

## **OBSERVATIONS AND REACTIONS TO CHRISTIANS INVOLVED IN A NEW APPROACH TO MISSION**

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### **1 Introduction**

I refer to this as our “observations” because we national believers have seen new approaches to mission with our own eyes and have

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<sup>1</sup> Rev. Edward Ayub was raised in a devout Muslim family and was converted while in University. He began his ministry training with Campus Crusade and obtained his MDiv at Presbyterian Theological Seminary in the Philippines. Since then he has become a well-known teacher, writer, and speaker throughout Bangladesh. In 2004 he devoted himself to church planting among Muslims and to establishing a network of Muslim background churches now organized as the Presbyterian Church of Bangladesh. Although seldom named in the literature, Bangladesh has been both the laboratory and the parade ground for missiologists and practitioners committed to Insider ideology. For years this incubation was permitted to continue while clandestine reports were being circulated in American academies and among inner-circle missionaries. Bangladeshis for the most part were ignorant with regards to what was being reported about their country. Those who came to know were reluctant to speak out and bite the feeding hand of Western institutions. Things have changed. The Bangladeshi church was alerted by a controversial translation of the Scriptures and some key leaders were recruited to the Insider group. Some came back out and began to tell the story that was being spun by Insiders. Pastors and church planters began to encounter all kinds of deviant theologies and practices in the field. There was an explosion of awareness in the church. While missionaries were urging unity, church leaders were crying foul, reacting against western money that was turning the Muslim background church into a lab rat. At the center of this reaction was a small group of Muslim background church leaders who formed the Isai Fellowship of Bangladesh. They have all spoken out strongly but I am only aware of one, Rev. Ayub, who has published anything in English. With broad based support from every corner of the Bangladeshi church their chief strategy is to establish a strong network of visible Muslim background churches, thus proving that Insider/C5 strategies are unnecessary in Bangladesh.

discussed them extensively with one another other in a variety of seminars, conferences and personal conversations. This short paper is a reflection on the views that I have heard as well as my own thoughts on the matter.

Prior to starting to write on this purportedly phenomenal approach to evangelism in light of the Holy Scripture, I want to mention that in the recent years in Bangladesh many have used various methods to preach the Gospel among the majority Muslims. I respectfully admit that I may be proved wrong in calling a method unbiblical or improper. I cannot be sure that my judgments are 100 percent correct. But, judging itself is in fact not forbidden, because Christ has ordained power and ministry upon his church. But, since our judgment cannot be 100 percent error-free and correct as God's is, Christ has warned us to be careful or to judge in light of the Scriptures and after much prayer so that our judgment will be governed by His will at the time of judging.

If anything happens against and beyond the teachings of the Bible, being a follower of the Gospel it is my duty to disclose it. If the Holy Scripture allows us and if crossing the limits of Bible is observed, we cannot be silent. We have to guard the Holy Book and its sound teachings. People will misinterpret it, organize churches in an unbiblical way, and present Christ wrongly for dishonest gain (Tit 1:11).

Seeing all this, we cannot remain silent and indifferent as if nothing is happening. We already bear the allegations and condemnation from Muslims that we are changing the Bible. Churches in Bangladesh are also often not aware of basic Christian doctrines.

This writing is a step to challenge this carelessness and call us to greater responsibility as stewards of God's Word. I firmly believe, however, that this distraction is momentary and that only God's Scriptures and their teachings will last forever (Acts 5:17-40). In bringing attention to these new approaches, I also believe that we are not creating division but protecting true unity by keep-

ing and promoting the true teachings of Jesus Christ. Those who have been promoting other teachings, rather than what the Word of God teaches, have already strayed from the truth and are ruining the household of God (Tit 1:11).

## **2 Some observations**

These days, we who work in what is termed “the mission field” tend to explain success in shallow terms, on the basis of human wisdom and practices that have become an accepted part of missionary technique. Among those are: *the number of followers in the church, the wealth and prosperity of the church, the number of developmental projects being run by the church, connection of the church with the rich and western world, and having big mission centers*. But, in reality, the success and honesty of a work depend on its spiritual maturity.

