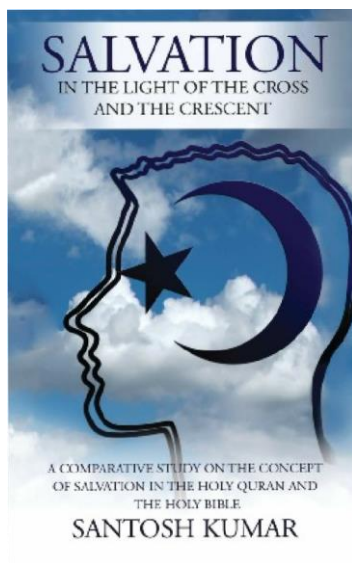


Book Review

Mohanraj Wilson Israel

Kumar, Santosh, (2019). *Salvation: In the light of the cross and the crescent*, Chennai, India: Notion Press Publication. ISBN: 9781647604974. Print version \$ 8.99

In this book, “Salvation in the light of the Cross and the Crescent,” the author, Santosh Kumar, does a comparative study on the concept of salvation in the Holy Qur’an and the Holy Bible. As stated by the author, this work



started as an MA thesis and has expanded into this book published. Dialoguing is very important for any Christian or Muslim when it comes to sharing his or her faith. Dialoguing means establishing points of contact with those of other faiths to understand the beliefs and faith of the other, thus making it easy to present the message. This is evident in this book. The author has taken the most fundamental doctrine, the Doctrine of Salvation, bringing out the similarities and dissimilarities in this doctrine as found in Christianity and Islam.

Since I have known the author personally, I have seen his passion and thirst for truth. As a result, he has developed a keen interest in studying other religions, evident in this work. The book's title is well chosen: Salvation in the light of the Cross and the Crescent, the two obvious symbols of the two religions. Mr. Santosh Kumar has exhibited a keen interest in world religions, particularly Christianity, Hinduism, and Islam.

Currently, he serves as an Assistant Professor in the Division of Religious Studies and the Research Editor at Spicer Adventist University, Pune, India. His area of interest includes world religions, anthropology, contextualization, oral traditions, urban mission, church growth, and planting of churches. He is currently a Doctoral candidate preparing to defend his degree in Missiology, concentrating in Intercultural Studies at Andrews University, Michigan, USA. This book is first published in 2019 by Notion press, including the Bibliographic list and a Glossary of terms used in Christianity and Islam.

This is the author's first work. Although he has written other papers and articles for journals, this is his first book. Since this sprang from his Master's thesis and compared to other articles he has written, this certainly is well-researched material. The opening of the story was exciting. The progression was good. It started well, progressed well, and reached a conclusion very naturally. What I found most interesting in the book is the argument put forth to prove the point—to dialogue between the Muslims and the Christians regarding the concept of Salvation. The story was written in the third person, which is crucial to the plot. The author went into great detail about the setting.

I see that this work is a result of a deep desire in the heart of the author who was seeking an answer to his own identity and destiny, and it is this quest for his own identity and meaning in life that has led him to study several other scriptures in the pursuit of truth and which has ultimately brought him to accept Christianity to be his path to salvation. This background has created a special interest in the Muslim religion; the adherents are known for their simplicity,

compassion, and dedication to God, mainly since it teaches “Peace for All,” although this may have been greatly misunderstood.

This book is well written since the author has had a balanced approach to Islamic Literature and Christian Literature. He has spent time looking at Islamic Literature and Christian Literature, which is visible as he introduces the book's first chapter. He has also equally balanced his study by devoting the second chapter to a clear understanding of the concept of Salvation in the Holy Qur'an, where he has clearly described Qur'anic Soteriology, the Development of Islamic Soteriology, *Shar'iah* and Salvation, the five pillars of Islam, works, repentance, forgiveness, grace, and predestination. Similarly, in the third chapter, he has clearly described Salvation in the Holy Bible, where he has concentrated on the Salvation in the Old Testament where he discusses God as Deliverer, God of Promise, and the Sacrificial system and Salvation. Similarly, he has concentrated on Salvation in the New Testament, where he discusses the means of Salvation, Faith in Christ, Repentance, Grace, Predestination, Justification, Sanctification, and Glorification. Then in the fourth chapter, he brings out the Commonalities and Differences between the two religious faiths. He has presented Repentance, Faith, and Submission to God as commonalities and Original Sin, Intercession, Forgiveness, Born Sinless, Salvation by Works or Grace, and Predestination as differences. Then based on these arguments from the Qur'anic scriptures and the Bible, he has drawn up his conclusion in Chapter five. The author has also authenticated his work by referring to excellent primary sources. He has also included a glossary of terms to make it easy for readers to understand the terms used.

The book has met my expectation. The book came out well since the author balances his approach and clearly outlines the doctrine of salvation in the Qur'an and the Bible. Moreover, since the author has deliberately tried to bring a dialogue between the two religious faith and focused on a comparative study on the concept of salvation in the Holy Qur'an and the Holy Bible, this book has met the standard for publication. Since the book compares the concept of salvation in Christianity and Islam, and because an Islamic symbol is employed, the author has represented the cross alongside the Crescent appropriately.

I want to recommend this book to general readers interested in knowing about Islam and Christianity and the concept of Salvation in these two religions rather than theologians. Moreover, I believe the book's title is very catchy: *Salvation: In the Light of the Cross and the Crescent*, which can be used as a perfect tool in the hands of a Christian who is attempting to present the gospel message.

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