

EVANGELIZATION OF MOSLEMS IN EGYPT

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DEDICATION

To

NADIA A. NOOR

It was through your continuous encouragement  
and great sacrifice that the writing of this  
thesis was made possible.

I dedicate it to you in love and admiration.

Gift of Author

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## EVANGELIZATION OF MOSLEMS IN EGYPT

### INTRODUCTION

#### A. The Subject Stated

Islam has always been a great rival of Christianity. Christianity met a strong opponent in Mohammad the prophet of Islam, and in his new religion. Mohammad presented to the world a faith without mysteries, and a morality without love. In many regions Islam conquered Christianity. Before 642 A.D., Egypt was a Christian country, and the Church of Egypt was the leading church of the world. Yet, when Islam invaded Egypt, it reduced the Church to a minority of the population. The religion of 91 per cent of Egyptians today is the religion of Islam. The language of Egypt became the language of the Quran, and Islam the state religion.

The theological differences which have arisen between Islam and Christianity have made it very difficult for a Moslem to consider changing his religion.

Most evangelistic methods known to man have been tried, and are being tried. Hospitals and clinics,

schools and educational institutions, distribution of Bibles, preaching in special meetings and in funerals, and the work of Bible women, have not borne the fruit that was expected. The Christians in Egypt feel as the disciples did when they said to the Master that they toiled and caught nothing.

The aim of this thesis is to present a method for the evangelization of Moslems in Egypt by preparing evangelistic pamphlets written especially for Moslems, explaining the way of salvation by Jesus Christ. These pamphlets would be distributed by a devoted Christian group among their Moslem friends whom they know and can follow up. This Christian group would be guided and helped to do that type of work by the writer and another leader of work among the Moslems in Egypt.

#### B. The Subject Justified

Egypt today is a new Egypt. Educated Moslems are losing their faith in Islam. The need of the Moslems for Christ is great, but they have resisted Christ's message as no other non-Christian group ever has. Yet, there are many Moslems in Egypt who secretly believe in Christ. Islam faces a crisis and the Christian Church faces a great opportunity.

The study represented by this thesis should be very important for the Christian Church in Egypt to

help face the new day in Islam. The ministers in Egypt, of whom the writer is one, feel a great need for a method to reach these educated Moslems and the secret believers. All the Christian denominations in Egypt realize the urgency of that important work but need a method that works. The missionaries, as the pioneers of the work among Moslems, will profit by using such a workable method.

### C. Method of Procedure

In this study the development will proceed as follows:

In the first chapter the writer will present Islam and its basic beliefs. He will give a summary of the life of Mohammad the prophet of Islam, mentioning how Islam invaded Egypt, becoming the dominant religion of the land.

In the second chapter the writer will mention the difficulties in reaching the Moslems and the obstacles in winning them to Christ.

The third chapter will be a survey of the different methods used and now in use for reaching the Moslems. It will give account of the work of the missionaries in evangelizing the Moslems in Egypt.

The fourth chapter will present a project for reaching the Moslems through literature specially pre-



pared for them. This literature will be distributed by some national Christians. The writer will prepare six pamphlets as samples of that literature.

#### D. Sources of Data

Sources of material to be presented herein will be:

1. Selected books dealing with the subject, both in English and Arabic, including the Quran and the Bible (RSV).
2. Special discussions about the subject with leading workers among Moslems in Egypt.
3. The personal experience of the writer in the work in Egypt for the past seven years.
4. Letters from some missionaries working in Egypt.

# ISLAM AND ITS INVASION OF EGYPT

## CHAPTER I

### A. Introduction

Chronologically Islam is the latest among the world's great religions. It is the only one that is an active rival of Christianity. Yet it has not contributed a single new idea to the religious thought of the world.

If Christian evangelization work among Moslems is to be studied, it is important to understand the background of the Moslem, and this must be considered seriously. It is the purpose of this chapter to set forth the background of the Moslems as it affects them and as it creates problems and challenges for the work of evangelization. Islam will be defined briefly.

The life of Mohammad the prophet of Islam will be presented historically. The judgment of the great scholars on the life of the Moslem apostle of Allah will be given. What the Moslems today think of Mohammad as affected by the Hadith will be stated, giving examples of the thinking of the leading Moslems.

A review of the faith of Islam, both theoretical and practical, will be offered with an introduction

about the sources of these doctrines. While offering the Moslem concept about prophets, the Islamic idea about Jesus will be considered. Weak points in Islamic theology, which a Christian may use as an opportunity to present the Christian Gospel, will be presented.

The history of Islam in Egypt will be scanned. The conditions of the church before invasion and how its condition contributed to a successful invasion will be scanned. Next the writer will mention the way in which the Christians were treated after the Islamic invasion and how this resulted in the Moslem Egypt of today. Lastly, a consideration of the present condition of the Christian church in Egypt will be given.

#### B. Mohammad the Prophet of Islam

Mohammad, the prophet of Islam, was a descendant of Abraham through Ishmael, and he belonged to the Arabian tribe "Quraish." He was born about 570 A.D. in Mecca, Arabia. His father and mother died when he was a child. Until his eighth year he was under the shelter and favor of Abdul Muttalib, the chief man of Quraish. He learned what it was to be lordly and exercise power, and he never forgot it. His environment and his early training were the determining personal influences in his character.<sup>1</sup>

. . . . .

1. "حياة محمد" للدكتور محمد حسين هيكل ص ١٥

Arabia in the days of Mohammad was a refuge of all sorts of religious fugitives, and each band added something to the national stock of religious ideas. There were star worshippers, Zoroastrians, Jews, Pagan worshippers and Christians. Christianity in North Arabia was weak. The location of North Arabia between the rival powers of Rome and Persia made it a sort of buffer-state, and Christianity suffered in consequence. The Persians and their allies persecuted the Christians in Arabia.<sup>1</sup>

Mohammad started his life as a shepherd. Later he worked for a rich widow, Khadijah. He conveyed her caravans to Syria and back. There he came in contact with Christians and, according to the tradition, formed a friendship with a Christian monk. Khadijah was attracted by his handsome appearance and the propriety of his behavior, and married him when he was twenty-five.<sup>2</sup>

Mohammad must have heard a Christian missionary sermon. As a matter of fact, tradition tells of a Christian preacher named Quss ibn Said, who is said to have been the bishop of Nejran, but who belonged to a tribe living at Hira in Mesopotamia, whom Mohammad is supposed to have heard preaching in the market of Okaz. Mohammad

. . . . .

1. S.M. Zwemer, The Moslem World, New York, Eaton and Mains, 1908, p. 9.
2. J. Christy Wilson, Introducing Islam, New York, Friendship Press, 1954, p. 6.

received from the Nestorians of Persia the impressions which decisively influenced his personal religious message.<sup>1</sup>

Mohammad used to retire frequently for meditation in a cave. At the age of forty he said that he saw a vision in the cave, and he felt himself to be a prophet of the One true God, Allah. The first declaration of his call was to his wife, and she became his first convert. The next believers were Ali and Zaid, his adopted children. Then others joined them.

Ten years after Mohammad had announced his prophetic office, his wife Khadijah died. Within a year, however, he had concluded two other marriages, and other wives were added to the household as time went by. Several years later, he married Zainab, who had been the wife of his adopted son Zaid. Another wife, Safiyyah, was Jewish, and Mariya was a Coptic Christian. Because of the background of the two last-named wives, Mohammad must have had the opportunity to hear Biblical stories in his household.

Mohammad preached to his people of Quraish, but they rejected him. In the year 622 A.D., Mohammad made a fateful decision. He left Mecca and took his followers to Medina. The flight, or Hejrah, marks the year

. . . . .

1. Professor Tor Andrea, Mohammed, London, Scribner, 1936, p. 124.

one of the Islamic era.<sup>1</sup>

As has been aptly said, "The flight to Medina changed not only the scene, but the actor and the drama."<sup>2</sup> The prophet that had been a simple and purely religious leader and preached the unity of Allah became a legislator and a military leader. He began to feel a deep resentment toward the people of Mecca who rejected him. As the number of his followers increased, there was not enough water for their agricultural needs. He decided to raid the caravans from Mecca. Raiding the caravan of about a thousand camels produced an armed conflict known as the battle of Badr. There were two other battles, and Mohammad won. He raided the Jews of Beni Quraiza, killed seven hundred captives, and sold their wives and children into slavery.

Mohammad sent messages to the neighboring kings asking them to become Moslems. He hoped that they would respond to him, but he was disappointed to receive their refusal. This changed his attitude towards Christians and Jews. Although the first Surahs (chapters) of the Quran speaks well about them as the "People of the Book," yet the later ones set the pattern of hostility towards them.

. . . . .

1. Wilson, op. cit., pp. 7-11.
2. Isaac Mason, How Islam Arose, Hankow, Society of Friends of the Moslems in China, 1928, p. 36.

The eighth of June, 632 A.D., saw the end of Mohammad's life, when he murmured, "Eternity in Paradise! Pardon!."

Here Samuel Zwemer says:

By a unique fortune in history, Mohammad became the founder of a nation, of an empire, of a religion, and of a social system. He was one of the greatest creative spirits in the history of human culture. The impress of his mind and his life has been colossal.<sup>1</sup>

Who was Mohammad?

Dr. Koelle, a great missionary to India and Turkey, and others boldly assert that Mohammad is the AntiChrist, that his system is a direct antithesis to Christianity, and, therefore, Mohammad himself was not a prophet of God but a tool of the evil one. Professor Tor Andrea says that he has no right to judge the prophet of Islam according to the Christian moral standards, but only according to those of his own revelations.<sup>2</sup> Yet Professor Andrea says that in the episode of Zainab it is difficult to reconcile his conduct with his sense of an apostolic mission. The prophet Mohammad fell in love with the lawful wife of his son Zaid, so he prevailed on him to divorce her, and then he married her immediately. For this he said that Allah had given him a revelation to justify his conduct.<sup>3</sup>

. . . . .

1. S.M. Zwemer, The Cross Above the Crescent, Grand Rapids, 1941, p. 28.
2. Tor Andrea, op. cit., p. 124.
3. Surah 33:37.

The same is true in the case of the war against the News of Beni Quraiza. In this again he revealed "the lack of honesty and moral courage which was an unattractive trait in his character."<sup>1</sup> It was lawful to marry a captive woman whose relatives had been slain in battle, but not until three months after their death. Mohammad waited three days only to marry Safiyyah of Beni Quraiza. It was also lawful to rob merchants, but not pilgrims, on their way to Mecca. Mohammad broke that law and said that God had given him a revelation to justify what he did. Although his followers were to be content with four wives yet, according to tradition, Mohammad took to himself eleven lawful wives and two slave girls.<sup>2</sup> Again Andrea says, "Unfortunately it cannot be said that righteousness and straightforwardness are the most prominent traits of the character of Mohammad as a whole."<sup>3</sup>

On the other hand, Sir William Muir and many other scholars believe that Mohammad was at the outset a sincere seeker after truth and a messenger of monotheism to the pagan Arabs. Afterwards when he gained power and influence, he succumbed to temptation and invented revelations to justify his own conduct.

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1. Tor Andrea, op. cit., p. 130.
2. Zwemer, op. cit., p. 21.
3. Tor Andrea, op. cit., p. 130.



Again there are those who say that Mohammad always was what he revealed himself to be afterwards in his life. Because, they say, he was the victim of psychopathic derangement -- he was sex-mad. This theory has been held also by the disciples of the Freudian school.

On the other hand, there are those who say with Carlyle that Mohammad was a true prophet of God from the outset -- that his faults were the faults of his age.<sup>1</sup>

In the Quran and in the earliest sources, Mohammad is thoroughly human and liable to error. Later tradition has changed all that and made him sinless and almost divine.

Today Moslems say that the great prophet is the very type of perfect humanity; that all his actions apart from trifles were perfect; that his moral splendor throws that of Jesus completely in the shade; and that his example and precept make the best foundation, not only for codes of conduct, but for national and international law.<sup>2</sup> For all Moslems Mohammad is the prophet of Allah, the last, the especially chosen, with a halo of centuries of reverence around his head. For very many of them he was the first made of all creatures. For his

. . . . .

1. Zwemer, op. cit., pp. 28-30.  
Kenneth Cragg, *The Call of the Minaret*, New York, Oxford University Press, 1956, pp. 186-189.
2. Zwemer, op. cit., p. 72.

sake, Allah created the worlds. Besides that, for all Arabs he is the great Arabian; no other like him has sprung from their race. For all Arab speakers, he is the greatest artist in the Arabic language. The Quran, for all those that speak Arabic, is the greatest work of Arabic literature.<sup>1</sup>

All the prophets have not only been succeeded, but also supplanted by Mohammad. He is the sealer and concealer of former revelations. He is called Light of God, Peace of the World, Glory of the Ages, First of all Creatures, and other names, Yet, of greater import, they say that he holds in his hands the keys of heaven and earth. No Moslem prays to Mohammad, but every Moslem prays for his aid in endless repetition daily. His name is never uttered or written without the addition of a prayer. "Ya Mohammad" is the open sesame to every door of difficulty, temporal or spiritual. One hears that name in the market, and in the street, in the mosque and from the minaret. Sailors sing it while raising their sails, the beggar howls it to obtain alms. It is the best name to swear with in the bargain.

Mohammad has been for thirteen centuries the cynosure of Islam, and the last of the messengers of Allah. His sinlessness has become an article of orthodox belief,

. . . . .

1. D.B. McDonald, Aspects of Islam, New York, Macmillan, 1911, p. 316.

and his power of intercession is a ray of hope for the day of doom.

To the Moslems everywhere, he is still the viceregent of Allah, the being who existed before Adam, and descended to his earthly sphere as the light which illumines all the prophets, and even Jesus Himself! For them, Mohammad is the hope of salvation. They address him in a language like this:

O my Lord, O apostle of God, O my hope in the day when I shall stand before the Judge!  
I beseech thee, by thy glory, to forgive the sins which I have committed, and let thy merit weigh down my scales!  
Hearken to my prayer and deliver me from the troubles which have befallen me; comfort me in my afflictions! Thou art the nearest in whom we may have hope, albeit thou art far from my house and home.  
With thee, O son of Abraham, I seek refuge of my sins and trespasses! <sup>1</sup>

Dr. Haykal, a former prime minister of Egypt, writes of Mohammad:

He is a power which can lift mankind to the heights of the spirit where life will be brotherhood and love and care for the knowledge of all that is in the world of existence, so that knowledge may illumine brotherly concord and love, and that both may grow in human worth and excellence and bring us by their protection into the fullest peace.<sup>2</sup>

### C. Faith of Islam

There are four basic authorities and sources of

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1. By Abdul Rahim Al Buri, as translated by Tor Andrea, op. cit., p. 389.
2. "في منازل الوحي" للدكتور محمد حسين هيكل ص ٦٣٧

Islamic theology. First there is the Quran, the absolute word of Allah. The second authority is "Sunna" (tradition) - what Mohammad said, did, or approved by silence. These traditions are recorded separately from the Quran and are called "Hadith." "Hadith" or Islamic tradition is a collection of reputed sayings and doings of Mohammad, not contained in the Quran. The authority of these traditions depends upon an alleged chain of narrators such as: "A said that B said that C said that D said that Mohammad said." Moslems depend on tradition for many of the details of their daily religious practice and for nearly all of their jurisprudence. Tradition is regarded as supplementing and as interpreting the Quran. Although the Quran gives the very words of Allah, yet so perfect an apostle of Allah was Mohammad himself that any clearly supported tradition as to what he said or did is binding on every true believer.

