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is proud to announce the

reprint and release

of one of the most

stunning, explosive

books ever written on

mission to Islam.

# Mission to Islam and Beyond

A Practical Theology of Mission  
Jens Christensen



Jens Christensen, 1899 – 1966, was a theologian of great calibre. A Lutheran Bishop and pastor, he was a man who worked most of his life amongst Muslims. Few men have loved and understood the Muslim as he did.

## What the mission experts say . . .

Islamic doctrines stand in stark contrast to Christian theology, and a study of Islam can make us value even more the truth and the grace of the gospel. This book challenges Christians to understand more thoroughly, essential biblical doctrines.

*Rev. Canon Dr David Claydon*

*Fed. Sec., Church Missionary Soc., Australia*

Bishop Christensen's name is legendary in north-west Pakistan. His approach to Muslims and to Islam comes not only from practical experience but from deep suffering. We do not have to agree with every detail of his thought to know that here is someone with an appreciation of the uniqueness of Christian revelation, which is held together with sympathy for those of other faiths.

*Right Rev. Dr Michael Nazir-Ali*

*Bishop of Rochester, England*

Jens Christensen was no idealistic armchair theorist. He was a missionary apostle whose faith was hammered out over many years in one of the world's most difficult environments. Combining exceptional experience, knowledge and theology of both Christianity and Islam, Christensen engages his readers and urges action.

*Dr Stuart Robinson, Crossway, Melbourne*

## Preface to the 1977 Edition

For several years there have been requests for Bishop Jens Christensen's lectures on 'The Practical Approach to Muslims' which have been out of print. An edition of them in book form is therefore very welcome.

Bishop Christensen spent a lifetime working among Muslim Pathans in the North West Frontier Province of Pakistan. He was probably closer to Pathans both in their thinking and in the use of their language, Pushto, than any other westerner. I had the great privilege of working under him for seven years, and later I succeeded him. As few others he was committed to the Church of Christ and to the apostolate to Islam. His own scholarly study of Islam was profound. Nevertheless, he trusted his experience of the living Islam rather than the academic presentation of it by Western scholars. For his whole lifetime he was grappling with Islam as a theological challenge to the Christian Church and its mission. He is one of the very few original thinkers in missiology since the Second World War. As a person and as a theologian he was always scrupulously honest and never willing to accept an easy way out unless it was the answer to the problem. This is why Jens Christensen's books, whether in Danish, English or Pushto, are always interesting and reward the reader. It is due to his efforts that we have a relatively rich Christian literature in Pushto, and his excellent Pushto translation of the New Testament is among the best in any language of the subcontinent.

Jens Christensen's 'The Practical Approach to Muslims' may be felt by many not only to be provoking, but also to be putting the questions too uncompromisingly. Bishop Christensen never believed in qualifying his statements for fear the point might be lost. This is therefore a book for those who are willing to think and struggle with the difficult questions that Islam poses for Christian mission. Perhaps the real reason why some may not find this book acceptable is that Bishop Christensen is absolutely honest, never tries to hide behind pious phrases, never seeks for easy solutions and is never evasive. This attitude may be unpopular in some circles today. But surely it is now more necessary than ever in our striving for dialogue and a sympathetic approach to Islam to take Islam entirely seriously.

There are two points on which I think Jens Christensen's call to an honest approach are especially applicable today. First, there is an approach to Islam which too easily tries to find common ground in religious terms which seem to be similar, but actually have quite a different content. The term 'revelation' is one of these. Jens Christensen stresses that the Christian concept of revelation as revelation of God is something quite different from the Muslim idea about revelation from God. Many Muslims would agree here with Bishop Christensen.

Secondly, Jens Christensen puts a question mark against our attempt to use instruments such as good works, or philanthropic institutions such as schools and hospitals, to convert Muslims. Today there seems to be a growing awareness that very often our use of such instruments has been interpreted by Muslims as an exploitation of their economic, medical and educational difficulties. Jens Christensen stresses, in my opinion rightly, that God Himself is the subject in Evangelisation, and the only instrument He uses is the evangelist who proclaims the Gospel. This book shows us that the problem in mission to Islam is theological, and he challenges us to take this seriously. Perhaps the reason for the neglect of the apostolate to the Muslims is that the Church has been afraid of facing these theological questions connected with Islam.

I hope that this book will be not only a help to those who are trying to grapple with these problems, but also a challenge to the Christian mission to take Islam seriously and to be willing to rethink our often superficial understanding of the Gospel. I heartily recommend Jens Christensen to all who are working among Muslims, or who are otherwise interested to see what an honest approach to Islam implies.

*Right Rev. Arne Rudvin Bishop of Karachi, Pakistan*



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