

Description: Diane discusses her acceptance of Islam, her new life, and a prayer for America.

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Published on 16 Jan 2006 - Last modified on 04 Oct 2009

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My Journey to Islam

It took three full years of my searching and studying Quran before I was ready to proclaim that I wanted to be a Muslim. Of course I feared the changes in clothing and habits, such as dating and drinking to which I had become accustomed. Music and dancing were a big part of my life, and bikinis and mini skirts were my claim to fame. All the while I had no chance to encounter any Muslims, as there were none in my area except a few immigrants who could barely speak English an hour's drive away at the only mosque in the state at that time. When I would go to Friday Prayer to try and check out what I was considering, I would receive furtive glances as I was perhaps suspected of being a spy as was the case, and still is, in most Islamic gatherings. There was not a single Muslim American available to help me and, as I said, all the immigrant population were rather chilly to say the least.

In the midst of this phase of my life, my dad died of cancer. I was at his bedside and literally witnessed the angel of death remove his soul. He was gripped by fear as tears rolled down his cheeks. A life of luxury, yachts, country clubs, expensive cars ... for both him and mom, all a result of interest income, and now it's all over.

I felt a sudden desire to enter Islam quickly, while there was still time, and to change my ways and not to continue blindly seeking what I had been raised to believe to be the good life. Shortly thereafter I came to Egypt, and involved a long slow journey through the miracle of the Arabic language and the discovery of the clear truth - God is One, the Everlasting Eternal; Who never was born or gave birth and there is nothing at all like Him.

It is also the resulting equality between humans that attracted me most to that religion. The Prophet Muhammad, may the mercy and blessings of God be upon him, said that people are like teeth of a comb - all equal, the best being the most pious. In the Quran, we are told that the best are the pious ones. Piety involves love of and fear of God alone. Yet before you can really be pious, you must learn who God is. And to know Him is to love Him. I started learning Arabic to read the word of Allah in Arabic as it was revealed.

Learning the Quran has changed every facet of my life. I no longer wish to have any earthly luxuries; neither cars nor clothes nor trips can lure me into that web of vain desires which I was so caught up in before. I do enjoy a fairly good life of a believer; but as they say... it is no longer embedded in the heart...only at hand. I don't fear the loss of

my former friends or relatives - if God chooses to bring them close, then so be it, but I know that God gives me exactly what I need, no more - no less. I don't feel anxious or sad anymore, nor do I feel regret at what has passed me by, because I'm safe in the care of God - THE ONE AND ONLY whom I always knew but didn't know His name.

A Prayer For America

I pray to Almighty God to allow each and every American the opportunity to receive the message of the Oneness of God in a simple, straightforward fashion... Americans are, for the most part, grossly uninformed in regards to correct Islamic theology. The stress is almost always on politics, which focuses on the deeds of men. It's high time we concentrated on the deeds of the prophets who all came to lead us out of the darkness and into the light. There is no doubt that darkness is prevailing in the malaise affecting America now. The light of truth will serve us all, and whether or not one chooses to follow the Islamic path, there is no doubt that the blocking of it or the hindering of others from following it will surely lead to further misery. I care very much for the healthy future of my country, and I'm quite certain that learning more about Islam will enhance the chances of my hopes being fulfilled.

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