

False Light of Philosophical Paths Leads to “Instead of christs”

Part A, (READ):

http://www.nytimes.com/2013/09/08/books/review/a-house-in-the-sky-by-amanda-lindhout-and-sara-corbett.html?pagewanted=all&_r=0&pagewanted=print, accessed 2 August 2014.

“Journey Into Darkness” A review by *N Y Times*’ Eliza Griswold of the book, *A House in the Sky*.

[commentary by M. J. Greene, Paraclete Press Research Service, Inc.]

[Amanda Lindhout’s suffering is an uncontested, life changing nightmare no human would choose to face. Thankfully, Amanda is now recovered, back home in America. Prior to her kidnapping Amanda traveled the world, not in luxuriant ease, but as a seeker of all that cross-cultural immersion provides in excitement and exposure to foreign nations and people.] Griswold records Lindhout’s described pre-captive travels this way. “It was a calling. Each border she crossed “felt like a revelation. It was better than school. It was better than church.” [These travels were “peripatetic” in nature, as one seeks wisdom according to Aristotelian philosophy.]

[But after years of pleasant travel, Lindhout was captured by Somalis in 2008. For over thirteen months she suffered captivity, torture, starvation, and rape. As readers might guess, Lindhout and her (unwitting) male captive voluntarily converted to Islam.] Griswold writes, “They studied not as believers, but as prosecutorial lawyers looking for chapters and verses with which to make a case for their safety.” [Lindhout graphically recounts how her study of the Koran produced no safety.]

[The co-authored book recounts Amanda’s *greater* story of *how* she believes she survived. She describes an imaginary heaven-esque abode she fashioned—a place where she could mentally be swept away from the anguish of her captivity.] That technique explains how Lindhout “...emerged with unfathomable grace and wisdom,” according to Griswold.

“To withstand her anguish, she recited a catalog of the small gifts for which she was grateful: “my family at home, the oxygen in my lungs,” the fact that “Jamal set my food down on the floor instead of throwing it at me.” She practiced compassion for her captors even after they gang-raped her, an episode she recounts with characteristic restraint, rendering it all the more terrible for what is left unsaid...

Most remarkably, in total darkness, Lindhout transcended her starving, feverish body. She built first stairways, then rooms in the stillness of the air above her. She built, as the title suggests, a “house in the sky,” where “the voices that normally tore through my head expressing fear and wishing for death went silent, until there was only one left speaking.” This voice asks, “In this exact moment, are you O.K.?” She answers, “Yes, right now I am still O.K.””

Part B, (Watch):

<http://www.pbs.org/wnet/religionandethics/2014/08/01/july-14-2014-amanda-lindhout/23737/>

Lindhout's story is covered again by *Religion and Ethics Newsweekly* on August 1, 2014. This is *R & E's* summary of their interview with Lindhout:

“In 2008, Canadian journalist Amanda Lindhout was kidnapped by a group of Somali teenagers and held captive for over 460 days. She was tortured, starved, and abused repeatedly before finally being released for a ransom. *Lindhout says she did more than just survive the ordeal, she was transformed by it.* “Physically I was in chains on the floor, and I had no power, no control over that, but I still had the power to choose my response to what was happening to me, to hold on to my own morals and my own values,” Lindhout explains. “I knew somehow at the deepest part of my being that if I chose forgiveness, that experience just would not have the power to crush me.” Lindhout is the author of a memoir about her ordeal, *A House in the Sky*, written with Sara Corbett.”

[When life events such as Lindhout's are publically presented in contexts such as described, there is no denying readers are invited into the realm of philosophical and religious critique. This author does not mean to either speak for or stand in judgment against Ms. Lindhout. But the telling of her story begs religious and philosophical questions of Richter-scale magnitude. Ultimately, it is my hope and prayer that Ms. Lindhout will come to realize that the voice, the power that sustained her was neither self-imagined nor nameless. Life in Christ Jesus is the only true *transformative* reality.

According to the Bible, there is one true God. And this God—rather than human strength or will—according to His manifest grace—sustains this world through the nearly-off-its-axis chaos inflicted by The False god—Satan. It is this False god who was responsible for Lindhout's suffering in Somalia. Ultimately, it is Satan, and his Coming Prince—the “Instead of” christ—who are *glorified* when the God of the Bible is not attributed as the Sustainer and Protector of all His creatures. It is the compassion and forgiveness of the God of the Bible—ultimately expressed in Christ's death on the Cross—and not *our* forgiveness of and compassion *for* others—that accounts for the only sacrifice able to atone for the “...guilty, one the same as another.”

Many are self-deluded to believe they are their own saviors—seeking redemption in every carnal, temporal, earthly rescue the heart can imagine. But this is evidence of ending chaos and confusion, not the peace that awaits the Prince of Peace. This world is overripe for judgment—the stench of the decay reaching nostrils up to heaven. Unless forgiveness and compassion are attributed to the only One qualified to offer forgiveness and compassion, human nobility is self-righteous and self-serving. Satan and his minions are disguised as angels of light (2 Cor 11:14). We are to be careful lest the light in us is actually false (Luke 11:35). The false light of philosophical paths lead to “Instead of christs”, not Christ Jesus who is enthroned in His Father's House in the sky.]