The third source of Islamic theology is "Quias" (analogy) from Quran and Sunna; fourth, Ijmaa (general agreement) of the Moslem people expressed through the opinion of those who by knowledge and study have a right to a personal "ijtihad." It might be thought that the Quran, being the word of Allah himself, would be the dominant source of Islamic theology; but while in form it is always handled with the greatest reverence, its plain statements have been modified and even reversed

by both tradition and agreement. Agreement especially has come to have the final and absolute voice. Its status is expressed in an alleged tradition from the prophet Mohammad, "My people will never agree on an error." In consequence, when the Moslem people in judgment can be brought to an agreement, this is deemed infallible.

The following tradition is given in support of the list of beliefs and practices, "Iman and Din" commonly and officially recognized and accepted in Islam:

Gabriel came in the form of an Arab of the desert, and sat down so that his knees touched the knees of the prophet and said, 'O apostle of God, what is Islam?' He said, 'That thou shouldst bear witness that there is no god save Allah, and that I am the apostle of Allah; that thou shouldst perform the prayer and bring the alms and fast in the month of Ramadan, and make the pilgrimage to the House (Kaaba) if the way is possible for thee.' He said, 'Thou hast spoken truly.' Then he said, 'What is faith?' The prophet said, 'That thou shouldst believe in God and his angels and his books and his messengers and in the last day, and that thou shouldst believe in his decreeing both of good and evil.'

According to the Hadith, the Moslems divide their faith into two parts: Iman, that which is theoretical; and Din, that which is practical.

1. Theoretical Faith "Iman."

a. God.

"God - there is none save He," is the first

. . . . .

1. As translated by Charles Watson, What is This Moslem World?", New York, Friendship Press, 1937, p. 63.

part of the Moslem witness. Mohammad proclaimed the Divine Unity that disqualified all other worships. The word "God" in Arabic is Allah. The word itself is grammatically incapable of being plural. It is a proper name. The Quran refers to God as al-Wahid (the One). "He is Allah alone, Allah the undivided. He does not beget and is not begotten. There is none co-equal with Him."<sup>1</sup> This chapter of the Quran is called the "Surah of Unity." Tradition regards it as a very early utterance. It is held to be worth a third of the whole Quran, and the seven heavens and the seven earths are founded upon it.

Mohammad proclaimed Allah in a sequence of descriptives which have been called in the Quran "al-Asmaa al-Husna" (the Beautiful Names). These number ninety-nine. Most of these beautiful names are found in the Quran, and the remainder are in the Hadith. Moslems all over Egypt have a chain of beads called "sibha" in three divisions of thirty-three beads each. They move the beads repeating the ninety-nine names.

The most important of these Divine Names are the twin titles "al-Rahman al-Rahim" (the Merciful the Mercier).<sup>2</sup> This double title is used as an invocation

. . . . .

1. Surah 112.

2. As translated by Kenneth Cragg, op. cit. p. 40.

at the head of the 114 Surahs of the Quran, with the exception of the ninth Surah. Some of the other names are, "The First and The Last; The Outward and the Inward." These suggest God's eternity, omniscience, and self-sufficiency. God is also called "The High, The Living, The Abiding, The Mighty, The Exalted, The Always Erect, The Standing." This conveys the idea of God in alert relationship to the world. Also Allah is called "The Opener, The Creator, The Bestower, The Recorder." This shows that there is no power save He. God is also "Al-Haqq" (the real). He is the supreme reality of all existence, whose nearness, judgment and will are great facts of human life.<sup>1</sup>

The Moslem feels the presence of Allah always. John Van Ess who spent forty years among the Moslems, and knew them intimately writes:

Religion to an Arab comes first in his politics, first in his social outlook, and first in his economic program. You cannot deal with Iraq or Palestine or Egypt without dealing with Allah. He is present in every battle, as an ally, and sits at every conference table as a champion. He witnesses every bargain in the bazaar. He and not the doctor, heals disease, or He send death in spite of the doctor.<sup>2</sup>

Dr. Charles Watson, who for many years was in touch with Moslems, writes, "All of life of the Moslem

. . . . .

1. Cragg, op. cit., pp. 35-47.
2. Van Ess, John, Meet the Arab, New York, John Day Company, 1943, p. 29.

is saturated with the consciousness of God. He has to deal with man's life in all details, and His presence and power are everywhere recognized."<sup>1</sup>

In fact, even the Christians in Egypt, influenced by the Moslems, use the name of God all the time, for congratulation, salutation, and for giving thanks. Nothing happens without the mention of Allah.

Yet, do the Moslems know Allah? Do they have any fellowship with Him? A Hadith says, "Whatever conception your mind arrives to, I tell you flat, God is not that."<sup>2</sup> Kenneth Cragg says, "In a real sense, the Moslem awareness of God is an awareness of the unknown. The revelation communicated God's law, but not God Himself."<sup>3</sup>

The Christians and the Moslems in Egypt speak about Allah as their God. Yet, the god of the Moslems is not the God of the Christians. A Moslem convert speaking to the writer said, "The Moslems worship a god called Allah."<sup>4</sup> The Quran mentions things about Allah that makes Him completely different from the God revealed in Christ. Allah does not appear bound by any standard of justice. Although the worship of the creature is

. . . . .

1. Watson, op. cit., pp. 38-39.

2. Ibid., p. 80.

3. Cragg, op. cit., p. 55.

4. Rev. Marcus Abdul Masih in April 1952.



heinous, yet Allah punished Satan for not being willing to worship Adam.<sup>1</sup> Allah is merciful in winking at the sins of His favorites, but is the quick avenger of all infidels and idolaters. The moral law changes according to times and circumstances. God can do what He pleases, not only physically, but morally, for He is Almighty. Allah, the Quran says, is the best plotter. He mocks and deceives, and makes it easy for the followers of Mohammad.<sup>2</sup>

The Quran gives Allah all the attributes of a fearful dictator. In Surah 14:4, "Allah misleads whom He will, and whom He will He guideth." In 16:38, "Know that Allah will not guide him whom He would lead astray." God says in 32:13, "I will surely fill hell with Jinn and men together." A Hadith says, "If all the infidels became believers, Allah would suffer no loss." In another Hadith, "Allah wills the unbelief of the unbeliever and the irreligion of the wicked."<sup>3</sup>

Thus we see that Mohammad's idea of God is out and out deistic. James Freeman Clarke gave a good summary of the Moslem's concept of God when he said:

. . . . .

1. Surah 2: 28-31.
2. Surah 8:29, 3:35, 27:51, 86:15, 16:14, 14:15, 9:51.
3. Zwemer, op. cit., p. 58.

Islam saw God but not man; saw claims of deity, but not the rights of humanity; saw authority but failed to see freedom. Mohammad teaches God above us; Moses teaches God above us, yet with us; Jesus teaches God above us, God with us, and God in us.

Though Islam came after Christianity, its revelation of God marks not a forward, but a backward step, carrying us even further back than the Old Testament. The God of Islam is power-pure, absolute power - not even subject to moral principles. No wonder then if Aysha, the favorite wife of Mohammad, said that the prophet was constantly in a state of grief and anxiety, and never had any peace of mind.<sup>2</sup> He was preaching a fearful God with whom he had no fellowship!

b. His Angels.

Moslems believe in three species of spiritual beings--the angels, the Jinn, and Satan.

Angels are numerous and created of light. They are inferior to prophets.<sup>3</sup> Angels are free from sin and intercede for men, and also act as guardians.

Jinn are also referred to in the Quran, and are created from fire. They are either good or evil. They eat, drink, propagate their species, and are subject

. . . . .

1. J.F. Clarke, Ten Great Religions, Boston, L. Freeman Clarke, 1913, Vol. II, p. 68.
2. Zwemer, op. cit., p. 5.
3. Surah 2:32.

to death, though they usually live for centuries.

Hadith says that King Solomon sealed some of them in bottles.<sup>1</sup> The Quran tells how Mohammad preached to the Jinn, and they listened and were converted to Islam.<sup>2</sup>

For fear of the Jinn, millions of the ignorant Moslems are all their life time subject to bondage and fear.

Moslem reformers interpret all the facts about Jinn metaphorically.<sup>3</sup>

Satan, the Quran says, was expelled from Eden for refusal to prostrate himself before Adam when Allah commanded him. He said that he is better than Adam, for Adam was created of mud, while he was created of fire. The demonic host of Satan is numerous and terrible.<sup>4</sup>

#### c. His Books.

There is a mention in the Quran of a large number of sacred books which have been sent down from heaven. Hadith says that there were a hundred and four books. A hundred were lost, and only four are existing. Of what was lost Abraham had certain leaves "Suhuf." The four existing are "Taurat" or law of Moses, "Zabur" or Psalms of David, "Injil" or Gospel of Jesus. Finally,

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1. S.M. Zwemer, Studies in Popular Islam, New York, MacMillan, 1939, p. 14.
2. Surah 46:72.
3. Van Ess, op. cit., p. 36.
4. Surah 7:10-17.

the Quran that was revealed through Mohammad. The Quran was the speech of God, breathed instrumentally into the ears of Mohammad. Allah chose Mohammad as an agent to teach him by word. So the Quran is uncreated, eternal, final, unchangeable and incorruptible.<sup>1</sup> While the Taurat and the Zabur and the Injil are highly spoken of in the Quran, Moslems today say that they exist in a corrupted form, and their percepts have been abrogated by the final book to the last prophet, Mohammad.<sup>2</sup>

The Quran is a volume a little smaller than the New Testament, and it is divided into 114 Surahs, bearing more or less irrelevant titles, taken from words found therein, such as "The Cow," "The Bee," "The Table," "The Elephant." Every chapter is called Surah. The Arabic word Surah is of uncertain derivation and meaning. The Quran is often unintelligible, even to a Moslem, without an explanation.

The present text was collected by Caliph Uthman (644 - 656) who ordered the destruction of all alternative versions that had been gathered in different centers, thus making comparative study impossible.

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1. E.J. Poole-Connor, Mohammedanism, What Is It?, London Fellowship of Faith for Moslems, (no date), p. 15.
2. S.M. Zwemer, The Nearer and Farther East, New York, Macmillan, 1908, p. 17.

Henri Lammens says:

All Moslems admit without question the miracle of the "i'jaz." Mohammedan orthodoxy considers the Quran as uncreated in the sense that in its actual form, in its phonetic and graphic reproduction, in its linguistic garb of the Arab tongue it is co-eternal with its celestial original.

Groups of verses which obviously belong together are unreasonably separated from each other. It is full of historical errors, such as saying that Mary the mother of Jesus was the sister of Moses.<sup>2</sup> Its teachings outrage our modern moral sensibilities, violently in many passages, such as these: "Kill the idolaters wherever you may find them." (Surah 9:15). "Marry what seems good to you of women, two or three or four, or what your right hand possesses." (Surah 4:3). "But those (wives) whose perverseness you fear, admonish them, and remove them into bedchambers and beat them." (Surah 4:77). The Quran moreover has no adequate emphasis on sin, and, of course, presents no atonement for sin. Samuel Zwemer says:

It keeps the supreme question of salvation in the background. In this respect it is inferior to the books of ancient Egypt, India, China, though unlike them, it is monotheistic. It can not be compared with the Old or New Testament.<sup>3</sup>

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1. Henri Lammens, Islam: Beliefs and Institutions, New York, Fleming Revell, 1905, p. 55.
2. Surah 19:28-29.
3. S.M. Zwemer, Islam: A Challenge to Faith, Student Volunteer Movement for Foreign Missions, 1907, p. 91.

d. His Prophets.

Moslems believe in six major prophets and in one hundred and twenty-four thousand minor prophets. The major prophets are Adam, the chosen of God; Noah, the preacher of God; Abraham, the friend of God; Moses, the spokesman of God; Jesus, the word of God; Mohammad, the apostle of God.<sup>1</sup>

The Quran mentions the names of twenty-two minor prophets; from them are Loqman (Aesop) and Zul Qarnain (Alexander the Great).<sup>2</sup>

The Quran says that Jesus was born miraculously of the Virgin Mary, the sister of Aaron, and was protected from Satan's touch and endowed with powers not granted to other human beings, even prophets; and that he spoke to many right after his birth.<sup>3</sup> Yet, in the same passage the miraculous birth is mentioned, the Quran denies that Jesus is the Son of God. The Quran also says that Jesus is like Adam, only a man.<sup>4</sup> Jesus performed miracles in his youth; healed the sick and raised the dead. He is a teacher, a prophet, a healer of the sick, and a spirit of God. To him is given the Gospel - not the good news about God in Christ - but a book of words and preaching.<sup>5</sup> Jesus is said to foretell another prophet, whose

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1. Poole-Connor, op. cit., p. 16.
2. Surah 18:80, 31:1.
3. Surah 19:16-34.
4. Surah 3:35.
5. Surah 5:112.

name should be Ahmad (Mohammad) (Surah 61:6). The chief note about Christ in the tradition is that he was a homeless wanderer (Imam al-Saihin)<sup>1</sup>.

Christ, the Moslems say, was saved from crucifixion, and taken to heaven and that he is now in one of the inferior stages of celestial bliss; that he will come again on the last day to slay the Anti-Christ, and kill the swine, and break every cross. Then, they say, he will reign as a Moslem king for forty-five years, marry and leave children, then die and be buried near Mohammad at Madina.<sup>2</sup>

What a sad picture of Christ!

e. The Day of Judgment.

The consideration of the day of judgment plays an important part in the Moslem mind. Islam teaches that there are two judgments: the lesser judgment that starts after burial ceremony; when two large black livid angels, Munkir and Nakir<sup>3</sup> visit the grave and interrogate the dead regarding the faith in Allah and in Mohammad. Their voices are like thunder, and they wield enormous iron hammers. If the answer is satisfactory, the dead's soul can rest in peace until the last day. If not, the

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1. Cragg, op. cit., p. 261.
2. Zwemer, op. cit., pp. 93-94.
3. Surah 47:37.

dead endures "Azab al Qabr" (torture of the tomb). This and other punishments are his portion until the day of resurrection. Then the greater judgment takes place at the resurrection day. The hour of the day of judgment is known only to Allah. The Moslems believe in literal resurrection of the body. All living beings, men and beasts, will be raised to stand in the presence of Allah. The beasts will be there to bear witness against the men who have used them cruelly. Thereafter they will return to dust, except a few, who, because of association with prophets, will enter paradise! Thus the Moslems expect to see Balaam's donkey with them in paradise! Mohammad will intercede for his nation, yet Allah may exact the uttermost penalty or may freely forgive. All the believers will be in paradise, there they will have physical joy.<sup>1</sup> "The believer in paradise will marry five hundred houris, four thousand virgins and eight thousand divorced women."<sup>2</sup> The unbelievers will be cast into fire. The Moslem hell is sevenfold and terribly hot. Its fuel consists of men and stones, its drink liquid pus, the clothes of the inhabitants burning pitch. Scorpions and serpents sting their victims daily.

The signs of the day of judgment are the coming

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1. Surah 18:30.

2. الغزالي الجزء الرابع صفحة ٣٣٧



of the Dajjal (Anti-Christ), the return of Jesus as a Moslem king, the rising of the sun from the west, and the war of Gog and Magog.<sup>1</sup>

f. Predestination of Good and Evil.

