
NEGLECTED ARABIA

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The Arabian Mission

OF THE

REFORMED CHURCH IN AMERICA

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NEGLECTED ARABIA

Missionary News and Letters
Published Quarterly

FOR PRIVATE CIRCULATION AMONG THE FRIENDS OF
THE ARABIAN MISSION

It is hoped that the Arabian Mission will see the opportunity for evangelism among the large group of people in the interior of Oman.

Our Dreams and Ambitions for the Mission

MAURICE HEUSINKVELD, M. D.

The Arabian Mission is a militant organization. It represents the front line areas of the church. It is fighting against many evil forces as summarized in the whole of Islam. But above all it is attempting to carry out the orders of its commanding officer Jesus Christ who said "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature."

Our orders have been to the Arabian Mission. These did not come as dogmatic unquestionable command but rather as a slow process of guidance over many years. The still small voice, the communion of prayer, the inspiration of a speech or an article all had a part. Much more could be said about this experience, but until one has been through it and given grace by the Holy Spirit to say, "Here am I, Lord, send me," it is folly to even Christians.

What then is our task? For what have we a right to dream and be ambitious in the battle for our Lord? Again we may compare the Arabian Mission to a militant organization. For that it is; not a fight with guns, tanks, etc., but with the word of God and the sword of the Spirit.

In recent years the term beachhead has become known to all of us. It represents a military method whereby a small group of well trained fighting individuals with appropriate equipment established themselves on a beach in enemy territory. There they held their position until reinforcements and equipment could be landed, and then a forward advance was started. The Arabian Mission now has five such established positions. Years of patient sowing have resulted in a gradual breakdown of resistance and a tolerable acceptance. The positions are held. The time for advancement is at hand. We should re-study our tactics and realize the strong need for reinforce-

ments and equipment, obtain these, and start the forward march.

It is at this point that the comparison with a military organization breaks down. All of us know the tears, broken hearts, sleepless nights and the burdensome pain of the news of final separation that resulted from orders to report to duty in recent years. The order was *go* and they *went!* Mission boards do not have this power. Instead, needs are pointed out and a multitude of prayers are made with the hope that the Holy Spirit will move some to enter into this battle of the Lord. What joy the arrival of a new recruit brings to those on the field.

As we write this we are spending five weeks in Matrah before taking over the work here after a few months. Our gracious God has chosen to draw out a fine group of Christians from this village and Muscat. These now represent a small church. But with the development of such a group a new responsibility develops. Someone must provide spiritual food for them, educate their children, straighten out family difficulties and arrange care for the poor. In other words a full time pastor's work has developed. This meant that others are needed to carry on the forward work. In Matrah most of the medical work and the evangelistic work is carried on by a doctor and his wife. There then is little time left for personnel work in the hospital. A full time worker could be used for this purpose. Then there is the loud clear call of the interior. Here is an opportunity constantly neglected because of the lack of workers.

Originally we felt called to work in the Arabian Mission through an interest in the use of airplanes in evangelism. Although this idea has been rejected by many of our fellow workers, there are those who see its real possibilities. We cannot doubt its reality for this idea was placed in us by the Holy Spirit. We dare not sin against Him. Since being here in Oman we are more than ever convinced of the possibilities of this plan. Near Matrah is a large *wadi* entirely suitable for the landing and taking off of conventional types of planes. Some feel that a helicopter would be more suitable here because of the rocky terrain and small *wadies*. This would be conducive to touring in many places where conventional planes could not be used. However many places are available where small planes could be safely used.

The possibilities in this idea are real. There is now a fine fixed medical work in Matrah. If another couple were stationed here their entire time could be given to touring. Prearranged schedules could be worked out and definite times allotted to certain areas. Heavy equipment when needed could be sent ahead by truck and station wagon. Then when things were prepared the doctor and his wife could fly in. Much eye surgery and clinical work accompanied by evangelistic work would be possible. More serious cases requiring surgery could be flown to Matrah where extra supplies could be picked up and brought back for the touring work. In the hot summer months when nearly everyone leaves Matrah, fellow workers could go up to elevated areas where the climate is cooler and help in the work.

This is just an idea. Its development depends upon the Arabian Mission and the church at home. Extra workers will be needed.

Another house will be required in Matrah for the touring couple. They will need a place in which to live while they are at the station and a place to keep their personal belongings and equipment. But most of all it is hoped by us that the Arabian Mission and its supporting members will see the opportunity for evangelism among the large group of people in the interior of Oman. A properly equipped and staffed group could use in a marvelous manner here all the technical equipment that 1948 has to offer in bringing the Gospel of Jesus Christ to these people.

