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Habib and Thoene's "Face to Face with Jesus: A Former Muslim's Extraordinary Journey to Heaven and Encounter with the God of Love" (Book Review)

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Face to Face with Jesus: A Former Muslim’s Extraordinary Journey to Heaven and Encounter with the God of Love,

Reviewed by Stanford Terhune, North Canton, OH

With the help of the best-selling author Bodie Thoene, Samaa Habib tells the story of how she grew up in a large Muslim family as the youngest of three boys and six girls. Her father had a PhD, was a mullah, a lawyer, and an instructor of philosophy at the local university, possibly in Kabul (the country is never identified). She tells how the country was undergoing civil war between Shia and Sunni Muslims, with killings, gunfire, lack of regular heat, and lack of food. Because she was small and weak, Samaa’s family thought it would be a good idea for her to take Taekwando training (she worked hard and became a black belt). The trainer, who is a Christian missionary, tells the students about Jesus Christ, and invites Samaa and her sister to go to a church, where they are converted and become strong Christians. The sisters tell their parents they are going for further Taekwando training while actually going to church. Samaa leads one of her brothers, four of her sisters, and her mother to Christ. She suffers savage beatings by her brother and anger from her father, and is persecuted by her local community.

One Sunday, Samaa’s church is bombed by Muslim infiltrators. Samaa manages to escape, but is killed by a delayed explosion after she returns with help. Samaa wakes up in heaven, face to face with Christ. Jesus gives her a choice of remaining in heaven, or going back to bring more people to Christ. She returns and suffers from severe burns and a hole in her skull; she is initially blinded, but her sight returns due to much prayer. An American Christian doctor returns from the United States to perform surgery on her in an improvised operating room, and she is healed with beautiful new skin. She ends up being a very successful model and real estate broker, and leaves her country to attend the Asia Discipleship School in the Los Angeles area. Samaa is a person of great faith, fasting, praying intensely, and tithing 90% of her earnings. She relates many miracles that took place for her and among the formerly Muslim Christians in her country.