Moslems believe that Allah is the only originator of everything. He is the "Qadar" (determination) of all things, and His "Taqdeer" (subjection) covers all mankind and all history. Nature, whether animate or inanimate is subject to the command of Allah, and all that comes into existence. Moslems deny all free-agency in man, and say that man is necessarily constrained by the force of the eternal and immutable decree of God to act as He does. God wills both good and evil, and there is no escape from the caprice of His decree. Had Allah so willed, there need have been no creation, no idolatry, no hell, no devil!<sup>2</sup>

Although a verse in the Quran says, "Whatever of good happens to thee is from God: Whatever evil happens to thee is from thyself", and "God does not change what has to do with a people until they change what has to do with their own souls," yet in the same passage it

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1. Zwemer, op. cit., pp. 94-95, and Presenting Christianity to Moslems, pp. 44-45.
2. Surah 13:11.

adds, "If God has willed evil to a people, then none can turn it away."<sup>1</sup>

The most characteristic descriptive of the human status before God is "Abd" (slave). This Abd is a term that is frequently an element in Moslem names. It signifies that man, the creature, stands under the Divine authority in all realms.

Omar el-Khayyam expressed this idea by saying:

'Tis all a chequer-board of night and days,  
Where Destiny with men for pieces plays,  
Hither and thither moves, and mates and slays,  
And one by one back in the closett lays.<sup>2</sup>

## 2. Practical Duties "Din".

This is the second demand of Islam from the Moslem. Din means religion in the sense of works or practical duties. The obligations are five in number. Because of their importance they are called "Arkan al-Deen" (pillars of religion).

T.P. Hughes says:

A Moslem is one who is resigned and obedient to God's will and (1) bears witness; and (2) is steadfast in prayer; and (3) gives Zakat; and (4) fasts in the month of Ramadan; and (5) makes the pilgrimage to Mecca if he has the means.<sup>3</sup>

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1. Surah 4:79.
2. Translated by Zwemer, op. cit. p. 96.
3. T.P. Hughes, Dictionary of Islam, London, Wm. H. Allen & Co., 1877, p. 220.

a. Witness.

"Tashahhud", the Moslem must confess his faith always. Once one says the "Shahada" he becomes a Moslem. The Moslem Shahada is, "I testify that there is no God but Allah; I testify to His Unity and that He has no partner; I testify that Mohammad is His slave and Messenger." Or the Moslem can briefly say, "La Ilaha illa Allah, Mohammad Rasul Allah."<sup>1</sup> (No God except Allah, Mohammad the apostle of Allah). This short Moslem catechism is always repeated, and easily remembered even by children. Moslems always repeat it, even when they are quarreling!

b. Prayer.

The Quran says, "Establish worship at the two ends of the day and in the parts of the night close to them."<sup>2</sup> Hadith interprets that by ordering five prayers a day as follows: Salat Al-Fajr (Dawn prayer); Salat Al-Zuhr (Noon prayer); Salat Al Asr (Afternoon prayer); Salat Al-Maghreb (After sunset prayer); Salat Al-asha (Before sleeping prayer).

Five times a day the Muazzin calls the Moslems to prayer from the minaret of the mosque. The muazzin is

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1. Moslem call of prayer.
2. Surah 11:114.

frequently a blind man, lest the faces of the women on the roofs be seen. The call of prayer is "Allahu Akbar (God is great). I testify that there is no God but Allah. I testify that Mohammad is the apostle of Allah. Come to prayer. Come to success. Allahu Akbar. There is no God but Allah." At dawn the muazzin adds, "Prayer is better than sleep." When the Moslems hear the call to prayer, they pray. Prayer is the paying of respect on the part of the inferior to the superior.

All times of prayer must be prefaced by "niyyah" or intention. The "niyyah" is the declaration of purpose. It would be possible to go through all the motions and phrases of the ritual without performing the prayer. Niyah means defence against inattentive and external performance.

The Moslem has to wash four parts of his body before prayer: the face; the hands and arms; a fourth part of the head is rubbed with a wet hand; and the feet are washed to the ankles. Washing the face, the Moslem must clean his teeth and rinse out his mouth three times; to put water in his nostrils three times. Hadith says that Satan takes his abode in the nose when one is sleeping.<sup>1</sup> If water is not available the Moslem can use clean sand or clean earth.

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1. L. Bevan Jones, Five Pillars of Islam, London, Fellowship of Faith for Moslems, (no date), p. 3.

Prayer, according to Surah 29:45, "Preserves from impurity and evil." To remember God in this way is to be restrained from evil. The washing, therefore, both fits the worshippers for prayer and demonstrates what his worship is meant to do for him.

The Moslem has to take special postures when he is praying. The first posture is standing; then bend forward with hands on knees; then prostrate with forehead touching the ground; then seated; then standing again. During each posture certain phrases are uttered. Prayer consists of praise to Allah and His prophets; then asking forgiveness of sins and guidance; and rarely contains extempore petition, though this is allowable. The Moslem repeats the same words each time he prays. This reduces prayer to a mechanical act.

The Moslems meet on Friday in the mosque to have Salat Al-Zuhr together. This is called "Salat Zuhr Al Gomaa" and has a special merit. They are usually led by the Imam, and hear a Khutba (short sermon). They look towards Mecca.

The Moslem can say his prayers any time if he misses the exact times. He may say his five prayers at one time if he could not do it during the day.

#### c. Fasting.

During the month of Ramadan the Moslem fasts

from dawn to sunset. Since the Moslem year is lunar, this month may fall any time in the solar year.

The ordinance of the "Saum" (fasting) in the month of Ramadan, in which the Quran began to be revealed, is a product of and a reaction against the Jewish-Christian practices. The saum of Ramadan is a rigorous exercise and is probably more widely practiced than the daily prayers. Throughout the fast there is emphasis on deepened devotion and more frequent mosque attendance. The passage enjoining Ramadan in the Quran says, "Be at your devotions in the mosque."<sup>1</sup>

There must be "niyyah" before the "saum." A Moslem intending to fast says, "O Lord, I intend to fast tomorrow for your sake. Forgive my past and future sin."

Fasting is in the most complete sense. Certain acts render the fast invalid, e.g., if when cleaning the teeth a drop of water should pass down the throat; if food is eaten under compulsion; if medicine is put into the ear, nose or even a wound in the head; if after the night meal a portion of food larger than a grain of corn should remain between the teeth; if food is vomited. Smoking is also forbidden, and the fanatical will not even allow the saliva to be swallowed!<sup>2</sup>

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1. Surah 2:187.
2. Van Ess, op. cit., p. 39.

When the fast is willfully broken, certain penalties are prescribed. The delinquent must atone by setting free a slave, or fast every day for two months, or feed sixty persons two full meals each.<sup>1</sup>

The aged and infirm must in the place of the fast feed some poor person. In the case of women with child, it is required that they keep the fast at some other time.<sup>2</sup>

Fasting the month of Ramadan is obligatory. A Hadith says, "He who forsakes the fast of Ramadan becomes an infidel, whom to deprive of his wealth and his life is lawful."<sup>3</sup>

d. Alms.

In the Quran two words are used for the giving of the alms: Zakat and Sadaga. Zakat has become a formal tithe imposed upon certain possessions in certain fixed proportions. Sadaga has come to be benevolences. David S. Margoliouth speaks about the starting of the Zakat:

The idea of enforcing alms as a yearly tribute appears to belong to the period when the necessity for organization of the state on some form of financial basis had arisen. When the money was wanted, and the expedient which had till now been employed, robbery of the Jews was no longer available, owing to the Jews

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1. Surah 2:179.
2. Surah 2: 180.
3. F.A. Klein, The Religion of Islam, New York, Kennedy 1940, p. 164.

having all been either massacred or despoiled. Experience had shown the prophet that the new converts were much more anxious to receive than to give: lavish presents had been deemed advisable in the case of the Meccans to induce them to remain faithful to Islam.<sup>1</sup>

Zakat in the Quran is frequently linked with prayer. The Quran says, "Perform the prayer and do the poor-rate." Those who withhold the zakat are a class synonymous with the idolaters.<sup>2</sup> Zakat, as serving to identify the Moslem as such, is noted in Surah 58: 12,13.

The Zakat is supposed to be given to "The poor and needy, and those who work for them, and those whose hearts are reconciled (al-Muallafat Qulubahum), and those in captivity, and those in debt, and those who are on God's path, and for the way-farer."<sup>3</sup>

According to Al-Ghazali, "Those al-Muallafat Qulubahum are those whose hearts are inclined towards Islam, that is the noble families who became Moslems, from among their people, and by the gift of zakat were firmly established in Islam, and also to inspire others like them or their followers with a desire for Islam."<sup>4</sup>

Caliph Abu Bakr abolished this giving of the zakat to converts, and the Caliph Omar said to such

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1. D.S. Margoliouth, Mohammad and the Rise of Islam, New York, Putnam, 1905, p. 90.
2. Surah 12:7.
3. Surah 9:60.
4. احكام علوم الدين . الجزء الاول . صفحة ١٦٠



persons, "This zakat was given to incline your hearts towards Islam, but now God has prospered Islam."<sup>1</sup>

Zakat is still practiced in Egypt. Margoliouth says, "Any member of the tolerated cults could at any moment join the dominant community by pronouncing the Moslem creed."<sup>2</sup> In other words, they could pass from the tribute paying to the zakat--receiving at least until their faith was firm.

Modern Moslem reformers say that the zakat shows that Islam demands economic justice. It proclaims the sovereign principle, "To have is to share."

e. Pilgrimage.

Hajj (pilgrimage) is the fifth pillar of Islam. It is a religious practice regarded by the Moslems as entitling the pilgrim to the highest consideration here on earth, and the greatest in the life to come. The Moslem that performs the pilgrimage receives the title Hajj.

The Quran in Surah 3:97 lays upon the loyal Moslem who is able to travel to Mecca the obligation of traveling there once during his life. If a woman goes, she must be accompanied by her husband, or a male relative.

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1. Bevan Jones, op. cit., p. 11.

2. D.S. Margoliouth, Early Development in Islam, London William & Norgate, 1913, p. 99.

Pilgrimage must be performed on the twelfth month of the lunar year, and lasts for ten days. When the Moslem arrives at Mecca, he doffs his ordinary clothes and wears the "ihram," which consists of two seamless cloths especially reserved for the purpose. One of these is worn around the loins, and the other is thrown over the shoulder, while the head is left uncovered. The Hajj is supposed to stand on an eminence called mount Arafat and make the "tawaf" around Kaaba seven times. He also has to kiss the Black Stone. A Hadith says that the "Black Stone came down from paradise. It was whiter than milk, but the sins of the children of Adam, through kissing it, have made it black."<sup>1</sup> The idea behind the Black Stone was a pagan one. Umar, the second successor of Mohammad said, "Verily I know that you are a stone; you do no good or harm in the world; and if it were not that I saw the prophet kiss you, I would not kiss you."<sup>2</sup> The Hajj also has to stone the devil. The target is a stone pillar standing in a depression like the basin of a fountain.

Subsequently the Hajj makes the "ziyara" or visit to the tomb of Mohammad at Madina. At the conclusion he shaves his head, pares his nails, dons his clothes, and receives a certificate that he became a Hajj.<sup>3</sup>

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1. Bevan Jones, op. cit., p. 15.
2. Ibid., p. 15.
3. Van Ess, op. cit., p. 40.

The spiritual meaning of the Hajj is great. It is a bond of union between the Moslems of all nations and races, and an expression of the solidarity of Islam. The Hajj also feels that he is obeying Allah. He repeats "Lubbaika", which means "Doubly at thy service, O God."

#### D. Egypt Invaded by Islam

In all Moslem countries that have been taken by force of arms from "unbelievers," it is a custom that the "Khatib" (preacher) who delivers the Friday sermon in the mosque should carry a sword in his hand, and should lean upon it when he preaches as though it were a staff. The Khatib does not tell the significance of that, but it is clear that Islam was propagated by the power of the sword. This is true of the capture of Egypt by Islam.

##### 1. The Church Before the Islamic Invasion.

By an almost universal tradition, the Evangelist Mark is said to have gone down to Egypt and preached the Gospel with great success until he was beheaded. The Christian religion was accepted by many in Egypt after the close of the first century, and the numbers rapidly increased among the naturally religious people, until the Egyptian nation became Christian, and the Christian churches filled the Nile valley.

The Egyptian Church passed through the fires of persecution under Roman rule, and many suffered martyrdom. The persecution was especially severe during the reign of Diocletian.

From the close of the second century to the time of the Moslem conquest, the history of the Egyptian Church is the history of the land itself. "The head of the Alexandria Church was the head of the world. Athanasius was not only in name, but in fact, the representative of the Egyptian Church."<sup>1</sup>

Gradually, however, like other Eastern churches, the Church of Egypt fell from the Gospel purity of doctrine and simplicity of worship into worldly ritual. The Egyptian Church fell into disputes with the Roman emperor. Charles R. Watson tells the story thus:

When Arius denied the deity of Christ, and the Patriarch of Alexandria was unable to reclaim him, he was excommunicated from the Church of Egypt. The Emperor Constantine favored Arius, and called the council of Nicea. The Council decided against Arius. The Imperial party then sought to secure by imperial authority what they had been unable to secure by argument - the restoration of Arius to the priesthood. The Patriarch of Egypt refused, so he was displaced, and an Arian Patriarch was appointed. The Church refused to recognize the imperial candidate and stood loyally by the Patriarch. This led to a conflict between the Church and the emperor.<sup>2</sup>

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1. Andrew Watson, The American Mission in Egypt, Phila. U.P. Board of Publication, 1898, p. 14.
2. Charles Watson, Egypt and the Christian Crusade, Pittsburgh, U.P. Board of Publication, 1907, p. 106.

In the early half of the fifth century, the Egyptian Patriarch Dioscorus, declared that in the incarnation, the human nature of Christ was transmuted into the divine, and the result was one person with one nature. The position of the Egyptian Church was condemned by the Council of Chalcedon (451 A.D.) and the Egyptian Patriarch was excommunicated as a heretic. Reading between the lines in the record of the Council of Chalcedon, there is the feeling that the heat of discussion was generated not so much by the fire of theological conviction as by the fires of the passion for ecclesiastical supremacy. The Egyptian Church had arrayed against her the united influence of the Church of Rome and the Church of Constantinople.

Thus the Christian Church in Egypt was under the religious and political persecution of the Romans. In one day the Roman soldiers killed two hundred thousand Egyptians inside and outside the Church of Alexandria. The Romans also killed the brother of the Patriarch, but the Patriarch escaped to the desert.<sup>1</sup>

The masses were ignorant about their religion. The clergy did little to educate them. The church was so largely concerned with the worship of saints and martyrs

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1. تاريخ عمرو بن العاص للدكتور حسن ابراهيم حسن ص ٧١، ٧٩

and the veneration of relics that Moslems could hardly be blamed for counting Christianity polytheistic and idolatrous.<sup>1</sup>

## 2. The Church During the Islamic Invasion.

In 640 A.D., Amru b. elAs, the general of the Caliph Umar, the second successor of Mohammad, entered Egypt at the head of an army of eight thousand men. A brief campaign followed, in which the Roman power was overthrown. The Egyptians secretly inclined toward the Moslems. Without doubt their aim was to take revenge on the Romans with no intention, however, of putting themselves under the Arabs. Yet it has been charged against them, with apparent justice, that their connivance with Amru and his army decided the contest in favor of the domination of Islam.<sup>2</sup>

Mrs. Butcher describes the stand of the Egyptians this way:

Egypt looked on passively while her fate was thus decided by a combat between the armies of the two alien nations in her midst. Side with the Imperial troops they would not; yet their conscience forbade them to espouse openly the cause of the infidels. They left the issue to the judgement of God.<sup>3</sup>

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1. J.T. Addison, The Christian Approach to the Moslems, New York, Columbia University Press, 1942, p. 17.
2. Edward Hardy, Christian Egypt, Church and People, Oxford, 1952, p. 187.
3. Mrs. E.L. Butcher, The Story of the Church in Egypt, London, 1897, Smith Elder & Co., p. 70.