Our one and first aim in all our dreams and ambitions is to bring Christ . . . that the men and women of the Arab world shall know the Truth, which will make them free.

Freedom and the Abundance of Life for Our Neglected Sisters

JEANETTE BOERSMA

Meet a few of our Arab sisters whom we have learned to love and know.

At present there is in our hospital an aged mother, whose daughter is left caring for her, while the mother hopes to receive some vision through the skillful hands of our doctor. The daughter is about twenty-eight years old. She, on the whole, is a pleasant and cheerful girl. She is a so-called descendant of their prophet Mohammed. Her husband divorced her a year ago for no particular reason. She left him two lovely daughters one and three years of age. These girls she will never see again. Her heart aches for them. Her hopes of life are shattered. She has gone to live with her parents. After they leave this earth, she'll have no one.

There is also a five year old boy, who was badly burned, in our hospital. He has two younger sisters who are darlings. When Keriem came to us in such a bad condition, the parents agreed that it would be better for his two sisters to die than to have Keriem die. They didn't want the girls. Their interest lay in the only son, because he is a boy. Girls do not count.

Often mothers will bring their little girls to morning clinic to be treated. Many are beautiful, who would touch any normal heart. The mothers will say, "The father doesn't want her. He tells me to throw her away." However we find that the mother usually has a real love for her daughter, and that she will give her loving care.

Zahara worked for us in the hospital last year. She is a young girl of twenty-two. She married her cousin, to whom she gave a nice boy a year ago. When the baby was four months old, her husband decided to look for work in another city as he failed in all he attempted here. Since her husband left, Zahara has not seen or heard from him. He

has not sent her a cent for her or her son's support. It has been told her that her husband has another wife in the city where he has gone. Zahara now has to be supported by her father, who has three wives, many children, and another married daughter to support. Zahara is left sad and hurt in spirit. She dislikes to have to be supported by her father who cannot give her all her needs. But what else is she to do?

One day I was invited to the home of a clinic patient. Two sisters came regularly to have their eyes treated. I learned while there that both girls were married to old men. They come from a family of five girls and two boys. The parents to get rid of the two girls, hurriedly married them to old men who have other wives, with no thought of the girls' lives or future. The one has already been divorced because her eyes are infected with trachoma. The second sees her husband occasionally when he comes to town. She is with her parents, while the husband is out in the country a distance from them. She'll bear her child alone, and be left to care for him. He may or may not send her support. In the meantime she cannot take pride in a home of her own or a complete family life.



ARAB GIRLS AT HOME

Occasionally our women patients are left without food or money for food. Their husbands will return to their homes in the country not caring whether or not their wives are provided for. Or perhaps they know that if left with us, they will be provided for. If it is a case of sleeping on a bed or on the floor, it is always the man who takes the bed leaving the floor for the woman. According to Arab custom the men and women do not eat together. The women prepare the food. The men will eat first, and that which remains is for the women. One time a very sick woman came from afar for treatment in our hospital. The men of the family came with her. She was securely placed in bed, and then the men returned to their homes, never again to come

to see the wife and daughter or to inquire after her. When Rabia was well after a three week's stay, she returned the long distance with only her mother to accompany her.

We could go on relating stories of unhappy, insecure, fear-filled lives of the Moslem women. They live in constant fear all their days of being divorced or left by their husband. It is perfectly legal and right for a husband according to Islam to divorce his wife any time he desires by saying three times, "I divorce you." It is legal for him to have four wives and as many concubines as he can support. Because of this liberty, women are often their husband's servants. Their life is a life of fear and bondage.

We have many dreams and ambitions for our Arabian Mission. Since its first beginnings in 1889, it has been the aim of the Mission to gain entrance into the interior of Arabia, which until now has been closed to the Gospel. We have recently seen the beginning of answer to prayer as Dr. Storm and his helpers are asked by the King himself to give medical service for periods which have grown to months at a time. We now see the time approaching when the King will give us entrance and permanency in his kingdom. We will not enter until we have his consent to take the Gospel and its message with us. We hope to extend and expand our work further into the interior using our five established stations as bases. Our one and first aim in all our dreams and ambitions is to bring Christ. When Christ comes in then the bondage and slavery of women will go out. It is our aim that the men and women of the Arab world shall know the Truth, which will make them free.

