Of course, it is not inconceivable that America would engage in this questionable activity; but I must insist that if it is involved, it must rely on strong and powerful relay stations in the Middle East which enable it to reach us with clear signals. [Note the confusion.]

Dr. al-Shal adds: One need not minimize the danger of these radio stations. They invade our very homes and they fight us in our own houses. We know that many of our poor citizens especially in southern Sudan [sic] have been influenced by them and have embraced Christianity. [Note the disinformation: the people in southern Sudan were animists, and never Muslims.]

But what is more troubling is the fact that these media use the most up-to-date broadcasting and televising methods. They offer their programs in a quiet and diplomatic way using good and clear Arabic. This exerts a great influence upon the soul of the listener. He becomes totally absorbed by them, having lost his reasoning and volitional powers. "Christianizing" stations do attempt to Christianize Muslims. This is a very serious act; we must face it by using all the means which are available to us. It would have been morally acceptable had these "Christianizing" stations concentrated their efforts and beamed their signals in the direction of those societies which are devoid of any faith in the heavenly religions. This would have been a legitimate work which no one would ever oppose. But to seek to "Christianize" Muslims is in fact a totally immoral and despicable act no matter which standard we may use to appraise its nature.

Dr. al-Shal continues: I call upon those engaged in research in the communications field within the academic circles to prepare studies about these questionable and dangerous radio stations. We must know exactly: who stands behind them, what are their methods, goals and program contents in order to formulate the best ways of combating them. This must be accomplished on the theoretical level. But as far as the practical level is concerned, I suggest that we review our religious programs currently offered over radio and television. Unfortunately, most of them are produced in a rather "rigid" way, and totally incompatible with the nature of the age we live in.

In order that a communications mission may reach its hearers and make an impact upon them, it must contain the following ingredients: a good broadcaster, an equally good content as well as a good production. Of course, we do have some successful religious programs in Egypt such as the program of Sheikh al-Sha'rawi, and "Science and Faith" of Dr. Mustapha Mahmud. There are other programs with good contents. However, the time of their airing or the manner of their production makes them unsuitable. Take for example, the program dealing with "The Beautiful Names of Allah," and "A Talk of the Spirit." They are telecast just before the conclusion of the television transmissions. Those in charge of programming claim that since these are successful programs, people will stay up late to watch them regardless of how late the hour may be. What an illogical claim!

Dr. Muhammad Amara: "An Imperialist Invasion"

The Islamic intellectual, Dr. Muhammad Amara, mentions several facts concerning the "Christianizing" radio stations.

If these radio stations which spread non-Islamic religions were merely explaining their faith and appealing to others to accept it, and were funded by non-Islamic religious societies, we would have no reason to criticize them. Freedom of religion, the right to appeal on behalf of Christianizing organization and to inform other about the Christian faith is a natural right for those adhering to any religion. It is a right which must be guaranteed by the laws, traditions and covenants of the various states.

When we call for freedom for the Islamic missions and Muslim missionaries, we must equally accept and protect the freedom of others to propagate their own religions as long as they do not engage in activities which demean other faiths. This is a general principle to be respected by all those who would spread their religions.

But what is actually happening, as far as the attempts for Christianizing are concerned, has nothing to do with what we have been saying above. Islam is well aware of the fact that the Western missionary effort is part and parcel of an imperialistic invasion of our Eastern countries. Even our Eastern churches have suffered from the attempts to Westernize them. The West would like to transfer the loyalties of the Eastern churches and their membership to the West. There was a time when the hostility which was manifested by our Eastern churches toward Western traditions was more intense than the one exhibited by some Muslims toward the same. Since Eastern Christians are more liable to be seduced by Western Christianity, they easily come under

the influence of organizations and churches in the West which maintain strong relations with imperialistic circles. It is such groups which set up broadcasting stations and means of communication which possess a great potential for influencing people.

Therefore, these "Christianizing" efforts may not be regarded as mere attempts to propagate a specific religion. Rather, they are one facet of a multi-faceted effort of that cultural invasion aimed at controlling the minds and the hearts in our Eastern countries and especially us Muslims. It is actually an attempt to dominate and exercise cultural and economic hegemony over the Muslim nations.