The Moslems were kind when they first ruled Egypt. They brought back the escaping Patriarch, and encouraged the Christians to be Jacobites. The worship and the churches were secured. The Christians of Egypt could rest for a while from persecution.<sup>1</sup>

### 3. The Church Under Islamic Control.

The amnesty, immunity and protection that the Christians of Egypt were promised, were not granted for long. When the Moslems took full control they changed their policy and started persecuting the Christians.

The Moslem law was practiced. It says:

The Christian shall not found churches, monasteries, or religious establishments, nor raise his house so high as, or higher than the houses of the Moslems; nor ride horses, but only mules and donkeys, and these even after the manner of a woman; draw back and give way to the Moslems in the thoroughfare; wear clothes different from those of the Moslems, or some sign to distinguish him from them; have a distinctive mark when in the public baths, namely iron, tin or copper band; abstain from drinking wine and eating pork; not celebrate religious feasts publicly; nor sing nor read aloud the text of the Old and New Testaments, and not ring bells; nor speak scornfully of Allah or Mohammad; nor seek to introduce innovations into the state, nor to convert Moslems; nor enter mosques without permission; nor set foot upon the territory of Mecca; nor dwell in the Hejaz district.<sup>2</sup>

The persecution was severe. High taxes weighed on the Christians. Twelve and a half centuries of Moslem

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1. تاريخ عمرو بن العاص للدكتور حسن ابراهيم حسن ص ١٧١

2. سراج السلوك طبعة بولاق عام ١٢٨٩ صفحة ٢٢٩

domination killed thousands of Christians and turned millions to Islam. Oppression sapped the strength and wealth of the nation, the loss of her ancient language, the pathetic reduction and degradation of her once famous National Christian Church, the ruthless upheaval of her social constitution, and the imposition upon her of Islamic civilization, robbed her of all that made her great.

Yousef Menqerious gives an example of the Islamic persecution:

In 1321 A.D. by a sudden and cruel conspiracy, the Moslem zealots destroyed simultaneously nearly all the Egyptian churches, many of which were razed to the ground. The Christians retaliated by burning Fustat and Cairo and a large number of houses, palaces and mosques. The punishment of these outrages, though it fell upon some of the Moslems, came with cruel severity upon the Christian offenders. Some were hanged, some burned alive, and permission was given to all Moslem subjects to rob and murder any Christian who might be found wearing the white turban, that only Moslems are supposed to wear.<sup>1</sup>

#### 4. The Christian Church Today.

Before Islamic invasion there were thirty million Christians in Egypt, but by the end of the eighteenth century they were reduced to two hundred thousand.<sup>2</sup>

In the beginning of the nineteenth century the British helped the Turks to drive back the French

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1. تاريخ الأئمة القبطية ليوسف منقريوس ص ١٧

2. نفس المرجع ص ٥١



invaders from Egypt. The British started to take a strong hand in Egyptian politics. Then the Christian Church got some rest from persecution. In 1919 the Christians and the Moslems forgot their differences and stood against the British. However, that stage soon passed, and traditional frictions reasserted themselves.<sup>1</sup>

What the Christian Church is receiving from the Moslem rule will be mentioned in the second chapter.

#### E. Summary

In the first chapter the writer has given a historical survey of the life of Mohammad. This was followed by a theoretical and practical review of the faith of Islam.

Islam may be regarded as presenting the most difficult field of Christian evangelism of contemporary Christianity. Islam is rigorous and unyielding in its affirmatives. It has a rigid bony structure. It does not deal with shades of gray, but in blacks and whites. They are mainly directed against Christianity. The Christian Gospel has been judged and condemned in advance. The Moslem mind is already made up about his creeds, for it is solidly based on a revelation accepted as divine.

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1. K.S. Latourette, Advance Through Storm, New York, Harper & Brothers, 1954, p. 257.

In the sacred book, the Quran, Jesus Christ is recognized as a great prophet, but not as the crucified Son of God. Mohammad in the Moslem mind takes all the glory that is due to Jesus Christ alone.

There is a supreme importance attached to works. Moslems believe that salvation is achieved by following the five pillars of their practical faith.

The chapter concluded with a consideration of the Islamic invasion of Egypt, and its results in the past and in the present.

DIFFICULTIES OF EVANGELIZATION OF MOSLEMS  
IN EGYPT

CHAPTER II

A. Introduction

Why is it difficult to reach the Moslems for Christ? Why has the mission work among the Moslems in Egypt been so unsuccessful?

It is the purpose of the writer to mention in this chapter the reasons for the lack of success in evangelization of Moslems in Egypt.

The first reason is that the Moslem is too satisfied with his religion. He is too contented with it to be converted to Christianity. He thinks that Islam is far better than Christianity and that it is the only right path.

Then there are the theological difficulties. The main doctrines of Islam are against the Christian teachings. The Moslem that believes in one God cannot understand the doctrine of the Trinity. The Deity of Christ offends him. The crucifixion of Christ is another stumbling block in his way. The Moslem's idea that the Bible is a corrupted, abrogated book makes it difficult

for the Christian to preach the Good News to him.

The social life of the Egyptians adds another difficulty for the Moslem that wants to become a Christian. Change of religion is considered as being disloyal to the Moslem community. The family tries to kill the convert to wipe the shame of his denouncing the faith of his fathers and becoming a Christian. The convert does not find any substitute for his family relations in the Christian Church. The Christians are usually suspicious of the Moslem convert. The community as a whole excommunicates the convert, and leaves him isolated and lonely.

There is the economic difficulty. The convert loses his job and inheritance and is boycotted by the Moslem community. This makes life very difficult for him.

The writer will mention lastly the political difficulty. The law of the land is against evangelism, and Islam is both state and religion. Islam is a one-way religion. A Moslem that accepts any other faith must be killed according to the Quran and the Hadith. Then the nationalistic spirit makes it more difficult. Changing religion is treason to the state.

The writer will state these difficulties without comment, and will give evidence about them from experience and from the law.

## B. Religious Difficulties

The average Moslem is too satisfied with his religion to be converted to Christianity. He feels that Islam represents what Christianity should have been and failed to be; that it is the correction of what is wrong, and a more perfect expression of what is legitimate in the religion of the followers of Jesus.

There is a familiar Moslem parable of the three caravans that set out across the desert. The first halted and encamped while the other two went on. By and by the second halted and encamped, leaving the third to complete the journey alone. The three caravans are respectively--Judaism, Christianity, and Islam.<sup>1</sup>

Islam then, as the Moslem sees it, arrived where Christianity failed. A modern Egyptian author wrote:

Christianity, as far as we can see, cannot be reckoned as a real force in opposition to the philosophies of the new materialism. It is an individualist, isolationist, negative faith. It has no power to make life grow under its influence in any permanent or positive way. Christianity has shot its bolt so far as human life is concerned: it has lost its power to keep pace with practical life in this and the succeeding generations, for it came into being only for a limited and temporary period between Judaism and Islam. . . Christianity has no essential philosophy of actual practical life.<sup>2</sup>

Moslems call the days before Islam "Jahiliyyah" (ignorance). To them Islam came to a dark ignorant world to light it and educate it.

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1. Cragg, op. cit., p. 245.

2. "العدالة الاجتماعية في الإسلام" سيد قطب ص ٢٧٩٦٢٧٨

These ideas prove that Moslems do not know much about Christianity. For the Moslems Christianity is an old story, regarded as having been thoroughly explored and appraised as inferior. The Moslem mind is fixed and has definite impressions as to what Christianity represents. At the same time the Moslem feels no need of any further good news because he alone has the One God.

In A Hadith Mohammad says to the Moslems:

You have no more need for the Christians nor of their books. Do not listen to them; do not hear what they have to say; there is no need of it. If they read to you what is written in their Book it is really the same as I have told you; and if they do not read what is written in their Book, then it is lies. You have the truth in what I have brought; hold by that; it is sure and safe for this world and for the world to come.<sup>1</sup>

In January 1935, a judge issued a sentence and gave judgement "On the principle that a corrupt Moslem is a better man and in higher position than a zummi (Christian subject)."<sup>2</sup> This attitude is based on Moslem pride, as Zwemer quotes:

Personal pride, which like blood in the body, runs through all the veins of the mind of Mohammedanism. . . . These Arabs humble themselves in the body. Their foreheads touched the stones. By their attitude they seemed as if they wished to make themselves even with the ground, yet they were proud in

. . . . .

1. McDonald, op. cit., p. 222.
2. Watson, op. cit., p. 118.

the Presence of Allah, as if the firmness of their belief in Him and His right dealing, the fury of their contempt and hatred for those who looked not toward Mecca nor regarded Ramadan, gave them a patent of nobility.<sup>1</sup>

The feeling of the Moslems comes from their concept of sin. Good and evil according to Islam are left in an unclear position. At one time they may be treated as though they were realities in themselves, but at another time they are made entirely dependent upon the will of Allah. Allah, as was seen before, "leads astray whom He wills" and that "there is no necessity upon Him to do that which may be the best for the creature." Zwemer says, "The teaching of orthodox Islam is that nothing is right or wrong by nature, but becomes such by the fiat of the Almighty."<sup>2</sup> He says also, "To them the highest good is the very outwardly and very sensuously conceived happiness of the individual."<sup>3</sup>

According to Islam you may sin, but if at the same time you denounce it as sin you are guiltless because your views on the subject are correct.<sup>4</sup>

At the same time a Christian is called an infidel. This shows how a Moslem that realizes that he is a sinner feels towards the Christians and the Gospel message.

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1. Zwemer, op. cit., p. 33.
2. Ibid., p. 41.
3. Ibid., p. 39.
4. Watson, op. cit., p. 90.

### C. Theological Difficulties

#### 1. Trinity.

The Christian concept of God is difficult for the Moslems to understand. The Moslem who says, "There is no God but Allah", incorrectly believes that the Christians worship three gods, and thereby is offended. Most Moslems think that the God of the Christians consists of God, Jesus, and Mary. The Moslems also cannot understand how three make one. That is what one of them said:

What foolishness! I swear by the Prophet that you Christians have some strange notions. Is it not plain that you are all polytheists? You say that you worship the One true God, the while you talk about three gods, or how can Allah be composed of three persons? I have heard Christians speak of God the Father, and of Jesus, as though he were a god, and of Mary the mother of God. Is God married? How in the world of thinking men can one say that the High and Mighty God could have a son? What blasphemy to speak of the Mother of Allah! The Blessed Quran tells us very plainly, "He begetteth not and He is not begotten, and there is none like unto Him."

A Moslem Shaikh said to the writer, "It is unacceptable blasphemy to say that God is not perfect unless the Holy Ghost and Jesus the Son of Mary join Him." Although the Holy Spirit is mentioned in the Quran in Surah 16:104, the Moslem understands Him to be Gabriel, the faithful messenger of Allah. When Christians speak about the Holy Spirit as the third Person of the Trinity,

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1. Philips, op. cit., p. 17.



the Moslems become very offended. To them this means placing an angel on the same level with God.

The Moslems also say that the Old Testament from Genesis to Malachi<sup>1</sup> teach the Unity of God. Even the four Gospels, they say, do not speak at all about Trinity. The Moslems believe that this absurd teaching is the most deadly sin of which man can be guilty.

## 2. The Deity of Christ.

The Moslem reaction to the Christian claim that Jesus Christ is the Son of God is that of horror and anger. To the Moslem, Jesus is a familiar figure in the Quran, and the idea of Christ's association and equality with God is a great heresy.

The Quran records a discussion between Allah and Jesus thus:

O Jesus, Son of Mary, hast thou said to mankind, take me and my mother as Gods beside God? He said, Glory be unto thee. It is not to me to say what I know is not the truth. If I had said it, thou wouldest have known it. Thou knowest what is in me, but I do not know what is in thee. Thou wilt know things unseen. I did not say to them except that which thou ordered me: Worship God, my Lord and your Lord.<sup>1</sup>

This shows the background of the Moslem when he hears a Christian preacher saying that Christ is the

. . . . .

1. Surah 5:116-118.

Son of God. In one of the villages in which the writer was preaching, a Moslem shaikh came into the meeting. Everything was all right, and the shaikh seemed happy to hear about the sermon on the mount. But when Christ was preached as the Son of God, the Moslem shaikh left the meeting angrily, saying, "There is no god but Allah, Mohammad is His prophet."

When a Moslem hears about the Son of God, he right away thinks of a bodily relation of the flesh. A Moslem once said, "The idea that God should have a son is merely a relic of pagan and anthropomorphic superstitions. It lowers God to a level of an animal. Tell me, if you say that Jesus is the Son of Allah, is Allah male or female? If male, has Allah a wife that should have a son?"

A teacher in high school asked the Christian students these questions: "If Allah was incarnate in Jesus, who was in heaven then, and to whom did Jesus pray? Does not God's incarnation limit Him?"

The Moslem that repeats that "God is great" can not understand God's coming in human likeness and taking the form of a servant.

Some of the Moslem scholars go to the Bible and try to prove from it that Jesus Christ was only a man. They say that Christ calling himself the Son of

God does not mean that he is God. They feel that the Bible refers to the universal fatherhood of God. It is only a term of affection and, in fact, all men are sons of God.

The idea that Christ the Son of God was crucified sounds illogical to the Moslem, for how can Christians reconcile the deity of Christ with his crucifixion, they ask. The Moslem points out that a whole night's prayer proved quite barren to Christ. He prayed that the cup might pass from him, but his prayers were not answered. How can God ask for something and not get it?

The concept of God the Almighty made one of their scholars write, "If God is such a weak and frail being as Jesus the Son of Mary was, we are better alone. We can do without him!"

A Moslem Hadith says:

On doomsday all religious communities will appear before Allah with their symbols. The Christians will follow the cross and on their confession that they did worship Jesus the Son of Mary be thrown to hell.<sup>1</sup>

. . . . .

1. توحيد البخاري صفة ٢٣

### 3. The Crucifixion of Christ.

The Quran says, "They did not kill him, they did not crucify him, he was resembled to them."<sup>1</sup> By "resembled to them", the Moslems mean that someone else made to look like Jesus (supposedly Judas) was crucified in his place, while Jesus ascended into heaven. Yet the Quran quotes Christ as referring to "The day I die."<sup>2</sup> The Moslems say that this refers to the post-millennial death. Moslems as a whole reject the idea of Christ's death on a cross.

A tract was printed and circulated in Cairo giving the Moslem's reaction towards the crucifixion of Christ. It was translated by W.H.T. Gairdner, the C.M.S. missionary to Cairo.

A strange question  
In answer to the people of the Cross. . .

If Jesus, as you suppose was a mighty and powerful God to be feared, how is it you believe that the Jews made him to taste bitter punishment by crucifixion?

You say that a crown of thorns was placed on his head to shame him, and it made his blood to flow upon his cheek till it became like dye upon his face; and that he rode an ass to save himself from the weariness of the road which he had traversed.

After this you reckon him as God, and are not ashamed of reproof. What is he save those like him, a servant to his maker, and one of them that draw nigh to God, as he has said of himself in a true text which came in the Quran?

. . . . .

