

**A Muslim and a Christian in Dialogue**  
**Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1997. Pp. 219 (paper) Price unknown.**

Reviewed by Rev. Bassam M. Madany in the  
Calvin Theological Journal, Volume 33, Number 2, November 1998

---

This is a unique book as it offers the reader a dialogue, in written form, that took place between an East African Muslim, Badru D. Kateregga and an American Christian missionary, David W. Shenk. Both have taught at Kenyatta University, in Nairobi, Kenya.

Each participant discussed certain basic doctrines and practices of their respective faiths in twelve brief chapters. Prof. Kateregga dealt with such topics as, There is no God but Allah, The Creation, Adam and Hawwa, Satan and Evil, The Books of God, The Prophets of Allah, The Seal of the Prophets, The Umma, Divine Guidance and Peace, Worship, Right Conduct, and the Mission of the Umma.

Prof. Shenk organized his expositions of the Christian tradition under the following titles: The Lord God Is One, The Creation, Adam and Eve, Sin and Evil, The Word of God, The Prophets in History, Jesus the Messiah, Salvation, The Church, Worship and Fellowship, Right Conduct, and The Mission of the Church.

For an understanding of what Sunni Islam teaches, Kateregga does a good job. It becomes very clear that he takes a strong exception to the Biblical teaching about the radical nature of the Fall and the necessity of redemption. Such a stand would explain the Muslim rejection of the Incarnation and the mission of the divine-human person of Jesus, the Messiah. One wishes that Shenk was clearer in his responses to his Muslim counterpart. For example, I have read and re-read his words on the topic of The Seal of the Prophets, and failed to grasp their true meaning and intention.

"Thus when a Christian looks at the Prophet Muhammad, he needs to evaluate Muhammad in light of the total biblical witness culminating in Jesus the Messiah. To the extent that the Prophet Muhammad accepts the total biblical witness and the central significance of Jesus the Messiah, and to the extent that the life and teachings of Muhammad give witness to the revelation of suffering, redemptive love which we perceive in Jesus the Messiah, Christians should appreciate and affirm the Prophet Muhammad. " (P. 76)

While we cannot but applaud the irenic spirit which pervaded the entire dialogue, ultimately not much is accomplished on the Christian side in any serious conversation with a representative of a world religion, when the uniquely redemptive character of the Biblical revelation is not re-iterated time and again. The human predicament is not merely a lack of supernatural knowledge, but fundamentally the need for a divine intervention. Jesus Christ was not simply a prophet who gave mankind another law, but the unique savior and emancipator of mankind which he accomplished by his vicarious death on the cross and his mighty resurrection from the dead. The high Christology of John 1, Colossians 1, and Hebrews 1, must form an integral part of our

witness to the followers of other religions. Unless the Christian's participation in dialogue becomes a passionate desire that the other experiences a saving knowledge of the Messiah, the encounter ends up in nothing more than a friendly conversation.

Any future reprint of this book, should have the following corrections: On page 91, "awe (rabbah) should be spelled (rahba);" on page 122, "foulness" should be spelled "fullness"; on page 142, "Thy word as a lamp" should read "Thy word is a lamp," and on the bottom of page 167, "Ismailil" should read "Ismail."