I only wish that he could speak English, that he could go to America and that you could meet him. It is Ya'coub's twenty-fifth anniversary as Colporteur.

Ya'Coub, Colporteur in Kuwait

JAY R. KAPENGA

In many respects it is a mad house. People would like to sit down on the benches, but there you are—two benches are taken completely by groaning individuals. All are milling around. The children are crying and the women, who are parked right in the middle of the veranda, are cooing and doing what they can to pacify their babies. Here men are laughing. There they are moaning, and there is one calling down God's mercy upon him; and these cars, how can we control their mad driving through our driveway bordering this mass. Boy, it's enough to make your head swim, that is, if you haven't become familiar with it.



*YA'COUB, THE COLPORTEUR, LEADS PRAYERS ON
THE HOSPITAL VERANDA IN KUWAIT*

Here are some boys spitting nut shucks or watermelon seeds all over the place. Others are crawling over the cement veranda playing marbles with bottle caps. That man? Yes, he's typical of all people. He's not only displaying his sore, he's telling all about it. It looks like that other man had an operation some time ago if his gesticulations mean anything, and they generally do. Did you say that you thought it smelled around here?—must have become familiar with that too. But never you mind,—smells, noise, confusion and even hostility will not prevent our regular morning clinic prayer service—yes, right on this same veranda when the confusion seems almost at its zenith.

Now there's Ya'coub, our Colporteur. He's the man you met in the Bible Shop in the middle of the bazaar. He is going to take charge of prayers this morning. It is undoubtedly way over the 2000th time

that he has given the clinic prayers on this veranda. Oh yes, we do it too, but I take my hat off to Ya'coub. He knows how these people think.

This year is Ya'coub's twenty-fifth anniversary as Colporteur in Kuwait. He has seen missionaries come and go, but always he has remained faithful to his appointed task in Kuwait. He is the friend always available in our Book Shop. It is in the courtyard of his house that all people are welcome every Sunday afternoon for a service. He it is who willingly accepts the privilege of conducting morning chapel and clinic prayers whenever we call upon him. When no missionary evangelist is in Kuwait, he takes care of all the Arabic services including our regular Sunday morning service. Being in the bazaar all day and a friend of all, he is our contact man. The amount of time and money he has saved every Kuwait missionary is no small reckoning. Ya'coub is one of us—a sincere evangelist, a willing co-operator, and a wonderful friend. Kuwait station without him, I believe, would have a different history. I only wish that he could speak English, that he could go to America, that you could meet him, and that he could receive an applause from you all so well deserved for twenty-five years of Christian service in Kuwait Mission Station. P.S. Sami, Ya'coub's youngest son, still in school, is planning to enter the ministry in the footsteps of his father. Kuwait Station has a special gift box to retain all gifts that Sami may go on into higher education and thus continue to serve the Mission.

My heart seems to say to the Lord, "Here am I; send me, too."

Arabia, My Home

KEITH DE JONG

At last we are home. Two weeks ago our school in India closed and we left for Arabia. All during the long trip we were thinking of home and what it would be like and wondering if it had changed much. No, it hadn't. It looked the same, outside as well as inside. The sea was still as beautiful as ever, the weather was still warm enough for swimming. What makes us so excited when we are coming to Arabia? It's home. That needn't be explained because everybody knows what home means. But for us youngsters who are far away from home at school for nine months every year, it gets to mean something very special. It is freedom from school but more than that it is a chance to be with Mother and Dad again.

I was born in Kuwait and am one of the many who feels a great affection for a birthplace. I hold the honor of being the first American boy to be born here. The Sheikh was very much pleased. He sent



DR. POTTER, ROB ROY STORM AND DR. HAROLD STORM

Rob Roy also attended the Kodai School

my parents a special letter which I still have. He signed my birth certificate in Arabic. He always beams whenever he see me and calls me *The Kuwaitee*. I was three years old when we went to the U. S. A. I was speaking chiefly Arabic then but soon forgot it all and learned to love the States so that I cried when we had to come back. This time it was to Bahrain.

In January of 1939 I left for school in South India feeling no twinge of sadness at parting from my parents. In fact, I was thrilled at the prospect of being on my own. But school troubles will arise; bullies and teachers and things. I certainly was glad to go home that year. Then my home in Arabia began to take on meaning. A refuge from school! The longer I was away the more I realized what my parents really meant to me. They were in Arabia so, of course, I wanted to be there too. It all added up to make home a wonderful place. Now, I love our school in Kodai too and am looking forward to returning there to graduate after a few months, and how I love my home! My appreciation of it has grown with the years.