1. Surah 4:157.
2. Surah 19:33.

Had he been Lord as you suppose, whom was he beseeching to disclose the nature of his punishment? Who was the one to whom he gave back his spirit when it left his body for its journey? And who after him preserved the order of the universe till the time of his coming again? Is there a Lord equal to him to be surety of his ordered world, or did he leave it to destruction?

#### Dilemmas of the Crucifixion

Was his crucifixion for a fault, or else why did he deserve to be punished? Did the people do well to crucify him, in order to bring salvation to your old men and your youths, or did otherwise they do harm by procuring salvation for you? Truly this is an astounding suggestion!

But, and if you say they did well, and did nought save the right thing, I ask why do you then count them as enemies, though he that does good is given his reward?

But if you say they committed a crime by crucifying the Godhead - How evil the deed! I answer how? Were it not for God, would you have been saved from the penalties of the last day?

Did he consent to be crucified, or was he under compulsion?

What is your decisive reply?

Voluntary.

For if you say that his crucifixion was voluntary to cover man's sin of which he has repented, then you have lied against your Lord, in respect to his actions as truly related in the Gospel; because he used to escape from his cross, and wept and wailed about himself and cried - 'Rescue me, thou God of heaven, by thy favor from these hard trials.

This is a proof that he was a servant to his Master without a doubt. This is a proof that you have lied and in your saying have gone aside from the truth.

Involuntary.

But if you say that the crucifixion was by force, how weak of an Almighty Lord! Surely curses come to him

from all sides by his being hung upon a wooden cross, even as the text of your own Gospels and Taurat tells you, nor is the blame to us.<sup>1</sup>

The idea of the atonement is not understandable to the Moslems. They say God forgives by His will. "Why did God appear in the flesh and bear shame to save mankind?", they ask. "He could have chosen a better way, as did the prophets. No need for death on the cross. God effects what He purposes by merely manifesting His wish. The forgiveness of sin does not require God to be paid any compensation." They also say, "If two thousand years ago Jesus died for the sins of the world, then all 'Christian' sins are automatically forgiven. The vicarious atonement must exercise a deadening effect upon activity, because it does not leave anything for the individual to accomplish and removes the whole burden which lies on his shoulders. It also means that human beings will go directly to heaven, notwithstanding that they commit various sins." Others say, "If Jesus was really crucified, as Christians say, then he was murdered. He did not die for others. It was a sacrifice for truth." "The idea of the atonement shows God as a fearful avenger, and involves disbelief in His mercy, for He was not satisfied until He punished the innocent Jesus for the sins of mankind."<sup>2</sup>

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1. W.H.T. Gairdner, D.M. Thornton, pp. 159-161.
2. From discussions of the Moslems with the author.

A Moslem Hadith says:

Mohammad said, 'I swear by heavens, when Jesus the Son of Mary descends from heaven, as a just king, he will break every cross and kill the swine.'<sup>1</sup>

#### 4. The Bible.

D.B. McDonald said, "If you converse with a Moslem upon his feeling towards the Bible, he would indicate that your books were forgeries."<sup>2</sup> Moslems say that the sacred book of the Christians were corrupted. They believe that the Injil and Taurat were dictated. The Quran says that the Injil and Taurat were revealed, and that they are the words of Allah. Since the present Bible does not agree with the Quran, some Moslems say it cannot be original. Some of them say that though corrupted, the present Bible contains some parts of the original truth, e.g., the unity of God, punishment and reward, and the significance of the coming of the last prophet, Mohammad. It is these parts only which the Quran is said to confirm and protect.

Moslems say that the Bible was corrupted in different ways. It was corrupted by misinterpretation. This is apparent from the difference among Jews, Catholics, and Protestants about the meanings of the Bible ideas.

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1. توحيد البخاري ص ٢٣

2. McDonald, op. cit., p. 210.

A Moslem said to the writer, "If you do not agree among yourselves how do you expect us to agree with you?" Then they say that it was corrupted by alteration.<sup>1</sup> This, they say, can be illustrated from the different readings in the Greek, Hebrew, and Samaritan texts of the Old Testament. If the Bible was really revealed, it would not contain such variations of readings, as are found in the manuscripts. The British and American Bible Societies already admit the corruption of the Bible, or are ready still to corrupt it by periodic publications of corrected and/or revised English versions. They also say it was corrupted by interpolation.<sup>2</sup> This is illustrated where marginal notations have crept into the text, as modern textual criticism shows.

Another idea the Moslems hold against the Bible is that it was abrogated by the Quran. They say that as the Injil abrogated the Taurat, and as Jesus' teachings abrogated Moses' teachings, so the Quran abrogated the Bible and the teachings of Mohammad abrogated the teachings of Jesus. Abrogation, they say, does not mean that

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1. انظار الحق لرحمة الله الصمد جزو ٤

2. Ibid.



God at one time commanded certain things, intending that they should be observed for a certain limited period, after which they were no longer obligatory.<sup>1</sup>

Some other Moslems say that Jesus took his Gospel away with Him. A Moslem shaikh in an Egyptian school said to his students, upon finding a copy of Matthew's Gospel with one of them:

Listen, you little fools, this book is a part of the so-called Gospel of the Christians and it is forbidden for you to read it or even touch it. It is not the true Gospel. When the prophet Jesus (the prayer of God and His peace be upon Him) went up to heaven, he took the true Gospel with him, and what the Christians call the Gospel is nothing more than tradition, and even that is very much corrupted. Now. . . wash your hands and your mouths lest you be defiled by handling and reading the corrupted book of the Christians.<sup>2</sup>

#### D. Social Difficulties

In Egypt, as in all countries in the Orient, the group is the unit rather than the individual. Thus any sin may be forgiven except disloyalty to the group. The Moslem who wants to become a Christian faces great difficulties from his family, and from his society. Even worse the Christian Church does not welcome the new convert.

##### 1. The Family and the Moslem Convert.

In the book, "Blessed Be Egypt My People",

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1. "إحصاء الحق" لرصة الله العبدى جزي ٣

2. Philips, op. cit., p. 116.

there are biographies of seven Egyptian converts from Islam. In each case the same thing can be seen. The family, feeling disgrace over the conversion, tried to stop the convert at any cost, even by killing him!

In one case a young man, Mikhael Mansour, came to know Christ as his Savior. Realizing the difficulties he would meet from his family, he went to Cairo to be baptized. When the news of his conversion to Christianity came to his family, his father hurried to Cairo.

As soon as they were alone, the father filled with intense emotion, asked the fearful question that had occupied his mind for so many days to the exclusion of all others, 'My son, have you become a Christian?' The answer came, 'Yes, father, I have accepted Christ.' These words were like an arrow in the father's heart. He was a sincere Moslem and nothing could possibly assuage his grief. His first born, his favorite son, the son in whom he had placed his hopes, the one on whom he had spent much so that he might have the best possible training, the son who was his very life, the pride and glory of the family, had turned his back to the faith of his fathers. It was enough to drive the man to madness. How could he endure the burning disgrace? He pleaded with tears asking his son to recant, but the son could not be moved.

When Mansour, Sr. returned to his home, burdened with grief, he gathered the members of the immediate family, and told them the cruel truth. They all wept together as they mourned for him, whom they now accounted as dead.<sup>1</sup>

This family was unusually kind and remained loyal to Mikhael. In other cases the family concerned became wild against the convert in the family, and they

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1. Philips, op. cit., p. 34.

did their best to kill him to wipe out the disgrace with the convert's blood. There was a suspicion that a leading Moslem in Cairo deliberately arranged to have his son meet with a tramway accident rather than permit his public baptism.<sup>1</sup> There have been cases in Egypt of relatives sending those of their family who had leanings toward Christianity into asylums for the insane with the connivance of the local authorities. Relatives will bring about by secret poisoning or other means the death of those whose Christian proclivities cannot be removed by argument or by promise.

When Egypt was under British control, a convert from Islam was staying in a home of a missionary. He wrote thus to the queen of England:

Now I wish to tell your Highness that I am a prisoner, unable to go out at all, or even to step on the balcony; because my relatives are so excited and watch me night and day, desiring to quench their thirst with my blood, the blood of the helpless young Christian. My brothers according to their law, often assured me that if they murder me, they would be martyrs for doing so.<sup>2</sup>

Because of the loyalty to the family and the strong ties the convert had before, he finds it very difficult to live alone. In the case of Mikhael Mansour mentioned above, Philips goes on to say:

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1. S.M. Zwemer, The Law of Apostasy in Islam, London, Marshall Brothers, (no date), p. 18.
2. Ibid., p. 23.

The weeping was not all in the old home. Down in Cairo the young shaikh was drinking the bitter cup of suffering alone, and was being baptized with a new baptism that is known only to those who, under similar circumstances, have taken the cross to follow their crucified Lord. Mikhael wept because he knew that genuine sorrow filled the heart of every member of his family; he wept for he knew that in all probability he was permanently cut off from the home and could never return to them again; most of all he wept because he could not lead his loved ones to the joy and peace he found in the new faith.<sup>1</sup>

One of the converts wrote to Samuel Zwemer:

"Don't you know that you alone are my family, friends and relatives? Oh! I beg you to remember this please. I am expecting a long letter from you soon."<sup>2</sup>

The same feeling was Kamel Mansour's, whose sorest trial was his exile from his family. He loved them so dearly, but he was sure they would never bid him welcome in the old home. Even after a quarter of a century passing by his town, he remembered his family and burst forth in a flood of tears.<sup>3</sup>

## 2. The Christian Church and the Moslem Convert.

The Christian Church does not give the Moslem convert the fellowship he lost by leaving his family because most of the Christians do not like or appreciate conversions from Islam. The difference, in missionary

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1. Philips, op. cit., p. 35.
2. Zwemer, op. cit., p. 113.
3. Philips, op. cit., p. 58.

spirit, between the Coptic Church and the Egyptian Evangelical Church is discouragingly slight. In spite of the Evangelical's far better training in the Christian faith and its principles, they still share with Copts the reluctance to approach the Moslem and the conviction that genuine conversion from Islam is next to impossible. More than that, if a Moslem comes to them asking for baptism they will turn him away. Harvey Philips' book gives examples of this in the lives of many converts. Mikhael Mansour, coming to an Egyptian preacher to ask for baptism, found the preacher afraid. He could not understand the preacher's lack of enthusiasm over his proposal to become a Christian. The preacher took Mikhael Mansour to the missionary in the nearby town, but he also hesitated to baptize the new convert. "So with his soul tossed and torn because of what he considered a lack of sympathy he turned to the Catholic priest."<sup>1</sup> The same thing happened when Marcus Abdul Massih went to the Protestant minister and asked for baptism. The minister advised the new convert to get in touch with some American missionaries.

Although the above actions are not correct, the writer does not place much blame upon the national

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1. Ibid., p. 32.

Christians. Accustomed to the status of tolerated minority, commonly despised and sometimes oppressed, the Christians have not attempted the task of converting Moslems. Under a Moslem government, the church has been able to maintain its existence only by being quietly inoffensive. Faced with the choice between static submission and wholesale martyrdom, it has chosen static submission. The Christians always fear the hostility of the great Moslem majority and view with suspicion the sincerity of the few Moslems who seem drawn towards Christianity. Both the clergy and lay leaders, therefore, center their interest in the administrative affairs of their own churches and postpone to some happy time in the future the unattractive task of approaching the Moslems. In fact, if a minister baptizes a Moslem, the Moslems will rise against the Christians, bringing danger to the convert and to the minister and to the whole Christian community. The Christians have a fear complex in a land where Islam has ruled by sword for so many centuries. The case of the Christians in Egypt today is like that of the Hebrews when they were in bondage in Egypt. Bondage and oppression did not move them to seek freedom, but rather made them even more submissive. When Moses brought them the good news of release, they did not respond to him "for anguish of spirit and for cruel bondage."<sup>1</sup>

. . . . .

1. Exodus 6:9

The convert, if married, usually has to leave his wife according to the Moslem law. If he is not married, Christians refuse to give him a wife, for they do not trust a convert from Islam. They fear that the convert may not continue steadfast in his faith, but may return to Islam. If he takes a wife from among the Christians, and then goes back to Islam, he is almost certain to leave her to return to her father's home helpless and humiliated. He can also, according to the Moslem law, keep her as his wife, and treat her as a slave, to the disgrace of her Christian relatives.

In the case of Nasrallah, Philips says:

Sometimes the converts from Islam are not very happily married and such was the case with our friend Nasrallah. The girl that was chosen for him was the daughter of a simple illiterate farmer who had been converted from Islam many years before. He had a good enough mind and was a very likeable fellow. He had suffered much persecution from his Moslem family and when he wanted to marry he was living in a Coptic-Christian community. Being only a Moslem convert, he was given a poor girl, so stupid that no one else would ever want her. The daughter of this pair became Nasrallah's wife. She had inherited both her mother's stupidity and temper.<sup>1</sup>

No wonder if Nasrallah fell back to Islam to escape life with such a wife.

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1. Philips, op. cit., p. 102.

3. The Society and the Moslem Convert.

The Egyptian society is a religious society. People in Egypt are affected by religion in every phase of life. At Friday prayer throughout all the Moslem world this prayer is repeated:

O God, destroy the infidels. Make their children orphans, and give them and their families and their household and their women and their children and their relatives by marriage and their brothers and friends and their possessions and their race and their wealth and their lands, as booty to the Moslems, O Lord of the beings of the whole world.

No wonder if the Moslems affected by the spirit of that prayer insult the Christians saying, "A curse be upon your cross." The worst thing that could be said to a Moslem when cursing him is to call him the son of a Christian.

When a Christian becomes a Moslem, he is paraded through the streets of his town. A great crowd of men and women express their happiness by beating drums and by the shrill joy-cry of the women. This is always considered a great victory to Islam.

On the other hand, if a Moslem becomes a Christian, the whole community gets stirred with anger. A demonstration sometimes takes place, like that one that went to Mikhael Mansour in the hall of the American Mission,

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1. Ibid., p. 69.



where he was preaching, and began to cry out against "The heretic that left the religion of his fathers to become a Christian. The Moslems kept shouting 'He should be killed at once!'"<sup>1</sup>

This is the Egyptian society that hates the "infidel Christians" and looks down at them and receives the Christian convert to Islam with open arms, and goes to the other extreme in dealing with the Moslem convert to Christianity.

James Addison describes what happens to the Moslem convert saying:

When he cuts himself from the brotherhood of Islam, he usually finds himself an isolated individual, with no social environment to compensate him for the fraternal solidarity which he has forsaken. An out-cast from his former group, a member of a despised minority, debarred from the normal opportunities of marriage, he is more than likely to experience a disheartening loneliness, and to feel that every man's hand is against him.<sup>2</sup>

Addison gives some reasons for the Moslem's isolation from his former society:

A Moslem convert that becomes a devoted follower of Christ, would find it quite impossible to retain true living connection with the Moslem social-political group. . . because he would, if true to his Master, be forced to pass judgement and criticize the ideas of life in his social-political group, having discovered that they are quite incompatible with his Christian faith.<sup>3</sup>

. . . . .

1. Ibid., p. 49.
2. Addison, op. cit., p. 304.
3. Ibid., p. 306.

## E. Economic Difficulties

When Shaikh Mikhael Mansour was converted to Christianity, his brother thought that he did so to gain more money. He went to visit him and was astonished to see the simplicity of his brother's new home; so he asked, "How is it my brother that you live in such simple quarters and in a home that has furnishings more ordinary than we have at our father's home? Surely you have money enough to live in a better place than this." Mikhael asked if his brother thought that he made a sacrifice by becoming a Christian. The brother's answer came strongly:

I surely think you have. You have given up your inheritance, your family, your religion, your position, your opportunity for a life of honor and distinction. As he walked back to his quarters, he kept saying: 'Fool, fool, fool! He seems to have gone mad. What-ever could have made him do it?'<sup>1</sup>

This is the price the Moslem pays for following Christ.