After all, we are well aware of the attempts to Christianize Africa which took place during the colonial era. A minority had the opportunity to establish control over all aspects of life in the colonies in economics, language, culture and politics. Thus, "Christianizing" did not consist in a religious activity whereby the human conscience was placed before certain choices which it may accept or reject. On the contrary, it functioned as one aspect of modern colonialism whose total goal was to exert complete hegemony over African nations and to strengthen their ties to Western culture.

In spite of the difficult conditions through which we are passing, it is our responsibility to stand together and manifest our solidarity as we face this danger which is threatening our Islamic world. We notice that many of its sons and daughters who have been hit by difficult circumstances such as famine and bad economies, are falling prey to the anti-Islamic thought parading itself under a religious mask. We have heard some very disturbing news regarding small children who are being snatched from their parents due to hunger in Somalia and Bangladesh and who are being sent to the West through those "Christianizing" organizations where they would eventually embrace their religion and receive their education. Then, they are returned to their homelands having become skilled specialists such as doctors and engineers. Back home, they begin to exert their influence among their families and with their milieu, armed with Western thought patterns and with a non-Islamic religion. They accomplish their destructive work in areas dominated by poverty.

Those who are truly aware of these "Christianizing" movements in such lands as Indonesia, or those informed of the role played by the Vatican and the Pope in Africa, must realize that the Catholic church has adopted the slogan: Africa Christian by the year 2000! Those who are truly informed about these dangers must begin to act and stand behind those Islamic organizations which advocate and support "calling" [Da'wah - Islamic word for missions] and development. It should be adequate for us to just remember the story of the South in the Sudan where various missionary organizations are trying to create another Israel and thus build a dam which would stand against the Arabization and Islamization of the heart of Africa. This is but one aspect of this imperialistic menace.

We conclude therefore, that these efforts of the Christian missionaries are not really aimed at converting people to Christianity. Rather, their activities represent one aspect of a multi-faceted campaign launched by an aggressive Western imperialism to dominate

our people and our countries. What is at stake is our national and cultural identity, our Islamic doctrines and our Islamic Shariah.

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## A STUDY OF MUSLIM WOMEN'S RESPONSE TO BIBLE READINGS

by L. D.

### Introduction:

This survey covers a three year period from 1988 through 1991, during which time Muslim women in a certain country in the Middle East had the Bible read or the gospel presented to them from one to three times. The majority were nationals of the country concerned, but there were also Muslim women from five other countries who were resident in the country.

Those to whom the Bible was read were newly delivered mothers in their private rooms in a maternity hospital. Usually, there was at least one other person present at the time, either a family member, or the maid, and on occasion the husband. Each woman's response was no doubt affected by various factors, such as the level of her discomfort or tiredness, who was doing the reading, her language, whether or not she was alone, and whether or not she had heard the gospel before. None of these factors have been taken into consideration here, as that would have been an impossible task.

The total number of readings involved is 706. All but 43 have been classed under one of 5 major categories: OLD TESTAMENT, MIRACLES, PARABLES, NARRATIVES, TEACHING (from the gospels or epistles), and PROJECT SUNRISE (also called SIRA, i.e. "THE LIFE OF THE MESSIAH IN CLASSICAL ARABIC").

The women have likewise been categorized according year of birth: from 1940-1950, from 1951-1960, from 1961-1965, from 1966-1970, and from 1971 onwards. The majority of the women, 51%, were born in the 1960s, with the 50s following next in line at 29%, and the 40s and 70s at 7% and 11% respectively.

Responses have been gauged on the following scale:

- INTEREST PLUS - interest seemed to go beyond the average.
- INTEREST - asked questions, requested Bible.
- MINIMAL INTEREST - no response, favourable or unfavourable.
- BASIC INTEREST - polite response, acknowledged they heard what you said, but wanted it to go no further.
- NEGATIVE INTEREST - engaged in argument rather than discussion, asked questions without caring to listen to answers.
- OPPOSED - open opposition to being read to

Undoubtedly, gauging someone's interest when one does not know the person, or all the factors that may influence her response, can be a hit and miss affair. The woman may not be revealing her true response to what she has heard, and so may be completely misunderstood. However, over all, the survey does show some generalizations which are only possible if the data is somewhat accurate and reliable.