Many argue that, if these are not dependable measures of success, why does that church have so many followers? Why are they so rich? Why do they have so many buildings and houses? Has not God been blessing them?! They might be on the right path! But, those who have spiritual eyes see that the churches where the Holy Scripture is strictly followed and applied often get fewer followers, because:

1. People are rebellious. They know that they will have to surrender to God if they follow the Holy Scripture. They recognize that the preaching and teaching of the true church of the Word are all against them, which they cannot tolerate. The pure Word of God especially threatens carnal believers. Therefore, when they consider conversion, many new believers seek the easy way and, in fact, are shown it.
2. In a true church, no one can escape sin, and we must be accountable for that. The court of Holy Scripture condemns us.

Some people just don't tolerate this. They find places where they and their sins are ignored without question. Wicked people can easily have very good relations with other wicked people. It should not surprise us to see that many leaders of Christian Churches now oppose these groups and few extend approval to them. Some argue that Christ came for sinners. But what kind of sinners are these rebels?! Even some of the leaders commit infamous public sins every day, including theft and rape, and yet we the missional church applaud them!!! Is there no accountability? No Punishment?

3. They are awarded with responsibility in the Church even after committing their sins. Nothing surprises us, the national church leaders, anymore. I would like to add one thing: those who reward these people with positions in the churches are a hundred times more corrupt than the people they reward. Additionally, the churches in the West which originate and export these false teachings into Asia are able to do so because it is assumed that they have such high spiritual motivation that their opinions can be trusted at face value. This is nothing more than the continuation of the colonialist mentality: whatever the white man does must be true.
4. When these people are disciplined in a good church they just change churches because those churches need members. Our leaders should be more careful from now on. Otherwise, our Churches will be destroyed spiritually. They will become unable to do anything to serve God. Gaining money and material influence is not enough. Nevertheless, God loves them! He wants them to change. Jesus loved his disciples, but because he did, he disciplined them.

### **3 Shallow approach to success**

#### **3.1 Numbers game**

Now, to the main issue. First of all, we need to consider the words that have been circulated concerning the *number of followers*. Large numbers of followers are not the principal sign of genuineness of a church. If we look around the globe, we will find that ill-motivated individuals and groups flourish day by day. But because numbers are held to be the most important evidence of God's blessing, they produce exaggerated reports. Someone abroad asked me whether 10,000 mosques have been converted into Christian Churches in Dhaka. I had to answer that I know of none. Did he hear the number correctly? If he heard the number accurately, that would indicate that almost all the mosques in Dhaka had been converted into Christian churches! Even if he heard 1,000, that number could not possibly be true. I do not know of even one thus far.

The fact is that some people collect money from abroad by producing such appealing but imaginary stories. A missionary reported in my presence that, in the southern part of Bangladesh, Muslims had rejected the Qur'an and thrown it into the water, and finally had converted their mosque into a Christian church. Another missionary reported in a meeting where I was present that there was "every minute one baptism". We don't want such exaggerated and hyperbolic reports published. There is no spiritual benefit for Christianity from these false and ridiculous reports.

How are these reports produced? I think the leaders of Christian churches and Christian organizations need to discuss this issue and seek to stop these reports. Otherwise, they might bring undue persecution to the minority Christians. Rather than confronting these falsehoods, they circulate photos purporting to show the success of their methods of evangelism. These are clever methods to deceive Westerners who want to believe that we have a foolproof

method of converting Muslims. There are no statistics of how many ordinary people are being portrayed in the pictures, without their knowledge, as being baptized when they are taking their normal baths in the pond, since baptism is done by immersing in water, pouring or sprinkling.

### **3.2 Problems of identity**

Are the people who do these things a sect of Islam like Wahabis or Sunni's, or are they Christians? They never clarify their position. They perform *namaz* at the mosques. Which *surahs* do they use? I certainly know that, though they are standing in the *namaz* with the Muslims, they secretly use different oaths, recitations and *surahs*. In one instance, they developed a separate book on prayer different from the ritual Islamic prayer system. After protests from Muslims and the government in Bogra district, for being duplicitous, they destroyed all copies. Taking an oath in the name of Christ to worship Allah, reciting *surahs* from the Bible, the Torah and most portions from Psalms, they muddy the water between Christianity and Islam. They fast, but their oaths and methods are different. They sacrifice, but with a purpose different from what Muslims suppose. Their religious activities make them look like Muslims, but in private they claim that they are different theologically. Very recently in 2009, a pastor from Dhaka went to a district of Jamalpur in Bangladesh, and he asked the local people what they thought about Christianity. Their answer was that Christianity was a sect of Islam and Christians are therefore Muslims. Now what should we do about these people: support them or correct them? What is our responsibility?

