WAITING FOR YOUR MESSAGE
MOSLEMM WOMEN

By

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FOREWORD

No one can study the tragic story of women under the Muslim faith without an earnest longing and prayer that something adequate may be done by the United Church of Christ to meet this need. There is no faith in the world, not even our Christian faith, which is doing such rapid missionary work and extending itself so rapidly, as the faith of Mohammed. Only a very few Boards are attempting to meet the situation and of necessity they are doing it very inadequately. We question whether any denominational Board can deal with this problem. It may be that a great united movement will come and we may see the Gospel of Christ prevail. We think with pity and sorrow of the veiled women of Islam, Is there not equal tragedy in the veil which hangs before our eyes, preventing us from any realization or understanding of the vast need? It is beyond human power, but it is not outside the power of God and the sacrifice of our Lord, Jesus Christ, therefore let us study this year, with constant prayer, that in His time and in His way Christ shall reign.

Mrs. Henry W. Peabody, Chairman
Miss Gertrude Schulze
Mrs. N. Walling Clark
Mrs. Frederick G. Platt
Miss O. N. Lawrence
Mrs. A. V. Pohlman
Miss Emily Tellington
A Moslem Wife's Lament

"Less than the dust beneath the chariot wheel,
Less than the rust that never stained thy sword,
Less than the trust thou hast in me, my lord,
Even less than these!

Less than the weed that grows beside thy door,
Less than the speed of hours spent far from thee,
Less than the need thou hast in life of me,
Even less am I.

Since I, my lord, am nothing unto thee,
See here thy sword, I make it keen and bright.
Lube's last reward—Death comes to me to-night.
Farewell, Zahirudin."
PREFACE

THIS little book invites the reader to turn aside for a while from the joy and peace of her Christian home life—that rich inheritance—and consider other lives less favored. (It is not intended to foster a spirit of Pharisaical superiority or racial pride.) All we have in Christian kinds we have received. Only God makes men and women to differ in their heredity, environment and opportunity. But the solidarity of the human family makes it impossible for any one of us to live unto ourselves or to live as if we lived alone in the world. The condition of so large a portion of humanity as is here unveiled before us concerns each of us.

We who write of these Moslem sisters have ourselves seen "the oppression that is done under the sun and have beheld the tears of such as are oppressed and have no comforter, while on the side of the oppressors there is power." We have also witnessed the power of the living Christ to redeem and transfigure lives.

When the iron has entered the soul the pen must write more than mere ink. Purely objective study is then impossible. Our missionary life and experience in the early pioneer days in Arabia and later in the chief city of the Moslem world, Cairo, furnish the background to our thoughts. Yet we owe far more to others than we can express. From the documents of the Islamic faith, missionary reports, personal letters,
books of travel and first-hand testimony we have gath-
ered and marshaled our facts. How great our debt is
to these sources the reader may see. We began and
eend our labor of love as a work of faith. We pray that
God may accept and use it.

Amy E. Zwemer,
Samuel M. Zwemer.

Cairo, Egypt.

"What is the final ending?
The issue can we know?
Will Christ oulive Mohammed?
Will Kail's altars go?
This is our faith tremendous.
Our wild hope, who shall scorn?
That in the name of Jesus,
The world shall be reborn."
"Just because true religion is the best, false religion is the worst of all things. 'Corruptio optimi pessima.' That is why it is the very crown and climax of shallow-thinking cant to say that it does not matter what you believe. It is the one thing in the world that does matter. Literally everything depends upon it as far as you and your worth to God and man is concerned. To say that it does not matter is to assert that, so long as you center your whole life round someone or something it does not matter in the least what it is. The enthusiastic and devoted miser is as good as the devoted and enthusiastic minister; the devout hunter of honors, as sane as the devout healer of men. That is manifestly absurd. Religion is a dangerous thing. It is a mental dynamic which can either blow you to heaven or drive you to hell."

G. A. STUBBERT KENNEDY,
_The Word and the Work._

"Islam saw God but not man; saw the claims of deity but not the rights of humanity; saw authority but failed to see freedom—therefore, hardened into despotism, stifled into formalism, and sunk into death. Mohammed teaches a God above us; Moses teaches a God above us and yet with us; Jesus Christ teaches God above us, God with us and God in us."