### 1. The Loss of Job and Inheritance.

The Caliph Umar "forbade the employment of Christians in offices,"<sup>2</sup> making it difficult for a Christian to find a job, and more difficult for a Moslem convert to keep his.

In the story of Yusef Butrus, whom Philips mentions

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1. Philips, op. cit., p. 47.

2. "الدين والامبراطورية" لعلي طبري ص ٥٩

in his book, "Blessed Be Egypt My People," he says that Yusef was baptized secretly. All went well until his baptism was discovered. His family asked him to close his shop and leave the town. He found a job in the government, but his boss discovered his baptism, and he was dismissed from his work without pension or even compensation.<sup>1</sup>

Yusef Butros is an example of what happens to the Moslem convert. He loses everything and is left with nothing.

The economic care of the convert is a big missionary problem--the problem of how to help him without hurting him.

## 2. Boycott of Trade or Work.

The Moslem convert is usually persecuted by a system of boycotting. This means that he is blacklisted, that he can neither sell nor buy in the market, nor marry and in the event of his death, he cannot have a burial place in the local cemetery.

The missionaries try to help the convert financially, by giving him some money to start a trade or craft, but this boycotting leaves him helpless.

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1. Philips, op. cit., p. 58.

Zwemer presents the Moslem laws that should be followed if the Moslem convert was preserved from death by a Christian power. He says:

The brothers of the Moslem convert are forbidden to give him branches to be carried on Palm Sunday; to buy an animal slaughtered by him; to sell him wood from which a cross can be made; or copper from which a bell can be cast. The Moslem is forbidden to lend or hire to the convert the service of his slave, or to lend him or hire him an animal to ride.<sup>1</sup>

This leaves the Moslem convert in financial difficulty, and usually he cannot live in the same place any more.

#### F. Political Difficulties

##### 1. Rising from the Law of the Land

The Moslem thinks of the Christian Church as a separate "millet" with a different "ethos", so he considers any conversion from Islam to Christianity as treason. Several Moslem states in the United Nations have withheld their signatures from the Declaration of Human Rights because of its insistence that freedom of religion means freedom to become as well as to remain.

In Egypt evangelism is restricted by the prohibition of all out-of-doors preaching, and even more by the resentment felt by all classes against "Christian propaganda." Moslems object to missions just because

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1. Zwemer, op. cit., p. 42.

they are evangelistic. The government is often called upon to defend Islam against the evangelistic activities of the Christian Church, and it usually does so, not by forbidding evangelism as such, but by bringing charges against evangelists of attacking Islam and so endangering the public peace.

The Egyptian constitution says, "The state religion is Islam." Recently there was a law passed that in all schools "no child may be taught a religion other than his own, even with the consent of his parents." The law as it stands is thoroughly bad because it takes the right of decision away from the family and places it in the hands of the state.

## 2. Rising from Islam State and Religion.

Lord Curzon remarked, "Islam is not a state church; it is far worse, it is a church state."<sup>1</sup> J. Christy Wilson affirms that Islam, the state, and the social system are inseparable. He writes, "It is necessary to bear in mind that Islam is at the same time a religious, political and social organization, and attempts to dictate every function of life in all spheres."<sup>2</sup>

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1. Zwemer, op. cit., p. 51.

2. The Moslem World, Vol. XXXVI, p. 294.

Three years ago in all the Egyptian villages, the motto of the Moslem Brotherhood was written on the walls--  
"Islam is our religion and the Quran is our constitution."

Islam then is a politico-religious system; the two are interwoven. The Quran is both the faith to be believed and the law to be obeyed. It is a law regulating all life in its varied relations. Since that is Islam, conversion to any other form of faith is regarded as an apostasy and treachery to the nation.

### 3. Rising from the Islamic Concept of Freedom.

It is not an exaggeration to say that the doors of Islam swing inward only, but not outward. It is a one-way freedom.

After Mohammad's death many fell back from Islamic faith. War was declared against them to the knife. In Oman many of them were butchered.<sup>1</sup>

The Quran says, "But if they turn their backs, then seize them wheresoever you find them, and take from them neither patron nor help."<sup>2</sup> Baidawi, the great Moslem commentator, said, "Whosoever turns his back from his belief, openly or secretly, take him and kill him, like any other infidel."<sup>3</sup>

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1. Zwemer, op. cit., p. 80.

2. Surah 4:91.

3. تفسير البضاوي على سورة ٩١:٢

The Quran also says, "Whoso believes in God after having believed, unless it be one who is forced and whose heart is quiet in the faith--but whoso expands his breast to disbelieve--on him is the wrath from God, and from him is mighty woe."<sup>1</sup>

Mohammad said, "Whenever you meet the apostate, kill him; for whoever kills him is rewarded in the day of resurrection." He himself sent after some apostates, and they were brought in front of him. He cut off their hands and feet and put out their eyes. After that he did not staunch the bleeding until they died.<sup>2</sup>

Zwemer said:

Islam has been the age-long foe of democracy. It cannot exist and confer as equal gifts, religious liberty, equality or fraternity to those who are not Moslems. The Islamic theory of the state is based on the eternal law of the Quran, and cannot therefore be modified. Egypt for the Egyptians means Egypt for the Moslems.<sup>3</sup>

Replies to a questionnaire prepared in 1953 under the auspices of the Near East Christian Council, and sent to missionaries of six Moslem countries, revealed that 5 per cent of the Moslem converts had been completely lost to sight.<sup>4</sup>

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1. Surah 16:108
2. Cf. Zwemer, op. cit., p. 45.
3. Zwemer, The Cross Above the Crescent, p. 52.
4. Addison, op. cit., p. 300.

4. Rising from the Nationalistic Spirit.

As a result of history in Egypt, the name "Christian" has come to have unsavory connotations. It means racial minorities whose religion is hereditary rather than a matter of free choice of individuals. That heritage of the past, perpetuates in memory and tradition the centuries of hostility between Christendom and Islam, from the far-off days of bloody crusading to the recent days of European imperialism.

K.S. Latourette says:

For centuries the "Christian" powers of the West have had commercial and imperialistic ambitions in the Near East and more than once have supported missions of their respective nationals in the belief that these would prove of assistance to their self-interested objectives. The word "Christian" has no pleasant sound to the Moslem majority.

The Moslem speaks about the western countries as Christian countries. The Moslem views the life of these Christians through politics. The Christian West wants to colonize and imperialize the Moslem East. Seeking political freedom the Moslem hates the foreigner and his religion.

At the same time the Moslem sees the living example of the Oriental Church which displays so little that can command admiration and whose members have so

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1. K.S. Latourette, Missions Tomorrow, New York, Harper & Brothers, 1956, p. 68.



long been despised as spiritless, or viewed with suspicion as disloyal to the state.

Seeing the Western Christians and the Eastern Christians, the Moslem, to say the least, does not want to be a Christian.

#### G. Summary

In the second chapter the writer stated the difficulties in reaching the Moslems for Christ.

The religious reason, as the satisfaction of the Moslem with his religion, and his high regard for Islam, was described. What Moslems think about the Christian religion as a failure was given.

The theological difficulties that offend the Moslems about Christianity were mentioned. The Trinity and Deity of Christ were shown as reasons for the Moslem shrinking from accepting Christianity. The crucifixion of Christ and the Moslem idea about the Bible were set forth as stumbling blocks to the Moslem.

The writer described the social life in Egypt, and told of the reaction of the family, the Christian Church, and society towards the Moslem convert. While his family and society consider him as dead and try to kill him, the Christian Church does not give him any help or welcome.

The Moslem convert who becomes a Christian is usually left with no money. The writer explained from the lives of some converts how that happened. The financial difficulty often makes the convert hesitant about proclaiming his new faith in Christ.

The policy of the Egyptian government towards converts was stated. Preaching out-of-doors is prohibited by law. The convert is considered a traitor to Islam, which is both state and religion. Islamic law says that he must be killed at once and rewards the one that kills him.

The above reasons show why there is lack of fruit in the field of work among the Moslems.

METHODS OF EVANGELIZATION OF MOSLEMS  
IN EGYPT

CHAPTER III

A. Introduction

What are the methods used to reach the Moslems of Egypt for Christ? With all the difficulties that have been discussed in this thesis, one wants to know what the Christians are doing to convey the Good News to the Moslems.

It is the purpose of this chapter to present the methods now used for the evangelization of Moslems in Egypt.

The chapter starts with a survey of the attitude of the Christian world towards Islam and what Christians have done in the evangelization of Moslems. In the early days, controversy was the only means used without success because it did not intend to win the Moslems.

It was not until the eighteenth century that missionaries came to Egypt, but the early mission work did not succeed so far as visible results are concerned.

The mission body that started the work and succeeded was the American Mission. This was started in 1854. The American Mission wanted to have a successful, healthy Christian Church to demonstrate to the Moslems what Christianity really is. Thus the Evangelical Church started with members coming mostly from the Coptic Church, which is the ancient Christian Church of Egypt.

The work among the Moslems is not direct preaching, for the law forbids that; yet, Christian workers are working by whatever means they can use--through hospitals and clinics; schools and educational institutions; Bible distribution; through a special meeting in Cairo; through funeral customs; and lastly, through Bible women visiting homes.

The chapter will end by reviewing the results of all the above efforts.

#### B. Efforts in the Past for the Evangelization Of Moslems in Egypt

The Christian Church met Islam in the battle field on the same level with Islam. Fighting was the answer that Islam got from Christendom for centuries.<sup>1</sup>

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1. "The World Great Religions" by the editors of Life, Chicago, 1957, p. 198.

The Crusades were the reply to the challenge of Islam, but it was not the spirit of the Gospel. Christendom had accustomed itself ever since the time of the Crusades to look at Islam as its most bitter foe and not as the prodigal son to be won back to the Father's house.

John of Damascus was the first one to study Islam and was the first outstanding scholar to enter the field of polemics against the Moslems. In the eighth century he wrote a pamphlet defending Christianity. A century later there appeared a controversial writing which was perhaps the most effective of its era and known today better than any other -- the Apology of Al Kindy.<sup>1</sup> Years later the work of Nicetas of Byzantium appeared. He wrote a refutation of "The foolish and infamous book of the Arab Mohammad and of the errors of the Agarene contained in it."<sup>2</sup> In the twelfth century Petrus Venerabilis wrote a book on the same subject. Both of these books were based on arguments.

Raymond Lull in the thirteenth century approached the Moslems in the right way when he offered his life to reach them. He went to North Africa and there, after years of preaching, was stoned to death.<sup>3</sup> During the

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1. James Addison, "The Christian Approach to the Moslems", p. 50.
2. Ibid., p. 29.
3. Zwemer, "Raymond Lull", New York, Funk & Wagnalls, 1902

latter part of the sixteenth century, Francis Xavier went to India, and in the eighteenth century Henry Martyn followed. Later the Church opened her eyes and started sending more missionaries to win the Moslems.

About the results of the argumentative writings, James Addison says:

Whatever may have been the effect of controversy, the conversion of the Moslems to Christianity was not one of them. Not often intended as a missionary method, controversy was even less often a missionary success. One trouble was that the Christian writings were chiefly defensive reactions. Too frequently they allowed the Moslems to choose the weapons and fix the setting. Moreover they were heavily loaded with technical arguments and, having little moral or spiritual content, awakened no moral or spiritual response.<sup>1</sup>

The first one who thought of sending missionaries to Egypt was Count Zinzendorf. He wanted to have a closer spiritual communion with the Church of Christ on earth, and longed to know more of the conditions of the Christians residing in the Nile Valley. On the first of August, 1752, Fredrick William Hooker, a medical doctor, arrived at Alexandria with a message to the Coptic Patriarch from Zinzendorf. At that time it was strictly forbidden to converse with Moslems on religious subjects. Hooker found an entrance into the hearts of not a few among the Copts. The efforts that began about 1752 ended about the close of the century without any visible success.<sup>2</sup>

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1. James Addison, op. cit., p. 290.
2. Charles Watson, "Egypt and the Christian Crusade", pp. 70-109.

The second recorded effort to do foreign mission work in Egypt was in connection with the "Church Mission Society." It started in the year 1819 with Rev. W. Jowet, who had much intercourse with the priests and monks of the Coptic church.<sup>1</sup> His purpose was to reach the Moslems through a reformed Coptic Church that would give the right idea about Christianity. The missionaries worked hard to obtain the friendship of the clergy of the Coptic Church with a view to influence them gently, in the hope that by slow degrees they would become convinced of their errors and themselves reform their church. "But the system failed."<sup>2</sup> The "Church Mission Society" ended its work in 1849.

The general Synod of the United Presbyterian Church of North America at its meeting in Allegheny, May 21, 1853, took the following action: "That our missionaries be instructed to occupy Cairo at their earliest possible convenience." The Synod authorized the Board of Foreign Missions to send out the missionaries.<sup>3</sup> It was in the late 1854 that the first missionaries arrived in Egypt.

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1. Andrew Watson, "The American Mission in Egypt", p. 31.
2. Ibid., p. 33.
3. Ibid., p. 64.

Upon their arrival, the missionaries found that the Coptic Church had:

By their picture-worship (they) had become the stumbling block to the Moslems. Their religious leaders were "epistles of Christ" in whose corrupted text might be wrongly read Christ's license to drunkenness and vice, while the errors that crept into their creed set the seal of Christ's Name upon a religion in which salvation was divorced from sanctification and purchased by pious ejaculations. The Moslem could not pierce through such incrusting ceremonies to discover the true spirit of the Gospel.<sup>1</sup>

The first thing that confronted the missionaries was that corrupted picture of Christianity as seen in the Coptic Church. They decided to have a good Christian community that would show the Christian religion as Christ meant it to be. They started preaching to the Copts. The work spread along the entire Nile Valley like a fruitful vine and grew in numbers, influence, and results.

In the year 1898, the Egypt General Mission started working in the Nile Delta. The aim was to reach the Moslems only. They turned their converts over to the Evangelical Church that was started by the United Presbyterian missionaries. The missionaries of Egypt General Mission are laymen and from all denominations. Their headquarters is in London. They were working until

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1. Rena Hogg, A Master Builder on the Nile, Pittsburgh, U.P. Foreign Board of Publications, 1914, p. 94.



the British and French invaded the Suez Canal area, when they were deported by the Egyptian government.

In 1905, a Christian press was started in Cairo. Its aim was to prepare publications for the Moslems in all the Arab-speaking world. That press did a great work. Because its headquarters was in London, the Egyptian government confiscated it after the November 1956 invasion of Egypt.

C. Efforts in Effect Now for Evangelization of  
Moslems in Egypt

1. Hospitals and Clinics.

Medical missions have been an instrument for evangelism. The Rev. Bradley Watkins wrote to the author thus:

As far as the witness of the hospital to the Moslems, the entire program is essentially evangelistic. The medical ministry is a reflection of our Saviour's concern for the whole man, body, and soul.

As an example of the medical work in Egypt, Assiut hospital shall be considered. An average of over 3,000 patients are admitted each year, not to mention about 10,000 who are examined in the clinics but not admitted. The patients admitted remain in the hospital for a stay averaging eight days. Two of every three of

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1. From a letter dated October 31, 1956.

these are Moslems. The Gospel message comes to them when, because of their sickness, they are spiritually more receptive than usual. The oral message is vividly demonstrated in the gentle treatment they receive from the Christian staff of the hospital.

