

Message to the Reader¹

Esteemed reader,

This book that is in your hands “The Bold Proclamation of the Apostles of Christ,” is the second part which completes the “New Testament.” The first part was published in several printings by Dar al-Farabi and Dar Kitabuna under the title “The True Meaning of the Gospel of Christ” (first printing in Beirut in 2008).

The book “The Bold Proclamation of the Apostles of Christ” contains the epistles written by Paul, who is known in Christian literature as “the Apostle Paul,” and the two letters of Peter the Rock, who was one of the apostles of the Lord Christ (his peace be upon us), the epistle of the Apostle James, the epistles of the Apostle John, the epistle of Jude, and coming at the end of the book the text “the Revelation of John”.

The epistles of the apostles and the Revelation of John have a great significance in the Christian religion, in that they are an integral part of the “New Testament”. Indeed this book, together with “The True Meaning of the Gospel of Christ” we have previously referred to, forms that which is customarily published by other translations in one volume, in that it makes up a complete “New Testament”.

The book “The Bold Proclamation of the Apostles of Christ” addresses the doctrinal and social issues that the first Christian communities lived out (which are called in ancient and recent Christian literature “churches”), and therefore we find a treatment of the place of women and the relationship between masters and slaves for example, and of the value of the sacrifice of the Lord Christ (his peace be upon us) and a comparison of it with the first sin of Adam, etc. Even though the life story of Christ is not repeated, nor his sayings (his peace be upon us) as the Gospels do, these epistles are a vital part of the Christian faith and are indispensable to an understanding of the faith along with its concerns and its message, whether these things concern people of monotheistic faith in general or Christians in particular.

This new Arabic translation is distinctive (in comparison with previous Arabic translations, of which the translators consulted more than six, the first being done in the ninth century A.D. or the third century of the Hijra) in that it strives to clearly communicate accurate and correct Christian concepts to the modern Arab reader, whether Christian or Muslim, and to present them in elegant simple contemporary Arabic language without distortion or deviation from the original meaning. If it seems to the Arab reader in general, and to the Christians among them in particular, that this new Arabic translation of “the

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Epistles of the Apostles and the Revelation of John” employs what appears to be some terminology and names that differ from those in church tradition, this is in order to avoid confusion and ambiguity that might occur in the reader’s mind, who otherwise might understand only the surface meaning of the texts, perceiving the linguistic sense of the terms without delving into their depths.

In addition to this, the translators saw that employing these particular terms and names would be a more precise rendering and a clearer indication of the original meanings as they were communicated in the original texts, specifically the Greek and Hebrew texts.

Esteemed reader,

I cannot help but commend this great effort that the scholarly translators and consultants and reviewers have made, which is represented in this new Arabic translation of “the Epistles and the Revelation of John”. This is because the Arab reader, whether Christian or Muslim, is in clear need of understanding the contents of the “New Testament” in modern language and in light of newly made scholarly discoveries and the flood of historical and doctrinal studies. The translators have strived to make use of all the efforts of those going before them, also striving to help the Arab reader to immerse himself more and more deeply, with the simplest language and clearest style, into the contents of the Christian religion. This noble effort offers an important service to our Arab nation and to the cultured people among us and to the upcoming generations, demonstrated in helping us to increase comprehension and mutual understanding and coexistence among the adherents of the Islamic and Christian religions, which form through their complementarity and interaction the two basic pillars of Arab Islamic civilization. Christianity is a part of an Arab Muslim’s culture, just as Islam is an integral part of an Arab Christian’s culture. Even if the centuries of cultural decline and weakness and the negative influences of foreign colonizers and alien usurpers have sometimes brought to Muslim-Christian rapprochement some muddle and confusion, Arabs today, Muslims and Christians, are called to overcome the difficulties and negative experiences that have taken place for the sake of a better future for our nation with its two monotheistic religions.

{This nation of yours is one nation, and I am your Lord, so worship me} [Surah al-Anbiya, verse 92]

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