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Was Jesus Really Crucified? by Faris al-Qayrawani. Light of Life [P.O. Box 13, A-9503 Villach, AUSTRIA], 1994. 95 pages, paper. [Available in the USA from Good News for the Crescent World, P.O. Box 13217, Arlington, TX 76094. Price: \$5.00 per copy, quantity discount.]

The author, a Middle Eastern Christian, approaches his subject dispassionately and builds his case in a carefully reasoned manner. He is well acquainted with the Muslim mindset and manner of reasoning, and with classical Arabic literature. He is able to draw extensively from the writings of classical Muslim authors, such as al-Baydawi, Ibn Hisham and al-Ghazali, and to make use of Arab Christian authors of the quality of Professor Haddad and Awad Simam. One thing I especially appreciated: the book appears to be free of the typographical errors and inconsistencies in transliterating Arabic words and names that are so common in books of this type. I understand that the book is in process of being published in Arabic.

An introduction briefly contrasts the Muslim and Christian perspectives on the Cross and salvation, and outlines the approach the author will take to establish his thesis. The remainder of the book is given over to establishing the reality of the crucifixion. It is divided into three chapters which treat, respectively, "*Reasons for the Crucifixion*," "*The Historical Documents*," and "*Christ's Crucifixion in the Qur'an*."

The author shows that the evidence all favors a *real* crucifixion. For Muslims, of course, no amount of historical evidence can outweigh the testimony of the Qur'an. In a section on "Logical Evidence," the author therefore patiently shows, in a way that I believe Muslims can understand, why it cannot be so easily dismissed. He answers the six problems raised by Imam Fakhr ad-Din ar-Razi. Here, he deals extensively with the theory of the *Shabih* (the one said to take Jesus' place). He shows, from the Bible, why Christ *had to die*, especially the Biblical teaching on atonement in relation to that of Islam, and the story about God commanding Abraham to sacrifice his son. He brings out the fact that Jesus' death and resurrection are prophesied in the Old Testament, and foretold by Jesus Himself. This is an excellent section.

The author's treatment of the historical evidence is likewise very thorough. He covers every conceivable ancient writer who ever wrote on the subject—pagan writers such as Tacitus and Pliny the Younger, Jewish sources such as Josephus and the Talmud, Gnostic documents, and Christian sources—and even cites such evidence as catacomb drawings and Christian ritual. He also thoroughly examines Muslim opinion about the crucifixion, including interpretations of the Qur'anic expression *mutawaffika* ("one who causes you to die"). From the wealth of evidence, which I cannot begin to cite, he shows that the Muslim rejection of the crucifixion is traceable to the influence of several ancient heretical sects, notably the Docetists, Ebionites and Gnostics. The early Muslim commentators received their information about Judaism and Christianity from these sects, and some adherents of these sects embraced Islam and brought their heretical ideas with them. To my knowledge, this is one of the best treatments of the crucifixion in answer to Muslim objections that we have.

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