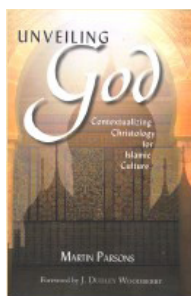


Changes at the deeper levels of culture should be a main focus of missionaries and ministers. Mission is to call people to a solid transformation with Jesus Christ as the center. A narrative based approach that is shaped by biblical concepts will enable people groups to develop a biblically shaped worldview and approach to life. Biblical narratives present Jesus as the liberator for all people and should empower them to engage in the process of redemption, including the redemption of people, the social environment, health, worship, all socio-cultural aspects, as well as their spiritual relationships and allegiance to God.

Bradshaw uses literature research, personal experiences, as well as biblical hermeneutics to construct his argumentation throughout the book. This work presents a helpful bibliography for those interested in further study of the subject and related topics. In addition, he refers several times to internet resources that I found particularly helpful. This book is recommended as a textbook for students as well as for pastors, missionaries, administrators, and anyone interested or involved in leadership and the social change processes.

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Parsons, Martin. 2006. *Unveiling God: Contextualizing christology for Islamic culture*. Pasadena: William Carey Library. 400 pp. Paperback, \$29.99.

Martin Parsons has ministered to the Church in two Islamic countries. It became apparent to him during these years that the Church was attempting to communicate its understanding of Jesus in the language of the Graeco-Roman creeds of the Church. This only perpetuated the misunderstanding that the Christian has more than one God (Jesus is the second “person” of the Godhead), that the Christian God could have biological children (Jesus is the “Son of God”), and that their God is not the Almighty God (Jesus brings God down to our level). Obviously, the Church needs to find a way to communicate that will help those of the Islamic background understand the true Jesus. The first chapter of *Unveiling God* describes and evaluates some of the approaches used throughout mission history to communicate Christ in Islamic cultures.

Parsons correctly observed that the Christological hurdles between Muslims and Christians today (and the Quran and the Bible) are very similar to what the first century church

had to overcome in sharing the Good News with people of Israel (New Testament and Old Testament concepts). His book, then, is an attempt to find in the New Testament Christology communicated to the monotheistic culture of its day possible contextualization constructs for the Church's Christological presentation to the monotheistic culture of Islam. The book leads the reader through a study of first century monotheism and then looks for ways that the New Testament church contextualized its message to its audience using their understanding of monotheism, theophany, and epiphany. This is followed in the last two chapters by a study of Islamic monotheism and suggestions for contextualizing Christology to their understanding of monotheism and God's relationships with mankind.

Parsons is cautious in the process. He does not over simplify the tough exercise of contextualizing while still communicating Truth. He carefully reveals where Judaism and Islamic understanding might be similar and where differences in

concepts—even to the same biblical and quranic stories—might necessitate adjustments to the early church's language and concepts. He allows for areas that might always be stumbling blocks, since the Truth is not compatible with the Quranic or Islamic understanding. Parsons does, however, suggest many realistic, scripturally sound but contextualized constructs for mission to Islam.

Anyone seriously wishing to share the Truth about Jesus in ways that can be understood and accepted by a spiritual follower of Allah should carefully read what Parsons has written. They will find some of his specific suggestions immediately useable in their mission. More importantly, however, readers open to the concept of critical contextualizing as a necessity in mission will find this book helpful in their own personal contextualization thinking as they attempt, by God's grace, to find ways to present the Good News in their specific Islamic cultures.

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### **Forthcoming articles in the next issues of *JAMS*:**

- Bounded and Centered Sets: Possible Application for Adventist Mission
- Insights from the Sociology of Religion for Movements to Christ among Muslims
- The Development of Organizational and Leadership Paradigms in the Seventh-day Adventist Church
- Logic Systems in Cross-Cultural Mission