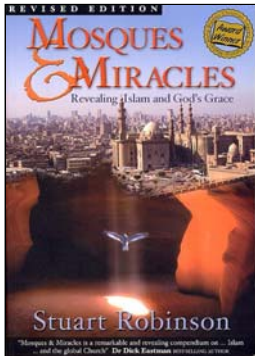


MOSQUES & MIRACLES

Revealing Islam and God's Grace – by Stuart Robinson. City Harvest Publications.
Revised Edition 2003. RRP \$



I am reminded of the message of this book each time yet another suicide bomber - in Israel, Iraq, Indonesia or elsewhere – obliterates himself (or herself), gruesomely scattering his own and his targets' body parts amid the wreckage of cars and buildings. Robinson quotes, after one such incident in Israel, a Hamas spokesman: “our love for death is greater than our love for life.”

In Islam, ‘the whole of life is seamlessly, inter-connectedly religious.’ Whether these attitudes exhibit what we in the west call extreme fundamentalism, or what most Muslims see as merely ‘a consistent natural process inherent in Islam’, in keeping with the will of Allah as expressed in the Quran, Islam appears to be on collision course with the West. ‘Under the influence of secular humanism in the West, Christianity has been individualised and privatised. To some extent it has largely abandoned setting a moral and religious agenda for its own society. The Church has been marginalised. Muslims on the other hand, whose world view does not separate religion from society, hold that the corrupt religion at its core, Christianity, is responsible for producing a corrupt, amoral society.’

Author Dr Stuart Robinson is Senior Pastor of Crossway Baptist Church in Melbourne. Prior to that for fourteen years he lived and worked as a missionary in an Islamic society. His book is tremendously informative about Islam – its teaching, its history and its current statistical, geographical and ideological scope across the world. It also offers a powerful challenge to Christian believers, especially church leaders.

There is also encouragement in its stories of how Muslims are being won for Christ today, sometimes at great cost, and how our sovereign God brings this about against all obstacles – through dreams, to which Islam (and the Bible) attributes much validity; through other supernatural events – miracles, healings, deliverances; through the sheer attractiveness of the person of Jesus, his life and ministry; through the Bible itself, whenever it can actually be obtained and read; and by encountering God's intimacy and love through Christians who know and love him.

One factor in Christianity's weakness is its fragmentation and lack of essential unity, and one of those divisions among Bible believing evangelicals is along the lines of what is labelled charismatic Christianity versus a more sober ‘scholarly’ evangelicalism. It would be tragic if these two streams cannot work together in showing Christ's love to Muslims and seeking to win them. Robinson comes from that charismatic strand. His book is readable yet scholarly, meticulously researched and footnoted, with over a hundred of its 400 plus pages devoted to endnotes, index and bibliographies, plus a section with material for Bible teaching to Muslims.

Lesley Hicks
February 2004