The Results

Those born from 1940-1950: The 1940's age bracket seemed to respond most positively to readings from the OLD TESTAMENT, PARABLES, and MIRACLES of Jesus. They responded the least to readings that were straight TEACHING. The majority of the women in this age bracket (34 out of 50) responded with what I've called a BASIC response. None had any inclination to argue. They were as polite and agreeable as they could be. These observations are supported by the fact that this is the age group with the least amount of formal education.

Those born from 1951-1960: Women in their 30's were far more positive towards TEACHING passages than those up to 10 years their senior. This could reflect the rapid social changes that began to take place about the time they were born. They were also quite positive to NARRATIVE readings, whereas, MIRACLE passages and PROJECT SUNRISE did not make much of an impression on them. Again, the majority of the responses were BASIC (121 out of 201), although a good number (65), also showed positive INTEREST. This age bracket was likewise not inclined to argue. If they felt differently, which assuredly they did, they kept it to themselves.

Those born from 1961-1965: I divided the 60s age group into two groups, because of the large number as well as the differences between those in their early twenties and those in their late twenties. On average, the younger women tended to be more vocal about their thoughts, whether positive or negative. Unlike their ancestors, they were not so concerned about offending anyone by being up front. Arguments ensued with three determined women; the BASIC polite response, common to those a decade or two older, was less frequent (79 out of 180) than evidence of some INTEREST (81 out of 180 or 46%). This was the age group that responded most favourably to PROJECT SUNRISE--60% of these readings evoked a positive response. The OLD TESTAMENT followed with 57%, and at the bottom was MIRACLES at 22%.

Those born from 1966-1970: The women born during these years were the group most OPPOSED to any reading at all (6 out of 195). Only 63 out of 195 gave evidence of positive INTEREST, while the number of those whose response was BASIC rose to 102. This age group was most positive towards TEACHING passages, followed by PARABLES. NARRATIVE passages had the least response of all.

Those born from 1971 on: A total of 80 women 19 years old and under gave birth at the hospital within the three year period. For many of these, it was their first time hearing the gospel or learning something about Christianity from a Christian source. The high level of BASIC responses (44), shows that they were, in spite of their youth, still quite cautious. But at the same time, many of those who showed INTEREST (23) did so with great enthusiasm. They were most positively affected by the same categories as those in the previous bracket, but in reverse order: PARABLES first (50%) and TEACHING second. They responded least to OLD TESTAMENT passages (15%).

General Observations: Overall, the types of readings that evoked the largest amount of positive response was TEACHING; 44% of the readings in this category met with a positive response. The second most popu-

lar type of reading was PARABLES, firding interest among approximately 37% of the women. NARRATIVES followed at 35%, the OLD TESTAMENT at 31%, LIFE OF THE MESSIAH (PROJECT SUNRISE) 25%, and MIRACLES 34%. As mentioned before, it should be kept in mind that many other factors would have influenced both the listener's response and the speaker's evaluation of that response.

#### Conclusions:

Results would indicate that PARABLES and/or TEACHING passages are favourites in 4 out of 5 age groups. Perhaps the Muslim's familiarity with the MIRACLES of Jesus left these women, for the most part, indifferent to this particular type of communication. Whereas, the teaching of Jesus and the apostles, whether in more straight forward fashion, or in the form of parables, was something new and therefore more interesting. The conclusions are even more pointed when it is seen that only 10% of all the readings were from the parables, and 16% from teaching.

The large number of positive responses from the 1961-1965 age group - 46% - is also noteworthy, compared to only 16% for the 1940-1950 age group. These observations have been helpful to us in determining how to most effectively use biblical truth with Muslim women in our ministry.