There is a daily chapel service. Attendance is voluntary. Many Moslems come and the Gospel is preached to them without restraint. The Gospel is also preached in the wards, and personal contacts are made and spiritual matters are often discussed.

On the walls of the rooms and wards hang large pictures illustrating Bible scenes or Bible verses. Many Moslems ask for the Gospel, which is given to them as a gift.

The Gospel is also preached in the clinic daily, and a native evangelist visits the children's ward and tells them stories from the Bible and gives them Bible quizzes.

The hospital has a follow-up system by which interested Moslem patients are visited after their return to their homes. Once a week the missionary visits only the villages around Assiut. The people usually welcome him, for they know him. After a discussion of their health they have a prayer meeting together, at which time they sing a song and read from the Bible.

Once a year the hospital has a conference for the former patients, particularly those Moslems who have been receptive to the Gospel. The main speaker is usually Shaikh Kamel Mansour, the Moslem convert who testifies fearlessly to his conversion.

The church in the village of the writer started a clinic in May, 1953. People from forty-one villages come to that clinic for help. Before they are treated medically they hear the Gospel message. The majority of those attending are Moslems. Many of them expressed their interest and asked for Gospels and Christian literature.

The hospitals and clinics are a means of reaching the Moslems in Egypt to know Jesus Christ the Saviour.

## 2. Schools and Educational Institutions.

One of the features in the work of the mission which is always noted is the strong emphasis upon education. The opening of the first station in Cairo was followed very soon by the opening of a school for boys and another for girls. The same was true in Alexandria. In Assiut very nearly the first thing done was to open Assiut College. The Church in turn, as it grew, opened day schools which fed students into the central schools

of the mission.<sup>1</sup>

The main purpose of these schools is that, "the Protestants must of necessity depend upon an intelligent understanding of the Bible. Only as the laity of the Church can read and understand the Bible can they continue effective Christians."<sup>2</sup> The missionaries wanted the Moslems to see what the Christian Church looks like when it is spiritual and scriptural.

The schools opened their doors to all. Moslems came because they could secure a good education. The Bible class was an integral part of the work and insisted upon as such, though there was no pressure to believe or change religion placed upon the children.

The Moslem students were often surprised to find that the worship of Mary, the homage paid to pictures and the drinking of the alcoholic liquors were not fundamental articles of faith and practice in the Christian religion. A new respect was given to both the Church and its ministers because of this knowledge.

The schools are still operating, but under restrictions of government laws. No child can be taught a religion other than his own, even if his family agrees.

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1. E.M. Bailey, May We Introduce Egypt, Pittsburgh, U.P. Foreign Board of Publication (no date), p. 30.
2. Ibid., p. 33.

Another law recently issued forced the mission schools to teach Moslem students Islam. The mission, accepting the suggestion of the national church, submitted to the new law.

Although the schools cannot give the Gospel message openly to the Moslem student, yet it operates in a Christian atmosphere.

The schools are no longer a strong means of reaching the Moslems for Christ in Egypt.

### 3. Bible Distribution and Christian Literature.

"The Gospel is the power of God for salvation to every one that believes."<sup>1</sup> The Christian workers take hold of that truth and carry the Gospel message to the Moslems when they distribute the Bible.

When the missionaries came to Egypt they introduced Bible study to the Christian Church and give it as well to the Moslems. Hundreds of Bibles are given as gifts to the Moslems by national ministers and laymen, and by missionaries.

The American and British Bible Societies are rendering a great service to the evangelization of Moslems. Through Bible printing and distribution, many souls are reached.

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1. Romans 1:16.

The Moslem who says that the Bible is corrupted stops saying so when he reads it. The great contrast between the Bible and the Quran opens the eyes of many Moslems to the soundness of the Christian faith.

Samuel Zwemer writes:

In Cairo a blind teacher keeps in touch with his pupils. He runs a sort of circulating library of Scripture volumes in Arabic Braille for these men, and has worn out 1,900 volumes in this process. He had 1,506 volumes out on a loan in the villages, 1,225 volumes in the hands of Cairo Sheikhs, in the last report given.<sup>1</sup>

About his own work, he also says:

It was my privilege for a number of years to venture to carry the Gospel into the Azhar University of Cairo. In the early years I often met with difficulty, but during more recent years it was my privilege personally to give to more than 150 students at Alazhar a copy of Matthew's Gospel, inscribing it as a gift, and to be taken by them to their homes. We had a prayer with some of the professors in their library, and on one occasion they requested twelve copies of the Bible in Arabic to be used by them personally.<sup>2</sup>

Along with the Bible distribution goes the printed page of Christian literature. It has been told that Martin Luther threw an ink-pot at the devil in Wartburg while he was preparing his version of the German Bible. The legend is prophetic, for the best thing to throw at the devils of ignorance and error is an ink-pot. In modern terms, a printed page.<sup>3</sup>

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1. S.M. Zwemer, The Cross Above the Crescent, p. 220.
2. Ibid., p. 224.
3. Ibid., p. 226.

Literature for the Moslems is the greatest power at the worker's command. Although there is no freedom in Egypt to write against Islam, yet there is the freedom to write positively about the Christian faith. Christian workers can use literature prepared especially for Moslems. The trouble that the worker has is that there is not enough suitable literature for the Moslems.

#### 4. Preaching to the Moslems in a Special Meeting.

The only meeting that is conducted for the Moslem converts and for reaching the Moslems is held in the mission building in Cairo. For several years the mission and the Synod of the Nile have united in providing preaching services for Moslems who may be interested. There is a special meeting every Monday evening in the chapel of the Ezbakia building. The most acceptable and well-known preacher in these services for a quarter of a century has been Elder Kamel Mansour, himself a convert who loves and understands those to whom he preaches. He continues to witness, both in public and private, to those who will listen. It is interesting to know that Kamel Mansour was converted in the same meeting when his older brother Mikhail was preaching.

The meeting has had strong opposition both from the public and from the government. More than once

the Moslems broke in and spoiled the furniture. Yet that meeting is still going on to proclaim to the Moslems the joyful news of Christ's salvation.

#### 5. Funerals.

The Egyptian custom of conducting funerals offers the Christian preacher a golden opportunity for reaching the Moslems. When someone dies, the custom is that the people from all the area around come to the members of the dead one's family to spend some time with them. Moslems go to Christians, and Christians go to Moslems. In Moslem funerals a Moslem "khatib" reads the Quran, while in Christian funerals ministers read from the Scriptures and give a word of explanation.

All classes of Moslems come to the funeral-- poor and rich, low and high. The preacher can tell them the good news of the Gospel of Christ. Many a Moslem knows nothing of the Scriptures except what he has heard at a Christian funeral.

This custom offers the Christian worker a great open door for reaching the Moslems, and many preachers use that door.

#### 6. Bible Women Work in Homes.

To reach the women is to reach the next generation. Knowing that, the mission started work among the



women when it started its work and opened schools for girls. A Bible training school was started to train Bible women to go and work in villages.

In every Presbytery there are four or five Bible women who visit the churches and hold meetings for women. They also visit the homes after the meeting.

When a Bible woman visits a home, curious women of the village gather around the door. The Bible woman invites them in, and among them are Moslems. She preaches to them the Gospel. The Bible woman also visits all women mourning for the dead and speaks to them about the hope of eternal life. In addition, she uses literacy work as a means of reaching the untouched and has students in every village she works in. This gives her an opportunity for visiting the women in Moslem homes in order to teach them. After the new literate finishes the primer, there is the opportunity of reading books on the life of Christ, or other books. Some Moslem women ask to read the life of Christ, and this is gladly made available. After the student finishes the set of books, she is given a Bible as a gift. With the new ability to read and the Book in hand it is most probable that the new literate will read the Bible.

The work of the Bible women is quiet, but powerful.

D. Effectiveness of the Past-Present Above Efforts

The visible results of the efforts mentioned above are nothing of which to be proud. The Moslems who need Christ have resisted His message as no other non-Christians ever have.

Samuel Zwemer writes:

Although there are 438 missionaries in Egypt, and although some of the mission bodies are working almost exclusively for the Moslems, and although there are 30,000 Evangelical Christians in Egypt with good church organization and a well-educated ministry, and although there are in the various mission schools approximately 2500 Moslem students, the visible result of the missionary work for Moslems is not very great. At the present time probably there are not more than 150 living converts from Islam in Egypt. If the Moslem converts were distributed among the missionary workers, there would be about one convert for every three missionaries. If the comparison is made with the Evangelical Church, there would be less than one for every congregation in Egypt. Every missionary method has been tried and is being tried, but until the present neither the missions nor the Evangelical Church has whereof to boast in the face of this great and baffling problem. We may say with the disciples, 'We have taken nothing.'

Colleene Bourne, in a thesis about mission schools, says:

Although the primary aim of missionaries in all countries is to bring the individuals to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ, it cannot be claimed that this goal is adequately reached in education for Moslems.<sup>2</sup>

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1. Zwemer, The Law of Apostasy in Islam, p. 19.
2. Colleene Bourne, The Contribution of Christian Mission Schools in Moslem Countries, Thesis for MRE in BSNY, Jan., 1948, p. 37.

This may seem discouraging and one may question the necessity of work among Moslems when the results are so few. Yet, visible results are not everything. Many in Egypt are like Joseph of Arimathea who was a disciple of Jesus, but secretly, for fear of the Jews;<sup>1</sup> and like Naaman of the Old Testament who worshipped Jehovah and remained outside the circle of Israel.<sup>2</sup>

There are the secret believers, and no one can tell their number. One runs across them accidentally. The writer met several of these "Christian-Moslems" who believe in Christ and live as Christians in their behavior but keep their Moslem names and relations. The writer has met them in streetcars, trains and in the clinic run by his church. Meeting these secret believers is the experience of all the Christian workers in Egypt.

Only the great day shall reveal the real results of the mission work among the Moslems. The Lord says:

For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven and return not thither but water the earth, making it bring forth and sprout, giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater, so shall my word be that goes forth from my mouth; it shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose, and prosper in the thing for which I sent it.<sup>3</sup>

The Lord's word is sown by these above-mentioned means and ways. Even if the results are not seen, the

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1. John 19:38.
2. Kings 5:17.
3. Isaiah 55:11.

Lord's work goes on as leaven, quietly, secretly, but surely.

#### E. Summary

In the third chapter the history of the mission work among the Moslems in Egypt was scanned briefly. The chapter also presented a survey of the mission bodies that work in Egypt now.

The different ways of reaching the Moslems were mentioned showing how the Christian workers are trying to reach them. The hospitals and clinics were presented as an open door for the Christians to approach the Moslems. The schools and educational institutions were analysed as giving limited opportunity for the Moslem to experience a Christian atmosphere. Bible distribution and Christian literature were evaluated as giving the Moslems the Gospel message.

There is only one meeting for the Moslems in Egypt conducted by a Moslem convert. The effort of this convert, supported by both the Synod of the Nile and the American Mission in Egypt was described.

The chapter presented another way for reaching the Moslems. The custom in funerals gives the Christian preacher an open door to reach the Moslems.

Finally, the work of Bible women in homes was mentioned.

The chapter ended by giving an analysis of the results of the work. The visible results and statistics are not too reliable, for there are a large number of secret believers in Christ among the Moslems, but they do not profess that openly. Although the seen results are not great, yet, the word of God is bearing fruit.

A PROJECTED METHOD FOR THE EVANGELIZATION  
OF MOSLEMS IN EGYPT

CHAPTER IV

A. Introduction

In this chapter the writer will present the fact that the controversial method has not succeeded in reaching the Moslems.

The writer will introduce a new project in Egypt for reaching the Moslems. This will consist of some pamphlets in the Arabic language--the English translation to be given in this chapter. The first pamphlet will speak about man's free will. The second will deal with man and how he chose the wrong, disobeying God. The third pamphlet will speak about God the just judge who punishes sin. The fourth will set forth Jesus Christ the mediator between man and God who brings peace between the sinner and the just judge. The fifth pamphlet will explain the sacrifice of Christ and how it brought salvation. The sixth will speak about prayer and the happy communion with God as a result of salvation. These pamphlets will lead progressively to the cross and the Christian life.

It is hoped that the distribution of these pamphlets will be done by a Christian society which works among Christians only--called "Salvation of Souls Society." The writer intends to visit the main branch of the society and present the idea to the leaders. Upon their acceptance the writer, with the help of a Moslem convert who works among the Moslems in Cairo, will advise these Christians on how to win Moslems.

After it has been tried, the project is expected to be presented to the other branches of the society. The work will be secretly done in a cell-group organization. Thus the message will be carried by nationals to their countrymen.

#### B. Preparing the Message

For a long time controversy was the method used in approaching the Moslems. By the beginning of the twentieth century, some of the most ardent missionaries to Moslems were ready to express grave doubts about the effectiveness of the controversial method. At the Cairo conference of 1906, D.M. Thornton, while acknowledging that the need to remove misunderstanding might lead to doctrinal discussion, urged his colleagues to avoid theological hairsplitting, to preach the Gospel with moral and spiritual emphasis.<sup>1</sup>

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1. James Addison, op. cit., p. 292.

John Van Ess wrote in "The Moslem World" thus:

Twenty years ago I visualized myself as a knight of the cross, sallying forth to attack the citadel of Islam. As the years went by the ideas of battle and conflict, of strife and victory have receded. I have discarded the old conception of citadels and arenas, and have tried to learn from Him His own method.<sup>1</sup>

A few years later, J. Christy Wilson wrote:

Today the one who would present Christ to the Moslems should be an expert at avoiding argument. Intellectual disputation still remains a favorite sport in the lands of the East. The ordinary Moslem would as soon argue as eat. Our task involves not only the winning of the intellectual consent to the truths of Christianity, but the far more difficult problem of winning the heart and will also for Christ.<sup>2</sup>

The idea is completely true, for the Gospel is Good News. Since the evangelist is a bearer of good news, his mission is not fulfilled until he has shared with the Moslem whatever the Moslem is able to receive of "the unsearchable riches of Christ." The nearest way to the heart of the Moslem is to use what appeals to the heart, rather than to the intellect. A Moslem's heart is not different from a Christian's heart. What would appeal to a Christian would appeal to a Moslem. The Gospel should be presented to the Moslem in all its simplicity, for he needs the message of salvation from sin and reconciliation with God.

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1. John Van Ess, A Quarter Century in Arabia, The Moslem World, April 1929.
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It is the aim of the writer to present to the Moslems the vital truths of Christianity in a simple way and without controversy, with the hope that the Holy Spirit will open the hearts of the Moslems to the need of Christ the Savior.

In writing to the Moslems there is always the difficulty of being misunderstood. The religious Arabic of Islam and the religious Arabic of Christianity have grown so far apart that the meaning of the words, still more their connotations, now differ widely. The Christian terms The Son of God, Trinity, and Atonement convey one meaning to the reader, and another to the writer. It is this need to be sensitive to the Moslem understanding, both of words and ideas, that requires the most thorough watchfulness.

The writer will prepare some pamphlets in Arabic using the vocabulary that conveys to the Moslem the right Christian message.

### C. The Message

#### 1. The First Pamphlet

##### TWO CHOICES

When God created man, He wanted to make him happy. He prepared a wonderful garden for man to live in, and supplied him with all his needs. He gave man

freedom to eat from all the trees of the garden but one, from which he forbade him to eat.

The Bible speaks about the friendship that was between God and man. Man was happy for he was obedient to God.