## 4 Avoidance of persecution

The question was asked: “Why do you think so?” They believe that when a person becomes ‘Isai’<sup>2</sup>, he is driven out of the family and the society. So they have to worship in such a way that Muslims or their relatives will not know that they have become ‘Isai’. Can a new Muslim convert continue staying with his family without being driven out if he or she testifies that Jesus is Lord? Jesus Christ, in the Bible, says:

Be on your guard against men; they will hand you over to the local councils and flog you in their synagogues. On my account you will be brought before governors and kings as witnesses to them and the Gentiles.” (Mt 10:17-18)

Brother will betray brother to death, and a father his child; children will rebel against their parents and have them put to death. All men will hate you because of me, but he who stands firm to the end will be saved. (Mt 10:21-22)

So do not be afraid of them. There is nothing concealed that will not be disclosed, or hidden that will not be made known. What I tell you in the dark, speak in the daylight; what is whispered in your ear, proclaim from the roofs. Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather, be afraid of the One who can destroy both soul and body in hell. (Mt 10:26-28)

Do not suppose that I have come to bring peace to the earth. I did not come to bring peace, but a sword. For I have come to turn a man against his father, a daughter against her mother, a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law - a man’s enemies will be the members of his own household. (Mt 10:34–36)

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<sup>2</sup> A new sect in Christianity who identify themselves as Muslims following Jesus Christ.

Anyone who loves his father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; anyone who loves his son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me; and anyone who does not take his cross and follow me is not worthy of me. Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it. (Mt 10: 37-39)

Recently in a meeting held in Dhaka with Christian leaders from different backgrounds, one leader mentioned that he once shared the Gospel with a Muslim and after much reading and waiting, he was finally converted to Christian faith. But when he met that convert in Dhaka city after few years, the convert told him, “I am really a Christian believer but for the fear of oppression, I go to the mosque and I perform namaz five times a day and I am also a member of mosque committee.” At that point another pastor leader commented, “If there is a new convert, he or she would usually bear some sort of persecution for a period of time but if she or he can endure for six months to one year, then the persecution should diminish gradually.

Thus, it is better to suffer for this shorter time than to suffer for his whole life by hiding his Christian faith.” I fully agreed with the comment since most of us have had such experience – bitterness in life for a period of time and then honor and respect from our persecutors.

The avoidance of persecution and repression is the principal logic driving this group. Now, in order to justify their actions, they try to find support from the Bible. Let’s see what the Bible says about this rather than simply accepting their use of it. Additionally, we don’t believe in converting someone into Christianity using some verses from the Qur’an, one of their most common practices. Converts that come this way do not last long.

What are they actually doing in any case? Are they supporting the Qur’an’s teachings, or criticizing them? Converting someone by criticizing one’s religious Scripture and/or his prophet and/or the followers of his religion is not the right way to do things. Con-

verting someone on the basis of criticism means building a house on sand. When storms come, as they always do, the house will be demolished easily. Many come to Christianity due to joblessness - normal in a country like ours where 30 million people are unemployed. Therefore, some preachers of this sect delight in criticizing persons or acts of other religions because they think they will receive financial support for doing so. I consider it a bad practice to criticize the Qur'an or Islam, and the risk in doing so is higher than in sharing the Gospel. I think if someone is led by the Holy Spirit and comes to us, embracing Christ after hearing and reading the teachings of the Bible, we should praise him. He will become a true believer and will last forever.

I served a Christian Trust for a few months primarily as an advisor and, at some point when they were in crisis, I served as the Director. I had no intention to work full-time for the Trust. But since the Trust has been trying to work among the Muslims through literature, I agreed to take the responsibility. There, among the staff, I saw people employed for about 10 years as believers but not yet baptized, and others who had been baptized for the sake of their jobs while their believing wives had not been. I had not paid that much attention to the status of the wives of staff, assuming that all of them had been baptized.

