Clarion Review

Religion

The Brotherhood in Islam: Message to the Jews, Christians, and Muslims
Ahmed Shendy Yousef
Dorrance Publishing
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Four Stars (out of Five)

"No one has any right to hate a Jew, Christian or Muslim just because of his/her religion," lectures Ahmed Shendy Yousef in this collection of what are essentially Friday prayer sermons and short essays on Islam and how it relates to other world religions and the modern world. Despite the horrors that have been done by those who claim to wear God's mantle, adds Yousef, "None of these religions call for hate or violence."

Born in Egypt and educated as a doctor there, the author is a physical therapist who has lived in the United States for thirty years. He is also a devout Muslim, as is obvious from his writings. Many readers may rankle at his conservative views on modern women, whom he chides for too often being more "competitors rather than companions." Others may take issue with his broadening of the definition of adultery to include sex between boyfriends and girlfriends. However, such statements are ancillary to the primary theme of his book, which is that we all need to work together rather than against each other. In God's eyes, believes Yousef, Christians, Muslims, and Jews are brothers.

"Learn to be united at home," Yousef pleads, and then work to be at peace with your neighbors, your countrymen, and people around the world. Although he faults the Christian West for being both "the greatest war-making" force and "responsible for killing the largest number of men in human history," Yousef does not call for vengeance. On the contrary, he calls on Christians to return to the teachings of Christ (and Mohammed) to "love his brother as he loves himself."

At a time when Islam is tainted with the blood spilled by terrorists claiming to act in its name, Yousef wants his readers to know that Islam, like other religions, is based on love, charity, and tolerance.

Islam, he adds, is "the most stereotyped and misunderstood" of all the great faiths.

Yousef struggles mightily to show what these religions have in common. He points to passages in the Quran that he argues mirror the Ten Commandments of the Old Testament, and, pertinent to that argument, he includes a sixteen-point primer on how all people of faith can work together to “act as one family” and “come closer to God.”

While peace, brotherhood, and tolerance are key themes of *The Brotherhood in Islam*, Yousef is first and foremost a Muslim. He believes that his own faith is “the last message from God,” and believes that the world has been instructed to become one united in Islam. Many Christians and Jews will take exception to that argument, and it is through such broad claims and similar statements that Yousef risks losing the very audience he is attempting to reach.

Yousef’s style is more that of a preacher than of a writer. As the reader progresses through his twenty-one chapters, it becomes evident that his words are meant more for the ear than for the eye. This is one of those rare works that would probably be more effective as an audio book.

Mark McLaughlin