

Book Review by Harfiyah Haleem

199 WAYS TO PLEASE GOD

By Rianne Ten Veen, Fast Print, 2009, ISBN 978184426629-6

First there was the Muslim Green Guide, and now we have a grown-up full-length guide to the Green Deen. Arranged according to traditional Islamic hadith and fiqh categories (Beliefs, Worship, Transactions, Moral character), this book contains Islamic guidance from the source texts, many quotations and references from authoritative scientific and scholarly writings, Muslim and non-Muslim, and examples of action for each section.

Rianne claims she is not a scholar but, with two MA degrees and a diploma in Environmental Policy, she is certainly no ignoramus. She points out that 'environmental problems' are man-made in the same way as poverty and wars, and although the book 'contains some frightening and disconcerting facts', she believes that 'we *can* change the world, starting with ourselves'. She deals with many of the excuses and distractions that stop many of us from understanding and doing what we should, and provides ample information to convince and enable us to make a contribution. Small, regular and continuous actions by each of us can add up to big ones for the planet. What she has found helpful, she says, is to make a list of things you can do to change about your life, and do one each month, like 'move to a more ethical bank, subscribe to a vegetable box, [switch to a renewable power supplier], buy a bicycle, put a water saver in the cistern.'

This is a book you can dip into or read in its entirety. Keep it handy to remind yourself of what actions are possible and the Islamic, social and scientific reasons why you should do them. Each of us can spread the message by setting a good example in our daily lives.

Published in *EcoIslam* Issue 6 August 2009