



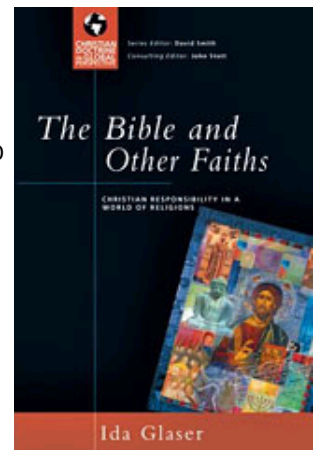
The Bible and Other Faiths

Richard Sudworth reviews Ida Glaser's book on other faiths

Title	The Bible And Other Faiths: What Does The Lord Require Of Us? (part of The Global Christian Library series)
Author	Ida Glaser
Publisher	Inter-Varsity Press
Length	253 Pages
ISBN No.	13: 978-1-84474-080-2
Available From	Christian Bookshops
Cost ()	7.99
Reviewed By	Richard J Sudworth, Mission Consultant, Faith To Faith (responsible For Training And Resources For Inter-faith Work Especially For The 18-30 Age Group)
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It seems that the pressure points between faith groups and between faiths and the secular world are growing all the time. Danish cartoons, British Christmas postage stamps, school uniforms for Muslim girls and creationism in schools are all examples of any number of challenges and discussions to faith groups in recent months. Faith is news because faith is shaping society and, we have to admit, often not for good. At times like these, resources that bring Christians closer to the text of the Bible with an ear to how Gods people are to engage with those of other faiths are invaluable, though sadly rare.

Ida Glaser, uniquely, provides a grand sweep of the Bible to draw out patterns as to how we are to relate to our neighbours. Ida not only brings with her many years of experience working with Muslims but also a keen appreciation of the text, interpreting thoroughly, with academic rigour, the relevance of both Old and New Testament plural contexts to today. From Gods first revelation to Abraham as El amongst the people of Ur, to Pauls appropriation of Greek philosophers in Acts 17, God speaks in context, into the particular structures and beliefs in each culture. With each revelation, though, there is a call and a movement towards covenant and relationship.



An appreciation of Gods revelation in the particular permits Ida to be generous and warm about people of other faiths whilst retaining a thoroughly orthodox belief that Jesus is the ultimate revelation of who God is and the of covenant and relationship. Tracing patterns in the biblical narrative, it seems clear that as God calls out his people in relationship, like Abraham, and they discover the nature of YAHWEH who is actually very distinct from the other gods, temptations to arrogance, complacency and decadence are never far away. Ultimately, Ida notes that Gods people are to be less concerned about highlighting boundaries around themselves but concentrate more on blessing the other; the ethic that points towards Micahs injunction used as the subtitle.

An approach that encourages an informed and searching engagement with those of other faiths with humility is desperately needed and Idas book provides foundations for such an engagement from a robust and faithful encounter with the unique God revealed in the Bible. Many dissonant voices are being raised in the disturbance that is faith relations at this time. This book deserves to be a key reference point for evangelical Christians serious about their responsibilities in multi-faith Britain as a voice of generous faithfulness.

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