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From Fear to Love

BY AN ARAB PASTOR

eagerly taking it in and eating it all up, including all the praise for the bravery of ISIS and al-Qaeda in "fighting the infidels." My fear turned to hatred.

Troubled Soul

I got out of the bus frightened even more. I am supposed to love my enemies, my haters, my persecutors, and I had missed a golden opportunity. That young man knew I was a Christian but he didn't see Christ in me. My troubled soul could only plead for the Lord's mercy and forgiveness.

Comforted

I shared my experience with a senior colleague. He prayed with me and brought home to me what I already knew, that nothing we experience as God's people is pointless. He added that as Christ's servants we should not be controlled by fear of what hateful, fanatical and violent Muslims say or threaten. He reminded me that as Christians we need to do more than forgive and love our enemies—we need to love them deeply enough



Young Islamists are active on smart phones

The Red Sea is a several hour bus trip from Egypt's capital, Cairo. Conferences are often held in resorts along its coast. After a blessed time in a church conference in a Red Sea resort, I settled into my seat for the long bus trip back to Cairo.

Most of my fellow passengers seemed to be a group of young men all returning from an Islamic conference. One of them sat in the seat next to me. He was very busy sharing video clips on his smart phone with his friends in the seats in front of us. I must admit that the clips he was enthusiastically promoting caused me a great deal of anxiety.

From Fear to Hatred

These clips all idealized jihad. They seemed to be part of a campaign to inspire young people to join militant groups and offer their lives "in the defense

and spread of Islam and the liberation of Palestine." The young man recognized my Christian identity, so he seemed intent on annoying and even frightening me. Most worrying was the way the other young men were



A Red Sea resort

One of MERF's Arabic Media Ministries websites present Christ's saying to Muslims



to share with them the life-changing Gospel message.

A Lesson for All

The Lord calls His people out of all kinds of darkness, including from among Muslims. He knows who they are. We don't. The hatred and violence of the religious fanatics is not new. Jesus Himself experienced that: "And the chief priests and the scribes were seeking

how to put Him to death..." (Luke 22:2).

As Jesus also taught, His people were arrested, detained, intimidated, flogged, imprisoned, and some even martyred by religious fanatics. The Book of Acts tells it all. This was not only foretold by the Lord but also allowed by Him. Yet, the cause of the Gospel continued to advance, God's people were called out, and

the church continued to grow. This seems to be happening today among Muslim peoples.

Gospel Fruit from Arab Lands

From Jordan, Mohammed, a university student says:

"...The words of Jesus Christ (Issa al-Masih) about love have become to me what God's word should be... Yes, that is how God speaks..."

From Yemen, N. and his wife A. say:

"...Truly what Jesus (Issa) taught about marriage is divine...the holy angel, Gabriel, could not have been the author of what we were raised to believe about man and woman and about marriage..."

From Algeria, Farha expresses her and her mother's joy in Christ:

"My mother and I memorized and audibly recite some beautiful words of Jesus (Issa)...Even my very Islamic father and brother are now convinced that the Gospel is not distorted like

our religion and our Imams keep saying..."

From Khartoum, Sudan, Z. writes of her sister's and brother's conversion:

"...My brother became an atheist. He kept telling me that I should not replace one religion for another, even if it seemed to be a much better one...In time he not only became a believer but also helped me convince my sister to believe that Jesus (Issa) is not merely a prophet but truly revealed God on earth..."



Arabic translation of Dr. Stuart Olyott's commentary on Daniel, Dare to Stand Alone

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"And when they had preached the gospel to that city and made many disciples, they returned to Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch, strengthening the souls of the disciples, exhorting them to continue in the faith, and saying, "We must through many tribulations enter the kingdom of God."
 —Acts 14:21-22