

Ann Cooper and Elise A. Maxwell, eds. *Ishmael, My Brother: A Christian Introduction to Islam*. Third Edition: Revised and Updated. Grand Rapids: Monarch Books, 1985, 1993, 2003. Pages 352.

This long-valued study guide has been updated for the contemporary scene. The religious and worldview confrontation with Islam is unavoidable. Many Christians today are afraid of Muslim people, and they do not know how to live in an inter-cultural community, and yet they must.

Designed for individual or small group study, the volume has an Aeducational goals@ paragraph at the beginning of each chapter, bibliographical recommendations, study exercises, illustrations, and other helps for learning not only the theology but also the lifestyle practices of Muslim people. The goal of the book seems to be to help Christians reach out to Muslims as friends, and in that context of trust, our witness is more effective.

Chapters are included on the religious practices of Islam. How do they practice handwashing, prayer, or fasting? What about the place of women in Islam? What about the variations in expressions of Islam and the political face of Islam? One chapter is entitled *Islam as Culture*.@ One examines ideas of God, and another surveys the Qur=an.

There are many good books on Islam, and many helpful sources. This book has its own weaknesses, but also many strengths. The authors remind us that we relate to individuals who are religious (rather than relating to religions as such). They argue that we can learn from these people without compromising gospel truths.

When relating to Jews, we know they need the gospel, but we also recognize them as a special case. The Old Testament is their Bible too. But what of the sons of Ishmael? Are they too a special case? Needing the gospel, yes, descendants of Abraham, yes. We cannot ignore the people of Islam in the modern world, and this is a well-designed study guide to help us understand who the sons of Ishmael have become, and how can we reach them for Christ.

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