
WORLD RELIGIONS

VOLUME 1

LIVING RELIGIONS OF THE MIDDLE EAST



YOUNG OON KIM

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WHATEVER THE title men use for God, whatever aspect of His nature is emphasized by different groups of people, God is the Father of all mankind and all are His children. However varied the doctrine and forms of worship, I see two universal features in all faiths: God is seeking His children everywhere and they are anxious to return to Him. Neither God nor man has ever stopped such longing; the efforts of each have continued and even intensified through the centuries. In olden times people may have expressed their faith in a simple way; whereas in modern times they have developed more logically and rationally to suit sophisticated minds and also the deepened spiritual experiences of individuals within each community of faith.

Rather than merely repeating a history of other men's religions or trying to refute their faith in order to promote Christianity, it is my aim in this book to show how profoundly people in each great religion have experienced the holy, encountering God, and testifying to His work throughout history—in other words, how clearly God has been revealing His will and heart to them. We

might find something common, universal, consistent among all religions. If there is something different, unique in their ideology, this could be an emphasis on different aspects of the one God and His work.

Religious differences and prejudices based upon misunderstanding have caused too much hostility and bloodshed in the past. Hence it is important for us to look at each great religion with an open mind. It was so hard to explain in a few pages the theology and history of religions which have developed over a long period. Humbly admitting the inevitable superficiality I only wish that the reader may be stimulated to begin friendly dialogue with people of other faiths. Thus men of all creeds should unite in their efforts to bring about His Kingdom on earth for His sake and our own.

I want to express my gratitude for the diligent research work of Reverend Royal Davis and associate editing of Mr. John Dolen.

Washington, D.C.
September 1, 1976

Young Oon Kim

about the author

Dr. Young Oon Kim attended Kwansai Gakuin University in Japan and studied at the Methodist seminary there. She later did post-graduate work at Emmanuel College at the University of Toronto and was for a number of years professor of New Testament and Comparative Religion at Ewha Women's University in Seoul. During her life-long effort to probe and bridge the religious truth of the East and West, she has been involved in various ecumenical conferences in Europe as well as traveling and lecturing extensively in the U.S. But beyond that she has been a profound, living religious force in the lives of hundreds in both the Occident and the Orient.

Her previous works include Divine Principle and Its Application and Unification Theology and Christian Thought. Currently, she is living and writing in Washington, D.C., and is professor of Systematic Theology and World Religions at the Unification Theological Seminary in Barrytown, N.Y.



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