One day Satan came to man, and gave him another idea about happiness. Satan said that if man disobeyed God and ate from the forbidden tree he would be happy, for then he would be as God. Here was man with two ways to choose--obedience to God, or obedience to Satan. Man thought that the happiness which he wanted was in Satan's advice, so he disobeyed God.

Was man happy?

No! Man discovered that he was naked. He was ashamed of himself and ashamed before God. The advice of Satan did not lead to happiness, and man did not become like God. He was driven out of the garden to hard work.

That story is your story and my story. Satan tells us that happiness comes from cheating our customer in the shop, or telling lies to our neighbors to escape blame. He tells us that God's way is difficult and that we are weak. God says to us that happiness is in obedience to Him and that He will give us strength to obey.

We have to choose one of these two ways--God's way or Satan's way. Christ talks about a broad way that

leads to destruction and about a narrow way that leads to eternal life. God wants us to choose the narrow way that leads to eternal blessing, while Satan wants us to choose the broad way, for he says it gives happiness.

You are free to choose and follow what you choose. God gave us minds to think and free wills to decide.

The Bible says, "Choose for yourself today."

What is your choice?

## 2. The Second Pamphlet.

### THE WRONG CHOICE

God gave us free will to choose His will, not automatically, but with our own thinking and will. Being free we have the possibility of choosing the wrong as well as choosing the right.

Free will makes it possible for each man to become the best possible man of God, or the worst sinner. Free will that we have from God makes sin possible, as well as goodness. God wants to see the free man following His Divine will, for He made man a free human being and not a dummy.

Today we see that we have made many wrong choices when we look at our past. We responded more to the ideas of Satan, thinking that they will bring us

happiness. We laid aside God's ideas to follow our own line of thinking.

King Solomon the wise said, "God made man upright, but they have sought out many devices." (Ecc. 7:29) The Wise wanted to say that man made the wrong choice by his own will and freedom against the will of God.

Wrong choice is sin, for sin means "missing the mark." We missed the right thing and displeased God. Therefore, we are sinners.

We are to be blamed for our choice. We may say that we are weak, or that the circumstances led us to do that, or that the difficulties of living forced us to do the wrong thing. All these are not valid excuses. More than that, the fact that we try to justify ourselves means that we admit our sin but try to hide it.

Let us hear the word of God in the Book of Psalms, "None is righteous, no not one. . . No one does good, not even one." (Psalms 14:1,3)

That is man!

That is you and me!

A helpless sinner, responsible for his sin, for he chose his own way.

### 3. The Third Pamphlet.

#### GOD THE JUST JUDGE

God made man upright, and gave him every opportunity to do good. He revealed to man His will, and

told man clearly what to do.

God did not force man to do good, for good that comes by force is not good. God wanted man to do good by his own free will and choice. Man chose Satan's way and ideas, leaving behind God's ways and ideas.

What shall God do?

Moses the spokesman of God says, "For I proclaim the name of the Lord. Ascribe greatness to our God! The Rock, His work is perfect; for all His ways are justice. A God of faithfulness and without iniquity, just and right is he." (Deuteronomy 32:3,4)

What would that just judge do to a person that ignored His orders? The Lord says, "If you are willing and obedient, you shall eat the good of the land; but if you refuse and rebel, you shall be devoured by the sword, for the mouth of the Lord has spoken." (Isaiah 1: 19,20)

God, the just judge, shall punish the disobedient who refuses His will. "For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and wickedness." (Romans 1:18)

What shall we do?

God is just and hates sin. He punishes the sinner. God is a consuming fire to destroy those who "refuse and rebel."

God's punishment is revealed against every man

that chooses Satan's way. Since every one of us chose Satan's way at least once, we are under God's punishment.

Is there a way out?

#### 4. The Fourth Pamphlet.

##### THE WAY OUT

We are facing a problem!

We are sinners deserving punishment, for God is a just judge and hates sin. Yet the Bible that tells us that God is just, tells us also that God is merciful. It shows how His justice has to condemn us, while His mercy forgives us.

Let us once again go to the Bible, and see how Job the righteous faced that problem and what he says about it. He says, "How can a man be just before God? If one wished to contend with him, one could not answer him once in a thousand times. . . I must appeal for mercy . . . For he is not man as I am, that I might answer him, that we should come to trial together. There is no umpire between us, who might lay his hand upon us both." (Job, Chapter 9.)

We feel the same way Job felt. We need someone who is perfect enough to stand for us before God and to reconcile us with Him.

There is only one that is perfect--the Lord Christ. He was born by the Holy Spirit without sin. He

alone can reconcile us. The Word of God says in the Gospel, "There is one mediator between God and men. . . Christ." (I Timothy 2:5)

This is the solution given in the Gospel for salvation from the punishment of sin, and for reconciliation with God. Christ lays His hands upon us and establishes peace between us and God.

Only God has the solution for our problem. He revealed it to us in His Book. Let us go to the Book to see how salvation from the punishment of sin is worked out.

#### 5. The Fifth Pamphlet.

##### THE WAY OF SALVATION

The well-known Arabic saying--"there is no sweetness without fire"--is completely true. There is nothing valuable that is cheap or free. To get something worthwhile we have to pay for it, or someone else has to pay for it.

Sin is against the will of God. When we miss the mark and do not follow the Divine command, we deserve punishment. To be saved from this penalty is a great fact that deserves a great price.

When we consider the solution we have for the problem of sin we see that there are two solutions.

The first one is that God saves us by His will. But the will of God does not save us, for we acted against it. God's will is to punish sin, for God abhors evil. There is no forgiveness in the Divine will, for we defied it, and it judges us. The idea that God saves us from the penalty of sin if He wills, is not only unreasonable but also makes salvation cheap and, therefore, not worthwhile.

The second solution we have is sacrifice. The idea is clear in the story of Abraham when he took his son to slay him as God commanded. The son was redeemed from death by a sacrifice. The sacrifice took the place of Abraham's son, and the son was saved. The idea of salvation by sacrifice is a Divine idea, for God pointed Abraham to the sacrifice that took his son's place.

Christianity speaks about salvation by sacrifice, the sacrifice of Christ himself, when He gave His life for us. The Bible says, "There is no distinction; since all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, they are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption which is in Christ, whom God put forward as an expiation. . .to justify him who has faith in Christ." (Romans 3: 22-26) Again the Bible speaks about Christ saying, "For he is our peace, who has made us both one, and has broken down the dividing wall of hostility." (Eph. 2:14)



This is the only sound solution which the Holy Book presents to us about salvation from the penalty of sin. It is through Christ's sacrifice that we are to be saved. The Bible says, "There is salvation is no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we might be saved." (Acts 4:12)

This is the Divine solution for salvation. Accept it or reject it, for you are free to choose. But your eternal life depends on your choice. Choose life and live!

#### 6. The Sixth Pamphlet.

##### PRAYER

Christ said, "Men ought always to pray, and not to faint;" (Luke 18:1) and the Gospel says, "Pray constantly." (I Thess. 5:17) This does not mean that one has to abandon his work, and close himself in a room to pray. It means that one has always to be in the spirit of prayer.

When you pray you talk to God and express to Him your feelings. One must be in constant communion with God, according to Christ's words.

Prayer in Christianity is not a formula one repeats, but rather a talk to a friend. When you pray you talk to God as you talk to a friend, for He becomes a friend.

Sin separates us from God, and stops the communion between us. The Bible says, "Your iniquities have made a separation between you and God, and your sins have hid His face from you, so that He does not hear." (Isaiah 59:2) It also says, "If man turns away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer is an abomination." (Proverbs 28:9) When Christ makes reconciliation between man and God, He breaks the dividing wall between man and God. Man then can talk to God, and God hears and answers him.

Prayer is a pleasure to the one who is reconciled with God. No words can describe the joy of the heart that communes with God. There sorrows are washed away, worries disappear, and anxieties vanish. Man becomes happy again, for he walks with God free from sin that separates him from God.

Do you want that kind of prayer? Do you want to have the joy of communion with God?

Christ is the way. He said, "No one comes to the Father but by me." (John 14:6) Come to God by Christ's sacrifice, and enjoy the happiness of life and restore the friendship with God.

#### D. Distribution of the Message

The distribution of the above pamphlets to Moslems should be carried out by born-again Christians who know Christ personally. This work needs wisdom as well as bravery.

In Egypt there is a society by the name of "Salvation of Souls Society." Its name is derived from its purpose. Every year they reach a large number of young people. There are branches of this society in all the big cities of Egypt. The writer came to know Christ as his personal Savior in one of the meetings of this society; thus, he is considered one of their number.

The society consists of Christians who received the vision of reaching souls for Christ, yet who do not think of reaching the Moslems. This they do not do, for it is a difficult work without great results. The work requires knowledge of Moslem beliefs which these young people do not have. It also requires a wisdom and bravery which only the Lord can supply.

It is the purpose of the writer to visit the main branch of the society in Assiut, Upper Egypt, where he came to know the Lord. There he will speak to a small number of the deeply spiritual leaders, challenging them with the command of Christ, and the necessity of the work among the Moslems. Any soul that accepts Christ as Master and Lord should respond positively to His call.

The writer aims to speak to these leaders about the faith of Islam and how to approach the Moslems. He intends also to introduce to them Shaikh Kamel Mansour, the Moslem convert who works among the Moslems in Cairo. Shaikh Kamel Mansour will give more advice with more practical illustrations.

After preparing these leaders, the writer will supply them with the above pamphlets. These young people will start distributing them among their Moslem friends, and follow them with prayer and counseling, answering the questions they raise.

It is expected that the work will be done secretly in a cell-group organization. The group will meet for exchanging discoveries and prayers. More information about how to work and follow up the Moslems will be given by Shaikh Kamel Mansour and/or the writer.

When the members of the society win some Moslems, they will open their hearts to the Moslem converts for they are the result and fruit of their own work. The warm spiritual atmosphere of the society will give the Moslem converts the friendship they need after their excommunication from their own societies.

This plan will be introduced to the other branches of the society as the way opens.

The work in Egypt must be carried on by the nationals. The Christians there should open their eyes to the needs of their fellow countrymen. "Salvation of Souls Society" is a wonderful Christian organization that can do a great deal for the Master's work among the Moslems.

### E. Summary

In this chapter a new project was presented by the writer for the evangelization of Moslems in Egypt. The controversial method has not succeeded, and the only right way to reach the Moslems is as sinners that need the salvation of Christ.

The writer presented a series of six pamphlets with the purpose of leading the Moslem to see the need for a Savior, and how Christ is the only Savior. The pamphlets started with man as a sinner, for he made the wrong choice with his free will. This led to presenting the punishment of God and the need for a mediator. Christ was presented as the only mediator. His sacrifice was the only way of salvation. The series ended with the life of prayer and communion with God after Christ reconciles man with God.

More important than writing the pamphlets is their distribution. The writer introduced a Society that does a great work among Christians in Egypt. He is expecting to introduce the idea of work among the Moslems to this Society. Upon their acceptance of the idea, the writer and a Moslem convert who works now among Moslems can advise the Society members on how to evangelize Moslems.

The idea is to be introduced to the other

branches of the Society all over Egypt.

In the new day of Egypt, Christians must have  
a new way in reaching the Moslems.

## SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The religion of Islam is one of the world's great religions. It is a strong rival of Christianity.

In Egypt Islam is the religion of the majority. The land that was once a hundred per cent Christian now claims only eight per cent.

For the last two centuries mission work has been carried on among Moslems in Egypt with little visible results. The national Christians did not take their share in that great work. This study was to present a project for the evangelization of Moslems in Egypt by writing evangelistic pamphlets prepared especially for the Moslems, and distributing them through a devoted Christian group among their Moslem friends. Better results are expected through the work of the nationals among their fellow countrymen.

In Chapter I the life of Mohammad the prophet of Islam was reviewed historically. The judgment of the great scholars on Mohammad's personality was contrasted with the belief the Moslems hold in him today.

There are four basic sources of Islamic theology:

the Quran, the traditions, the analogy, and the general agreement. From these four authorities the Moslems draw their theoretical belief on God, His angels, His books, His prophets, the day of judgment, and the predestination of good and evil. From the above mentioned sources, the Moslems also form their practical faith of witness, prayer, almsgiving, fasting and pilgrimage to Mecca.

The chapter scanned the history of Islam in Egypt. The Christian Church in Egypt was so persecuted by the Romans that it welcomed the Arab invaders and helped them to take over. The Christians who hoped to be saved from the Roman cruelty found worse treatment under the Islamic rule. Because of different kinds of difficulties, thousands of Christians joined Islam. Only a small minority remained faithful to the Christian religion.

Chapter II dealt with the difficulties of evangelization of Moslems in Egypt. The first difficulty was found to be the Moslem's satisfaction with his religion, for a Moslem believes that Islam is the last and complete revelation of God. The Christian teachings about the Trinity, and Deity and crucifixion of Christ add a second difficulty in the evangelization of Moslems. The set-up of the social life in Egypt makes it more difficult to convert a Moslem, for the family and society



of the convert will reject him, while the Christian community does not offer him a welcome. Economic difficulty is another obstacle, because the Moslem convert to Christianity loses his job and inheritance and is boycotted by all Moslems. The political situation in Moslem countries makes it almost impossible for a Moslem to be converted. In Egypt, outdoor evangelism is prohibited. Conversion to Christianity is considered treachery to the state. More than that, the Quran orders killing the apostate.

These difficulties show why conversion from Islam to any other faith is unlikely.

Chapter III mentioned the history of the mission work among the Moslems in Egypt that was carried on by different groups from different countries. The chapter also included the methods now in effect for the evangelization of Moslems--hospitals and clinics, schools and educational institutions, Bible distribution, the preaching of a Moslem convert in Cairo in a special meeting for the Moslems, the open door through the custom of funerals, and Bible women work in homes. All these are methods used today for reaching the Moslems for Christ. The chapter ended with a survey of the effectiveness of the past-present above efforts. The results are insignificant and nothing to be proud of.

Chapter IV presented the project of the writer for reaching the Moslems. The only way to the heart of the Moslem is to use that which appeals to his heart. The Moslem is a sinner, in need of Christ the Savior. Christ should be presented as the Savior without controversial arguments.

Six pamphlets were prepared with the Moslem reader in mind. The first spoke about man's free will; the second about man's wrong choice with his free will; the third is about God the just judge; the fourth spoke about Christ the Mediator and Savior; the fifth presented how Christ's sacrifice is the way of salvation; the sixth and last spoke about the life of prayer and communion with God after being saved from sin.

The distribution of these pamphlets is expected to be carried out secretly and slowly by a devoted Christian group. That group is to be guided for that type of work by the writer, with the help of a Moslem convert who works among the Moslems in Cairo. Much blessing is expected when the nationals participate in that important work.

Egypt is facing a new day. The time has come when ~~the~~ Christian Egyptians must rise up to carry their responsibility in that new day.

## APPENDIX

The underlying Moslem concepts which the author wishes to refute in his pamphlets are:

### Pamphlet I.

- A. Moslem concept that God is the origin of evil.
- B. Moslem concept of the relationship of Adam's sin to human sin.

### Pamphlet II.

Moslem concept that man has no free will.

### Pamphlet III.

Moslem's basic incapacity to reconcile the justice and mercy of God.

### Pamphlet IV.

Moslem's lack of an adequate mediator. Their only mediator is Mohammad, and they are not sure of his caring.

### Pamphlet V

Moslem concept of salvation as an act of God's will, apart from Christ.

### Pamphlet VI.

Moslem concept of prayer as repetition, without fellowship with God, and without answer from Him.

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