JAMES FREEMAN CLARKE.
CHAPTER I

MOSLEM LIFE

WERE a Jewish maiden in London privileged
to welcome in her drawing-room sisters of
her own faith from Warsaw, Budapest, Baghdad,
Tunis, Tangiers, Jerusalem and New York, she
would be surprised at the variety of costume and
color, of culture and language, but she would soon
recognize by infallible signs that the group had
one faith and were bound together by strong spiri-
tual ties which neither time nor distance can sever.
There is a Jewish race and a Jewish world with a
common tradition, and the great hope of the ful-
fillment of God's promise to Abraham. Literature
and life, thought and destiny, have one center and
pivot.

There is also a Moslem world. What Moses,
Jerusalem and Palestine are to the Jews, this, and
vastly more, Mohammed, Mecca and Arabia are to
the Mohammedan world. Not only is this land
the cradle of their religion and the birth-place of
their prophet, the shrine toward which, for cen-
turies, prayers and pilgrimages have gravitated;
but Arabia is also, according to universal Moslem
tradition, the original home of Adam after the
fall, and the home of the great patriarchs—Abra-
ham, Sara and Hagar, Isaac and Ishmael.
Islam, the religion of two hundred and thirty-four millions of human beings, was founded by a certain Arabian named Mohammed, son of Abdal-lan, born about A.D. 570, in early life a caravan-manager, later a respectable citizen of the town of Mecca in the Hejaz or west coast district of Arabia. An epileptic, a dreamer, a thinker also it must be admitted, this man grew up surrounded by heathen Arabsians, by Jews full of the fables and errors of the Talmud, and by idolators or sects of pseudo-Christianity.

Two things Mohammed clearly grasped in his meditations: (1) The heathen religions around him were already obsolete; (2) Judaism and Christianity though debased were strong because they worshipped one God and had for their authority a sacred book which could be read by high and low. On these two conclusions arose his dreams of a new religion which should be founded upon Allah, the one true God; himself the Prophet of Allah; the Koran sacred book of Allah and Mohammed. Mohammed stood at first, as has been said, in a minority of one. His wife became his first convert. Others followed. But the new sect in Mecca grew and spread in secret. Persecution arose and grew. The flight of the Prophet from Mecca to Medina followed. On the 20th day of July A.D. 622, there appeared in the city of Yathreth in...
Arabia, a fugitive of a new religion driven from his home. This man, persecuted and outcast in his native town, was hailed with enthusiasm as a prophet in Yathreb, which changed its name to Medina, City of the Prophet, shortened later to Medina. The flight of Mohammed from Mecca to Medina, known as the Hegira (exile), marks the opening of the Mohammedan era.

"Conversion or Death" The people who received the preaching of Mohammed represented religions degenerate and corrupt. The land was ripe for reform, and without doubt the early utterances of the prophet contained elements of truth and right, while later his cruelty and ambition were revealed. His preaching fell like a spark into dry stubble, and soon the desert of Arabia was aflame with the new doctrine. Myriads of followers flocked around Mohammed. Everywhere his hosts swept, with sword in hand, their war cry "conversion or death." In eighteen years Syria, Persia and Egypt had fallen before Islam. Our history presents no movement so dramatic, so startling, so appalling.

We can speak without exaggeration of "the Moslem World," for Islam has become a political world power. Consider the following carefully reasoned statement quoted by Canon Gairdner:* "Islam is the only one of the great religions to come after Christ-

tianity; the only one that definitely claims to correct, complete and supersede Christianity; the only one that categorically denies the truth of Christianity; the only one that has in the past signally defeated Christianity; the only one that seriously disputes the world with Christianity; the only one which, in several parts of the world, is today forestalling and gaining on Christianity."

The menace of the religion of Mohammed could hardly be more startlingly or more justly stated. Apart from its political implications, what is this religion? What of its social and personal influence? What has it done for women?

3. Creed and Characteristics of Islam

The Mohammedan creed consists of six short articles containing much fundamental truth mingled with error. Modern women know it by heart and repeat it as follows:

"I believe in God, His angels, His revelation in books, His prophets, in the resurrection of the dead, and in the predestination of good and evil."

We refer to other books for a detailed exposition of this creed, which is summed up by saying:

"There is no God but Allah, and Mohammed is God's Apostle."

The five duties incumbent on all believers in