Just why do I love Arabia? Naturally, someone will say it is because my parents live there. But to me there is a deeper reason than

that. Why are Dad and Mother out here? That's something different. They're living here because they are called by God to mission work. They are not here because their parents are here. In fact they never were here. They heard about Arabia and felt called to Arabia and are now in Arabia as workers for Christ. It is true that I am their child but why wasn't I the child of someone else? The answer to that question I shall never know.

As I've grown older I have realized more and more what a wonderful and great work my parents and the other missionaries are carrying on. With the war and all its suffering occurring in my maturing years I have realized the need and worth of self-sacrifice, the sacrifice of the soldiers on the battle front, but also that of the missionaries leaving home and dear ones behind and coming out to places like Arabia and India for their life work. I realize now, with the whole world in such a condition as it is, how much this attitude on the part of all is necessary. Growing up in these surroundings my heart seems to say to the Lord as others have said in answer to the question, "Whom shall I send and who will go for us?" "Here am I; send me" too.

(Keith De Jong, eldest son of Rev. and Mrs. Garret E. De Jong, is a student at Hope College. This was written while he was attending the Kodai School in India.)

Perhaps to our generation it will be given to devise a path of thinking that will lead Arabs to Christ more directly.

Dreams of Youth

EDWIN M. LUIDENS

My faith is that my Master will reveal Himself to my Arab friends. My hope is that my Arab friends will come to know my Master. My love, I pray will be the means of effecting that hope.

My dreams center about this love. How can I show my love for my Saviour and for my friends to my friends? The doctor brings healing with his prescription. The surgeon stays the processes of death with his knife. The teacher feeds hungry young minds with the truth. All the people whom they serve see, and therefore, appreciate their service. Few people, however, even in American churches, classify the Sunday worship hour and sermon as a gift or service of the pastor. Especially for our Arab friends is it difficult, or impossible, to assess the same value to the services of a doctor, a teacher and a minister. This is quite understandable.

The problem of us younger evangelists, therefore, seems to be this. How can we as ministers serve our Christian and non-Christian friends in a manner which they can recognize and appreciate as worthwhile,

loving service? How can we thus preach Christ, the Suffering Servant and Saviour? This is our basic problem, we think. Seeking its solution our minds dream strange dreams.

There is a great deal of love in our Christian communities in the Persian Gulf. The Christians are drawn together quite naturally by their common faith, especially as it sets them off in a minority group. Community pressure has another effect, however, as well: it produces a sense of uncertainty and timidity about the final victory of Christ's Kingdom. The fellowship of the saints is so limited in each area, the work of the spirit so staunchly opposed by the greater community, that the inspiration of belonging to the church is little. We dream of having some day a fellowship in one place of all the Arabic-speaking Christians in the Persian Gulf. Such a conference would undoubtedly be a great boon to each of the communities participating. We would have to pray for it for months; we would have to *iron out* innumerable problems of housing and feeding the group; we would have to expend, perhaps, several thousand dollars on transportation. But the realizing of the fellowship in Christ, which has been talked about for a half century or more, would undoubtedly be well worth the expense. This conference would have the primary purpose, of course, of stirring consecrated Arab Christians to higher levels of consecration and of bringing so-called Christians into a real fellowship with Christ. It is to be hoped that one result of this kind of conference would be the emerging of a small group of potential ministers and lay readers. So far we have had no Son of the Gulf become an evangelist in his own right. This is the dream of our generation for the Christians.

But we are not putting first things first! Without a doubt, the evangelist's first duty will always be to the man who honestly wants to know Christ. The earnest inquirer is the man around whom the most precious dreams arise. The inquirer is the burden of our prayer day and night. The inquirers are the salt of our life, for whom we sharpen our understanding of the Word of God—almost more than for ourselves! For nobody appreciates the Truth more than a sincere inquirer. For all of them we have the dream of developing some path of introducing them to all the grace and truth that we see in Jesus Christ. We dream of some form of catechism for Moslems that will lead them from their questions and their Moslem background to an affirmation of their faith in Christ with an understanding of what that credo implies. Perhaps this is an endless quest. Others have sought and found partial success. We dream of the goal knowing full well that the path is long and tortuous. Perhaps to our generation it will be given to devise a path of thinking that will lead Arabs to Christ more directly.