I asked a member of staff who did not undergo baptism, "How can you serve a ministry working for the publication of Christian literature without being baptized?" The staff member told me that she had been willing to take baptism for many years but nobody was willing to baptize her. She in fact blamed the leaders for not baptizing her since she came to faith in Jesus Christ. We saw to it that she took baptism promptly. I learned later that the night she was baptized she sought forgiveness from the Allah of the Muslims for the entire event. In other words, all along she had had a deficient understanding of Christianity. She did not return to the office the next day. I was quite surprised.

In the process of baptism one should take oaths like, “I have received Jesus Christ as my Savior and Lord. I will lead my life according to the teachings of the Bible, and I will do whatever the Church instructs me to do consistent with it”, etc. How can a person dare to leave Christ after receiving instruction and taking oaths of this kind?! Some of these workers continue to work with pride in that organization. They criticized me for leaving but they still work there as staff. This has been an open secret matter for all staff and the Board, I think. I resigned in order to work for Christ, his Church and the greater society, with a vision for what we can do if we are faithful to him and his Word.

Can missionaries (the people that set up these offices and organizations) conquer Bangladesh with these sorts of Christian (?) believers? Workers such as these, who are proud to be employed by foreign NGOs but without really understanding or accepting Christianity at all, would be better off following their previous religion – Islam. I know the supporting NGO of the Trust in question thinks that they are the only pioneers and the principal agent of Muslim evangelism in Bangladesh. They have spent large amounts of money over more than 50 years, but can they show even one visible church they have established? The main goal of this international organization registered as an NGO in Bangladesh appears to be publishing reports of questionable merit. This however is just one story. Many missionaries from different nations have also been wasting money in order to win Bangladesh for Christ.

Why do missionaries follow the methods they do? One of our friends commented, “Are these groups re-converting the converted Christians into Islam? Is this a hidden conspiracy of this group to work for Islam through spending church money?” Not only do some of these people counsel people to remain Muslims rather than confess Christ openly, they counsel those who have left Islam and become Christians openly to convert back and join mosques.

## 5 Deception

Some argue that the converted don't need to become Christians. They want to become pure Muslims. How? They say: by studying the Qur'an and following the portions of it that address Christ, as well as by following the Bible. They say that true Christians are true Muslims; even Muslims following the teachings of Islam are not pure Muslims, but those who believe that salvation comes through Christ are the only pure Muslims. They claim that true believers are described in the Qur'an as those who submit. Understood in this way, followers of each religion submit or surrender to that religion. Following their logic, communists would be the best Muslims because they sacrifice their lives for the cause of their ideology. Since they submit to the one true God, they are indeed Muslims. Since no religion called 'Isai' is recognized in Bangladesh in the same way as Islam, Christianity, Hinduism, etc., we have to survive as Muslims.

Is the Qur'an so insignificant that these men can change and distort the Qur'an according to their imagination, while the Muslims sit idly by? Muslims will eventually stand against this misuse of their name as their religious duty and stop these people. We members of the visible Church want to distinguish ourselves from them. We do not wish to be seen as deceivers or liars. They are active throughout different parts of Bangladesh. They are trying to misguide and deceive the Muslims. As a religious deception, it is liable to be brought under civil and criminal laws. They present Christ in such a way that the listener cannot understand that a Christian has just preached Christianity to him. Christ must not be preached in such ways. Muslims respect Jesus (Isa) as a Prophet. We can talk about Jesus Christ honestly and openly, making him known to those who want to listen.

The Muslims will eventually challenge these persons wearing Muslim caps and beards who talk about Jesus Christ (Isa). People

can masquerade as Islamic scholars, visiting mosques in order to talk about Isa and to subtly show the difference between the Jesus of the Bible and the Jesus of the Qur'an. This person may be introduced as a Muslim but, in reality, he is a Christian whenever he leaves Bangladesh and when he speaks to foreigners. To Muslims, he claims to be a Muslim; to Westerners he claims that he is a Christian working among Muslims. Ordinary Muslims should be wary of people taking pictures of their mosques because these people may portray the mosques to foreigners as converted churches. A missionary who worked in Bangladesh for more than thirty years says: "This slide is incremental and can be insidiously deceptive, especially when led by people of highest motivation.