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#### B O O K R E V I E W S

The All Nations English Dictionary. Pasadena, CA: All Nations, [P.O. Box 41540, Pasadena, CA 91141, Tel: 818/398-2473], 1990, \$5.00, plus \$2 mailing charges].

[Here is a dictionary designed for the use of the Christian Teacher of English as a Second Language in his or her language classes. What makes it unique is that it defines key Christian theological terms in such a way as to help clarify the Biblical message, and it uses many Scripture passages to illustrate a number of terms. The following review is by Irving Hoffman.]

Whoever uses this dictionary need make no apologies for its presentation or content. The All Nations English Dictionary (ANED) may be compared with the Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English (OALDCE) which is probably the best dictionary in its class for teaching and learning English as a second/foreign language. The former is North American oriented, but both dictionaries try to give British and North American usages.

The OALDCE boasts 50,000 headwords, many illustrations, examples, and extensive grammatical section and several useful tables and appendices. The ANED contains 35,000 headwords and is in some ways a stripped-down version of the OALDCE, yet it contains the essentials for a useful dictionary.

It has been proven many times over that pocket dictionaries and especially bilingual pocket dictionaries are inadequate and sometimes misleading. This stems from the short coverage of the uses, derivatives and idioms. More important than this, however, is the lack of

examples. The ANED seems to have adequate coverage and useful examples. Of course, more is better in dictionary writing.

In the ANED, a variation of the International Phonetic Alphabet is used, and the stress is marked by bold type. Both of these features make it useful to serious students and teachers. The vagaries of English spelling merit a longer treatment. A table for irregular verbs would be useful, as well as a section for various affixes. Prepositions always present great difficulty to the foreign learner. An additional section on them would also be welcome.

The ANED is therefore, a good working dictionary. Its emphasis on spiritual examples is healthy and corrective, but for those who don't know the Bible at all or very poorly, their source reference might be confusing. Maybe an introductory paragraph of explanation would be in order. The scripture references can also be used in personal evangelism by the discerning teacher. May God use this very respectable desk dictionary for His glory. We shall look for refinements in the future.

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 Abd al-Masih. World Muslim Population Growth 1970 - 2000. Light of Life [P.O. Box 13, A-9503 Villach, AUSTRIA], 1990, 404 pages, large size [8.25" x 11.75" / 21 x 29.8cm]. Order No. VB 8997 E. Price: DM 40.00. Available on diskette updated for 1992, order number VD 8997 E, at DM 40.00.

Here is a book that will be of interest especially to those called upon to represent Christian ministry to Muslims before the Christian public. It is a very complete statistical study of world Muslim population growth, and is loaded with charts which provide data on the subject from every conceivable angle.

The one thing that would have been helpful to have along with the charts is a few interpretive essays pointing out the significance of the charts and statistics. For this reason, it might be helpful to study this book together with the much briefer work of John R. Weeks [“The Demography of Islamic Nations,” Population Bulletin 43/4, reviewed in SEEDBED IV/2:18-23] which does not have near the charts and statistics but more interpretation. Several helpful interpretive statements are found in the Preface (page 3) and the Key to Numbers and Terms (page 6f), but this is all. The author states that:

Islam is expanding today in all aspects of life and has started a worldwide outreach on all continents. However, the growth of this religion is not based primarily on mission endeavours, social work, or holy wars, but on natural increase through surplus birthrate.

In 1990, the world population exceeded 5.4 billion, of which 1.1 billion were Muslims. Every fifth person on our planet follows Islam. The world population doubles every 40 years. Muslims alone double every 24-30 years; excluding them the world doubles in 50 years.

One interesting feature of this work is that, because different "authoritative" demographic studies differ considerably in the statistics they give, the authors have chosen to present both the highs and the lows as the "maximum and minimum figures" for each country. Following the introduction (Pt. I), the book is divided into seven chapters. Part II lists 173 countries of the world alphabetically with religious affiliation of their inhabitants. Part III gives demographic details on 129 countries having at least 10,000 Muslims from 1900 projected to 2000; graphs are given for 68 countries. Part IV analyzes the situation of the different world religions in the 173 countries in 1990; e.g. for each religion it lists the countries in which they live in order of the quantities in each. Part V does a similar analysis but by geographical region (continent). Part VII gives various pieces of demographic and economic information on the 173 countries, and Part VIII lists reference works consulted, and an interesting quiz.