But the inquirers are few. Not all men are ready to consider the deep truths of Christ. Some have so warped an idea of Christ that in our conversations with them we might as well be talking about different people. (Some missionaries, I understand, have actually introduced Jesus Christ to Moslems as someone different from the 'Isa bin Miriam of whom they think. Perhaps the point is well taken.) They think of a Jesus who was born under the influence of the angel

Gabriel; who was a prophet among the prophets and as such predicted the coming of Mohammed—not the Spirit's; who was spared the suffering of the cross by God's intervention in his behalf; who was raised without dying to live in heaven. A little knowledge is a dangerous thing, especially when it is inaccurate. It would have been far easier for us to talk about Christ to people who had never heard of Him than it is to talk to those who think they already know about Him. Our dreams for these people center about their re-education in the historical events of the life of Christ and His actual message. To that end we dream of bringing to bear the most powerful method of education in our generation—audio-visual education.

Perhaps Bahrain has been more blessed than any other station in the Arabian Mission in the early realization of this dream. Through the gifts of people at home and on the field it has been possible to begin already the program of visual education about which we have been dreaming. For about a year now we have been showing to



WITH THE GOVERNOR'S PRIVATE BODY GUARD. DR. POTTER AND DR. STORM VISIT THE OASIS-LIKE GARDENS WHERE THE ARABS OF HASSA LIVE AND WORK.

hospital patients from all over Arabia, Iran and the Persian Gulf the life-like paintings of Elsie Anna Wood depicting the life of Christ. These are done with enough accuracy to be acceptable in His own quarter of the world. As long as these pictures are being flashed on the screen, the audience listens carefully to the account of the life and message of Christ as the Gospel has given us to know it. These same pictures, incidentally, are educating Christian children and their friends—an important by-product of the visual education program for Moslems. For these Christian children must be firmly grounded lest they be warped in their thinking by the ideas of their Moslem comrades.

We are awaiting with bated breath the occasion when, for the first time in the Arabian Mission, the life of Christ will be shown in motion pictures with a running commentary spoken in Arabic. This dream-almost-true has occupied our thoughts for several years. It took a good deal of money and a long period of waiting to get on the field all the projection equipment and film needed for this venture. We are now working on the Arabic commentary which should give life and point to the attention-capturing pictures, this dream-come-true, like other visual aid projects, concerns step number one in missionary work: getting as many people as possible to know as much as possible about the life and message of Jesus Christ.

One group has been missing from our dreams until recently. They are the faithful Christian friends who pray for us and support us financially. Since we younger missionaries have all admitted to each other that the Arabian Mission was completely different from what we had expected before leaving America, we are forced to conclude that very few people in America can really understand our situation, our problems and our opportunities on the field. We have been dreaming lately about putting out a new moving picture that will show the Mission in action. Our first devotion must inevitably be to those who are before us. But we cannot avoid a desire to express our gratitude to those who are so loyally behind us.

And what do we dream for ourselves—we missionaries? That our dream-inspiring love for Christ and the Arabs will grow. That we can begin to comprehend the breadth and length and depth and height of the love of Christ—and make it known.

Personalialia

Dr. Samuel M. Zwemer made one of the outstanding addresses at the meeting of the General Synod at Buck Hill Falls. He spoke in connection with the report on Evangelism.

Miss Ruth Jackson is expecting to sail on the *S. S. Saturnia*, September 7. She plans to study girls' schools in Cairo before continuing her journey to Bahrain, where she is in charge of our girls' school.

Miss Hazel Wood, recently appointed missionary nurse has been taking special training as a laboratory technician at Richmond, Va., on advice of the Mission. She plans to sail with Miss Jackson.

Miss Eunice Post, also recently appointed, is to take courses at Scarritt College for Christian Workers this year, securing further training for work in Arabia.

Dr. C. S. G. Mylrea spent the winter and spring months in Basrah with Dr. and Mrs. Van Ess. He expects to leave for Kodaikanal in the early summer.

Mrs. Edwin M. Luidens and her infant son, "Donnie," arrived in New York by air May 6. The serious illness of Donnie this winter made it advisable to return to America for a period of several months. They expect to return to Arabia in the autumn.

Dr. and Mrs. Wells Thoms and family are home as this issue goes to press. They will live in the missionary residence at Grand Rapids.

Dr. and Mrs. Paul Harrison arrived this summer for furlough to be followed by retirement. In the fall Dr. Harrison will be a part of a team of speakers to present the cause of foreign missions in regional meetings in key cities of the United States. Headed by the Foreign Missions Conference, this program will be one great effort of advance toward "One World in Christ."



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