## **6 Theology**

Now, it seems to me, we need to bring these issues before our theologians, and administrators. Let us critique them before we suddenly find that we have arrived at a point which is indisputably sub-Christian." There are many witnesses in this country who could say, in fact, that this missionary was once one of the pioneers of such controversial mission work, but failed and became disillusioned with the methodology.

Some of these insiders or messianic Muslims gather support in the name of cooperative societies and/or micro-credit programs. They use pictures of bearded Muslims in most cases. They show that Islamic scholars are becoming Christians. We notice that these groups use such words to deceive many ignorant and illiterate Muslims. Muslims would be shocked to learn that these people don't even read the Bible, don't even pray to Allah. They are actually nothing more than businessmen. They build their funds from zero to millions. These practices make them rich overnight. In reality, they are frauds, deceiving the church in order to make money and gain power for themselves. After writing this book in Bangla,

some of the foreign missionaries and nationals agreed with my comments that many people have been doing business in the name of Muslim evangelism. I have their e-mails. Some of them have taken action against such reports and methods.

The Bible does not support this kind of work. Regardless of the language they use, there is no difference between an 'Isai' and a 'Christian'. A follower of Isa (Jesus Christ) will be known as an 'Isai' or a 'Christian', just as in Pakistan Christians are known as Isais. The followers of this group however do not introduce themselves as Christians or Isais. They claim to be Muslims, even though that does not really describe what they are. A Muslim can ask these people two questions: "(1) Do you believe that Qur'an is a revelation from Allah? And (2) Do you believe that Hazrat Muhammad is the last and greatest prophet of Allah?" According to Bible, an Isai/Christian cannot believe in these two at the same time. Jesus Christ has also advised these types of people not to stand on two boats at the same time. He says that a man cannot obey two masters at the same time. I believe that, in the same way, Islam will not call a mixture of Christianity and Islam, Islam, and its followers, Muslims.

If these people try to avoid these questions, we may ask them some more questions: "(1) Is Isa (Jesus) only a prophet, or do you believe him to be God? Do you believe Isa is the Son of God? (2) Do you believe in the Trinity of God – God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit? (3) Do you believe the 66 books of the Bible to be the only Holy Scriptures?" They often say that Muslims are the followers of Muhammad and they are the followers of Isa (Jesus Christ), but Allah is the same. Ask them, "What is the religious difference between the Muslims' Allah and the Christians' Allah? Is the Allah in the Qur'an the same as the Allah in the Bible?"

In fact, Trinity in Christianity shows that the concept of God is entirely different between the two religions. Of course, some of these people remove any reference that "Christ is Allah's Son"

from their published Injil (New Testament). They substitute “Messiah” in place of “Allah’s Son” in their Injil; in some verses they totally omitted “the Son of Allah” from their published Gospel of Mark. What do they think about the claim of Isa (Jesus), “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me” (John 14:6)? How do they explain the verse of the Bible, “Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved” (Acts 4:12)?

Having a majority of adherents in a given place does not make a religion true or legitimate. Because Christians are the largest religion in the world (the second largest religious group is Muslim) Christians could say: “We are the majority. Therefore, we and our belief are the purest.” On the other hand, Muslims will say, “We are over 1,000 million. So, ours is the truest religion. We are also increasing in Europe and America, the home of the Christians.” The quality of a work cannot be determined solely by the quantity of its followers. Jesus Christ said that people full of darkness are abundant in this world. Some people of darkness are among Christian churches too. Far fewer are the people who follow God’s path. There are also vast numbers of people without any religion. People from the majority religion are in great numbers and in spiritual blindness. Good believers exist, but they are fewer than the reports or claims.

## **7 Persecution cannot be avoided**

These people want to avoid persecution by embracing non-biblical faiths and cultures. What do Jesus, Paul and Peter say about persecution?

Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me. Rejoice and be glad, be-

cause great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you. (Mt 5:11-12)

The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children. Now if we are children, then we are heirs – heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory. (Rom 8:16-17)

Dear friends, do not be surprised at the painful trial you are suffering, as though something strange were happening to you. But rejoice that you participate in the sufferings of Christ, so that you may be overjoyed when his glory is revealed. If you are insulted because of the name of Christ, you are blessed, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests on you. If you suffer, it should not be as a murderer or thief or any other kind of criminal, or even as a meddler. However, if you suffer as a Christian, do not be ashamed, but praise God that you bear that name. For it is time for judgment to begin with the family of God; and if it begins with us, what will the outcome be for those who do not obey the Gospel of God? (1 Pet 4:12-17)

## **8 Money is a Real Issue**

What about the wealth and the large mission centers and projects developed by the groups supporting this kind of work? I deeply thought about it and observed that all these groups in the world are rich. Not a single group is poor. They have large mission centers, universities, well-decorated worship places, large hospitals, and many more physical attractions. Where do they get so much money from? I have been asked this question many time when I have taught about cults. My answer is: “Satan supplies them this money. They collect money from their members.”

While I was studying abroad, I came to know about a cult group named ‘Iglesia Ni Khristo’ where one loses membership if he does not pay his tithes; he is not even allowed to worship. Yet they have members flooding in. Everyone knows that the group is a

cult. Why then do the people pay them? Because Satan, “the god of this age”, has made those people blind. They can even sacrifice their lives for the sake of that group. You can see what the Scriptures say about this type of group:

But there were also false prophets among the people, just as there will be false teachers among you. They will secretly introduce destructive heresies, even denying the sovereign Lord who bought them – bringing swift destruction on themselves. Many will follow their shameful ways and will bring the way of truth into disrepute. In their greed these teachers will exploit you with stories they have made up. Their condemnation has long been hanging over them, and their destruction has not been sleeping. (2 Pet 2:1-3)

I know a person of my village who was a dedicated follower of Christ for many years. He was an outstandingly talented person in our area and then in Christian society throughout the country. Later he became an object of controversy. Some missionaries who taught unbiblical practices exploited him. Feeling isolated and finding no alternative employment he adopted their ideas as his own. I don't go to the village very often, but my brothers and relatives often go there. This person went to pray during Eid (Muslim festival) at the village mosque to show that he had re-converted into Islam. The villagers, however, did not allow him to pray in the mosque yard. Some even warned that they themselves would not pray at the mosque if he were allowed to do so.

Later, he went to my maternal grandfather who is a renowned scholar in the locality and a founder of a Madrassa (Islamic Education Institute). He gave his confession in my grandfather's presence and prayed with him. This was a fraud, however, because in fact he is a preacher of Christianity. It surprises me that he would even think of deceiving a respected person like my grandfather, but he did so very easily.

I respect my grandfather very much even though he is a Muslim. After applying these sordid methods among Muslims in my country, this person made his exodus and now resides in the USA. As far as I know he is no longer involved in mission work. He lives as a re-converted Muslim. A few days ago, he arranged marriages with Muslim boys (another violation of the teachings of the Holy Scripture) for two of his daughters. Don't men like this one read the Holy Scripture? Of course they read it but, for the sake of money, they don't implement its teachings. Paul says, "Unlike so many, we do not peddle the word of God for profit. On the contrary, in Christ we speak before God with sincerity, like men sent from God. (2 Cor 2:17).

At the same time another question arises: "What exactly does an Isai say while confessing to becoming a pure Muslim again?" What did the above-mentioned former Christian, later Isai, say to my grandfather? It is certain that these Muslims would not hear of Jesus Christ. I know another person from another area in Bangladesh, who was advised by one such mission group, as a condition for employment, to become pure Muslim (?), to go to the mosque for prayer and confess by saying that he is not an Isai but a (true) Muslim. He refused and had to leave the job. Re-conversion into Islam is one of theological beliefs practiced by groups such as these.