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Christians in Chains. Villach, Austria: Light of Life. [c. 1990], 153 pages. Order No. VB 5820 E. Price: DM 6.00

Apart from a four-page introduction, this remarkable little book represents the text of judicial interrogations which the secret police in an unnamed Muslim country conducted with four Christians, converted from Islam, who were imprisoned for a year. Everything that could identify the persons or the country have been changed. The editors "present this book in order to proclaim that there is in the heart of man a thirst for the love of God, and that Christ alone offers this love, quenching the cravings of the human soul."

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Muslim-Christian Research Group. The Challenge of the Scriptures: The Bible and the Qur'an. Faith Meets Faith Series. Trans. Stuart E. Brown. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1989. 101 pages. [a translation of Ces Ecritures qui nous questionnent: La Bible et le Coran. Paris: Editions du Centurion, 1987].

This is the first fruit of the work of the "Groupes de Recherches Islamo-Chretien" (GRIC), an inter-religious dialogue group made up mostly of French-speaking Muslim scholars and Catholics, both clergy and university professors, but with a sprinkling of Protestants from the ecumenical movement as well. The book is the result of a series of discussions over a period of 5 years with a view to coming to some kind of common perspective or approach on "scripture," a term which here includes both Qur'an and Bible. Those who participated in the study group did so as individuals, and not as representatives of a religious organization or church.

As might be expected from its origins, this book isn't one to give you an evangelical perspective on the Bible and the Qur'an, or help in defending the Bible against Muslim attacks. I mention it here because I think it is important to keep abreast of what is going on in the dialogues with Muslims carried out in ecumenical circles. The first two chapters are inane, no doubt all that could be expected

from a common denominator type approach. It is a classic example of "nature eats up grace." For me, the most valuable parts of the book are the Introduction and the last Chapter (Ch. 3). The Introduction is valuable because it gives the origins of the GRIC and of this study on "scripture." It is followed by a section on "General Guidelines for True Dialogue" which is the charter of the GRIC (pp.9-13).

Chapter 3, "The Scriptures of One Community as Seen through the Faith of the Other," is the most important of the book, and is probably worth the price of the book [although it is quite expensive!]. In the first part of the chapter, the Christian participants examine every possible aspect of the question of whether or not the Qur'an can be considered a word from God; the historical survey is quite comprehensive and useful. Then the Muslim participants examine whether or not Muslims can accept the New Testament; here the discussion turns around the question of tahrif. What makes this chapter rather unique is that in discussing these issues the two sides do not belittle and polemicize, but rather try to examine the issues as fairly as they know how. Not that the result is satisfactory from an evangelical standpoint. Far from it. The chapter does, however, give what is probably the most thorough discussion of the issues that I have seen in print, and it will certainly stimulate your thinking.

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 Lamin Sanneh. Translating the Message: The Missionary Impact on Culture. American Society of Missiology Series, No. 13. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1989. 249 pages.

This book was judged one of the outstanding missiological books of the year when it came out. Its central thesis is that the idea of translation--primarily the translation of the Scriptures--is of the very essence of Christian mission. The author, a Gambian Christian of Muslim background teaching at Harvard, writes from the standpoint of a historian of religion. He develops his thesis through a study of Christian mission, first in the early church and then in the taking of the gospel to various parts of the world, with the primary focus being Africa.

The value of the book for us lies in the fact that the author specifically compares the Christian approach in which translation is foundational to mission, with the Islamic paradigm in which mission is conducted on the basis of a non-translatable Qur'an. Apart from the Introduction where Sanneh introduces the thesis, the most important part of the book for the Christian working among Muslims is chapter 7 which summarizes the Islamic paradigm and the way Muslims have responded to the Christian approach to translation. I found these chapters very helpful for understanding the importance of the difference between these two approaches.

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