

CHAPTER VI

The Stumbling-Block of the Cross*

IT was the deliberate judgment of Dr. James Denny when he wrote on the place and interpretation in the New Testament of the *Death of Christ*, some years ago, that the atonement did not have the place assigned to it, either in modern preaching or in theology, which it has in the New Testament, and that the proportion given to it in average current Christianity was not that of the apostles in their preaching. Those who have carefully read his book must admit that the importance of the death of Christ to Christian theology and life cannot be exaggerated. Throughout the entire New Testament the Cross dominates everything. It interprets everything, and it puts all things in their true relations to each other. The death of Christ is the central truth in the New Testament, and therefore, as Denny remarks, "both for the propagation and for the scientific construction of the Christian religion, the death of Christ is of supreme importance." How is this fact related to the Moslem problem? Is the death of Christ and his atoning work our supreme message? Ought it to be our first message?

The fundamental difference between Islam and Christianity is the absence in the former of the

* Cf. Gal. 5: 11, and 1 Cor. 1: 23 R. V.