## **9 Who is Jesus? How to view the Qur'an?**

Followers of Isai groups who identify themselves as Isai at home and hypocritically as Muslims to others, who pray at the mosque sacrificing animals with the Muslims, are a new cult or misguided faction. Their wives and children never pray like they do, since most of their wives originate from Christian families. We understand that it is hard to say "Assalamu Alaikum" for them. Why do our local Christian scholars and theologians keep silent? Have you

lost your speech, being blessed by the crumbs of their money, or are you seeking opportunities to go abroad? It is hampering the Christian community. As the early church had false churches and heresies, so grow misguided cults in the Isai society working among the Muslims of Bangladesh. They may work this way in order to capture Muslim lives and society by hook or by crook. But followers of this sect will one day find themselves standing on a platform which has no base in the Holy Scriptures. This kind of Isai sect is wrong in the light of the Holy Scriptures in two regards:

First, they are wrong in not worshipping Jesus Christ as the Son of God and as our only Lord. These people believe in Christ, but they also believe in the founder of their stated religion. Much of the time, they say more about their founder than Christ. They place more importance on their human inventions and stories than on the One who bought them by His blood. This group is dependent upon the Western promoters of such theology, not least because their money provides many jobs. They seem so fervent about what they believe, but they embraced something completely different just a few days ago. What will they believe next? It is difficult for anyone to guess. One thing can be said with certainty: these kinds of people do not remain steadfast. They change their beliefs and doctrine as often as they change their place. The Holy Scripture is also clear about them:

The Jews replied, "It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and you are going to raise it in three days? But the temple he has spoken of was his body. After he was raised from the dead, his disciples recalled what he had said. Then they believed the Scripture and the words that Jesus has spoken. Now while he was in Jerusalem at the Passover Feast, many people saw the miraculous signs he was doing and believed in his name. But Jesus would not entrust himself to them, for he knew all men. He did not need man's testimony about man, for he knew what was in a man. (John 2:20-25)

The Pharisees heard that Jesus was gaining and baptizing more disciples than John, although in fact it was not Jesus who baptized, but his disciples. When the LORD learned of this, he left Judea and went back once more to Galilee. (John 4:1-3)

Secondly, the Bible is not enough for them. They believe in the Bible as well as the book of their founder, the Qur'an. Once I was with a Christian family: in the morning they did not have time to read the Bible, but they read the other book, taking time to read some of it for me. This misguided cult of our Isai faction, though they cannot make time to read the Bible, yet manage to find time to read the Qur'an. But how do they read the Qur'an? Do they read the Qur'an after ritual ablution? Where do they keep the Qur'an? Do they respect the Qur'an with the respect that the Qur'an deserves as a religious book? Or do they criticize the Qur'an?

The Qur'an has been used as an approach/bridge to discussion about Jesus Christ. Personally, I prefer to restrict my use of the Qur'an to times when arguments arise. In other words, I use it apologetically because it contains teaching about Jesus, the Injil, Torah and Psalms. But reading Qur'an can make a person a true Muslim, never a true Christian Muslim. There is no relation between ordinary Bible-believing Christians and these Christian (Isai) Muslims. Muslim evangelists should preach to them, because this group will easily be re-converted to Islam. They think of themselves as another sect in Islam like the Shia and Sunni. They go to churches abroad and some of their wives go to local churches. Some wives have learnt how to perform the namaz, and their husbands go to mosques. Most of them don't associate with the visible Isai church. How can Muslims tolerate them? Do they want to build a bridge between the Mosque and the Church? This million-dollar project is being run in the country with 100% foreign aid, but the religious people don't even know the names of the people that run it or the names they give their projects!

## **10 Conclusion**

We conclude that this group is pushing the whole Christian community into a great risk of persecution. Christians try to defend themselves by differentiating themselves from these groups. If they can go to the mosques for evangelism then why are they not becoming bold to share the Gospel? Which is easier – evangelizing inside the mosque or Gospel presentation outside the mosque? While writing this, I tried to align my thinking with the Holy Scripture instead of my own will, because I believe in the Holy Scripture. The Holy Scripture describes clearly what we should preach and where, when and how we should do so. For that reason, I ask those that have reacted negatively to my article to study deeply the relevant verses of the Holy Scripture and compare my arguments with them accordingly. If you don't think in the same way, show your arguments in the light of the Holy Bible. Please don't speak on your own authority. I believe that everything we need to uphold Jesus Christ purely is there in the Scriptures. Our Bible has not left us in incompleteness or doubt. The Bible is sufficient for our lives and actions. So, we should not nullify the truth of the Bible. I try to respect the Bible from the bottom of my heart. If you have questions, or have different opinions, please write. This will enrich us. We enjoy the freedom to write what we believe in our country. Writings will enrich writings and raise our thoughts. I want to learn from your writings, too.