

those that are ethically unacceptable, then his choice cannot be “unrelated” to the ethical quality of those whom he elects. Quite to the contrary, the notion of a divine pattern actually makes God’s election entirely dependent on the undesirability of the elect. Indeed, Grindheim implies such divine passivity when he states: “In his call, God *follows* the pattern of reversal of values” (157, emphasis supplied). It is highly doubtful that Paul’s point in Rom 9–11 is that God passively *follows* a particular pattern or logic of choice in his election.

In this book, Grindheim has certainly proven that some sort of reversal takes place in divine election. It would have been immensely helpful if he had explained with greater clarity what is being reversed.

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Heinz, Hans, and Daniel Heinz. *Das Christentum begegnet dem Islam: Eine religiöse Herausforderung*. Zürich, Switzerland: Advent-Verlag, 2007. 160 pp. Paper, €9,50.

The book *Das Christentum begegnet dem Islam: Eine religiöse Herausforderung* (“Christianity Encounters Islam: A Religious Challenge”) courageously delves into an array of subjects that a few decades ago were of concern primarily for missionaries in Islamic areas. The wave of Muslim “guest workers,” refugees, and immigrants in Europe in recent years has not only served as a catalyst to a certain Islamic renaissance and, on some occasions, aggressive fundamentalism, but also forced Europeans to reconsider their own democratic rights, social laws, and positions on religion and freedom of the press. This new climate has unleashed an array of critical debates in the public forum in the wake of severe tensions, confrontations, and even serious violence and killings. The authors (father and son) address this topical issue and suggest that a better understanding of Islam as a religion, its beliefs, and observable lifestyles, will be a step toward forging a more peaceful coexistence between Christians and Muslims.

It is amazing how much information and interpretation the authors have managed to cram into 120 pages of text, not to overlook the appendices that on their own offer another forty pages of well-researched material. There are more facts and knowledge pressed into this booklet than many other hefty books on the same subjects. *Das Christentum begegnet dem Islam* addresses the most important religious and cultural events that Islam and Christianity encountered in their more than 1,400-year history. A thorough exploration of Muslim tradition and history is coupled with meaningful references to contemporary church history. The book opens with the early pre-Islamic Church Fathers’ struggles on defining the nature of Christ and concludes by considering the often-resultless endeavors of Seventh-day Adventist approaches to Islamic people and the Islamic context.

Numerous issues are dealt with directly and make for interesting reading. Extensive references to the Bible and the Koran provide some fascinating and even surprising interpretations and conclusions. Confrontational issues are critically examined, matched by fair arguments that reveal the standpoint

of the authors. Points in dispute are treated in a balanced manner. The many footnotes explain issues and provide detailed references to leading authorities in the field. The book deals briefly but skillfully with the Pre-Islamic world, the life of Muhammad, and the development of Islamic theology. Critical issues in Islam such as Jihad, the role of women, and the Hijrah are adequately touched. Useful comparisons between the Bible and the Koran and Jesus and Muhammad are also made.

The authors have particularly focused on the role of Jesus Christ in Islam. Attention has been drawn to some astounding similarities between Christ and Muhammad and also to crucial points in Islam, where Jesus on one side is granted high status, but on the other a belittling position. The book clarifies the various biblical honorific titles for Christ such as Messiah and the Word and proves that the application of such expressions in the Koran under the Arabic language do not convey the same exalted meaning. The Arabic for Messiah has more the meaning of the sinless one; and Word the meaning of the preacher (63, 64).

A couple of important and refreshing observations should be mentioned. Today there is a tendency to compare the Muslim Jihad (Holy War) with the Crusades. While Muslims accuse, Christian apologists beg for pardon. To this contentious debate, the authors, however, rightly identify the Jihad as a concept that is authentically part of Islam, deeply-rooted in a theology based upon the Koran and the Hadith. The “Christian” wars such as the Crusades and colonial expansionism, however, are not a part of biblical commands and Christian teachings. Although these events took place under the cover of the church, the intentions underpinning the acts were against the spirit of true Christianity (36).

It should be mentioned that the book fails to address in detail such prominent foundational elements in Islam as the Five Pillars, the Five Articles of Faith, and the Hadith and Shari’ah law. It is clear, however, that these sources for Muslim faith, lifestyle, and ethics have been consulted. Still, references, quotations, or even paragraphs dealing with these bases for belief and practice would have strengthened some of the arguments.

The two authors, who possess Austrian passports, have written the book in Germany and published it in Switzerland. Their work reveals German academic *Gründlichkeit* (“thoroughness”). There is an excellent and up-to-date bibliography with German scholarly references to valuable works on Islam and its role in the modern world. The chronology and glossary are satisfactory. What is greatly missing is an index. The authors deal, over relatively few pages, with so many and such varied subjects that a somewhat detailed index would be of great value.

A comparison between Muslim/Christian beliefs is always a minefield to enter. Christian apologists are, on occasion, tempted to suggest similarities where really only names are somewhat alike. A case in point is the suggestion that we as Christians share a belief with Muslims—namely that Christ will, at the end of time, be Lord of the world (Herr der Welt). However, even a superficial study of the purpose and events connected with Isa’s return in

Islamic eschatology will show the great dissimilarity with the glorious second coming of Christ in the Bible.

The authors have carefully compared main Christian doctrines with corresponding Islamic beliefs. It would have been helpful also to have compared the most important Seventh-day Adventist beliefs with corresponding Islamic doctrines. There are interesting similarities, but also significant contrasting points here.

Christentum begegnet dem Islam is not written for missionaries to Muslim fields, although it would also be useful for them to be acquainted with the approaches suggested. Essentially, the book is written for Europeans, or more specifically German-speaking Seventh-day Adventists facing the massive immigration and growth of Muslims in their countries. Still, it has a message for Christians anywhere in the world where such immigration takes place. *Christentum begegnet dem Islam*, therefore, should be translated into English and other languages.

Historisches Archiv der Siebenten-
Tags-Adventisten in Europa
Bern, Switzerland

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Jones, R. Clifford. *James K. Humphrey and the Sabbath-Day Adventists*. Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2007. 250 pp. Cloth, \$50.00.

R. Clifford Jones's study of James K. Humphrey and the relatively small, short-lived United Sabbath-Day Adventist denomination is at the same time the best academic monograph to date on the Black *Seventh-day* Adventist experience. For until the events of 1929-1930, which precipitated the organization of the United Sabbath-Day Adventist Church, Humphrey had been the foremost Black Seventh-day Adventist minister. The 900-member Harlem congregation that he founded and pastored was the denomination's largest urban congregation in America, and his break with the denomination would prove to be a stimulus of critical importance in shaping the larger body's response to the racial dilemma.

Humphrey's story began to make its way into the historiography of Adventism during the late twentieth century, primarily through Joe Mesar and Tom Dybdahl's article, "The Utopia Park Affair and the Rise of Northern Black Adventists," published in 1974. Yet, says Jones, Humphrey remains "largely unknown," usually referred to in passing as a divisive and ultimately recalcitrant opponent of the Seventh-day Adventist organization (11). Thus the need for a thorough, fair-minded, and contextualized study, which Jones admirably provides. He portrays Humphrey and his movement as part of the African-American struggle for "freedom, empowerment, and self-determination." Within that general setting, Jones expertly navigates the reader through the more specific forces shaping Humphrey's world—the varying strategies of African-American religious leaders, the Black urban religious movements of the early-to-mid twentieth century, the Harlem Renaissance,