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NOAH'S OTHER SON: Bridging the Gap Between the Bible and the Qu'ran

Brian Arthur Brown / Salman Rushdie contributes to the foreword.

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In these troubled times of religious extremism, interfaith relations between Christians, Muslims, and Jews are increasingly important. As a minister of the United Church of Canada, ministering in communities where Christian majorities interface with robust Muslim and Jewish minorities, Brian Arthur Brown began to ask questions in the aftermath of 9/11, and what he found fascinated him.

Noah had another son who drowned in the flood? The Qur'an says Jesus was the Messiah, born of the Virgin Mary, rose on high, and will return prior to Judgement Day? Biblical women had names that are preserved in the Qur'an? The coming of Muhammad was prophesied by both Moses and Jesus? Who knew any of these things? One of the surprises Christians and Jews have found in their recent explorations of the Qur'an is the story of Noah's other son, a story not found in the Bible, though possibly originating from a time before there were Jews, Christians or Muslims.

The biblical figures known to Jews and Christians as prophets are frequently referred to in the Qur'an as "warners." Noah was such a warner and his youngest son, Canaan, was among those who failed to heed the warnings in this engaging story. Canaan derides his parents for making an ark and refuses to get on board, even as the rain falls, and he drowns. People of the twenty first century are like Canaan, and Canadian writer Brian Arthur Brown uses the story of Noah's Other Son as a parable for our time.

We have heard prophetic warnings about global warming, non-sustainable development, poverty and pandemics, but so far we have failed to heed the warnings and remain in danger of Canaan's fate. These days, internecine strife threatens the well being of the world above all other threats. It is here that a more mature religious approach is required, especially among the members of what Brown calls "Abraham's dysfunctional family," the Jews, Christians and Muslims who now together make up a majority of the world's population.

Noah's Other Son examines twenty-five familiar figures who play major roles in the Qu'ran and in both the Old and New Testaments of the Bible, revealing how understanding the characters in the two texts can point the present-day Muslim, Jew, and Christian toward a more mature and tolerant concept of religion. *Noah's Other Son* serves as an introduction to the place of the Qur'an in Muslim and world culture, as well as a tool to help equip all moderate religious people to deal with extremism wherever it may be found.

BRIAN ARTHUR BROWN received theological training at McGill University in Montreal, completed his doctorate at the San Francisco Theological Seminary, and did postdoctoral work at Harvard. He is an established author in the fields of French-English relations and Native-White tensions in Canada, Canada's relationship with the USA and Canada's role in peacekeeping around the world. He lives in Niagara Falls, Canada, where he ministers to two United Church congregations. This quest for greater understanding between Muslims, Christians, and Jews is presented for an international readership.