

SHANNON ABULNASR, EX CHRISTIAN, USA (PART 2 OF 3)

Rating: 5.0

Description: In this part of her story of conversion, Shannon relates how a couple of astonishing events pulled her towards Islam.

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By: Shannon Abulnasr

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Sadly, one night, I had been out partying and drinking, and was intoxicated. I had begun driving myself home but had to stop at a Hindu friend's store (a different friend than my first one) as I felt I couldn't drive any further safely. My friend was not there, but their employee was outside. I don't remember having any conversation but my friend informed me of what I had apparently said to their employee (who was also a Hindu). I was totally in disbelief and shock at what they said I was doing and saying. This employee said they saw me standing outside my car with my head on my folded arms crying against my car, and they approached me to ask me what was wrong and I didn't even notice they were there or talking to me. They said that when they approached me, while I was crying, I was talking in Arabic. I asked them how they knew it was Arabic if they didn't speak it, and they said because they heard me say "*Bismillah ar-Rahman ar-Rahim*" and they knew it was Arabic. However, they didn't know what it meant. I didn't know anything in Arabic either. Well, since neither of us knew what it meant, I just kind of moved on and didn't think much of it. I assumed they didn't know what they were talking about.

Time went by and nothing really happened, but one day maybe about a month or so later I was thinking about that night, and I looked at the Quran I had been given that was all in Arabic and wanted to know what it said. So, out of curiosity, I went and purchased a Quran that had the transliteration of the Arabic text and an English translation. I opened it to the first page and started reading. It took me a moment to figure out what the transliteration was, but when I tried reading the transliteration by sounding it out, I almost fainted because I heard myself say "*Bismillah ar-Rahman ar-Rahim*"! The first line of the Quran began with "*Bismillah ar-Rahman ar-Rahim*". I was in complete shock because I remembered my Hindu friend telling me that I said those exact words. I began thinking a lot about this. How could I say these words if I didn't know what they were or even what language it was? I had never heard them before except from my Hindu friend. At this point I decided to start learning more about Islam because that was just too odd to look past. I feel it was a signal from Allah to show me the truth and to change my ways.

I began studying a little here and there, and I just knew that this was really what I believed in. I didn't really know how to convert or anything, but it was already in my heart. I met some Muslims in Dallas, but they were men. I didn't know any Muslim women. I asked my Muslim friends to take me to the mosque because I had never been to one and although I wanted to go, I didn't want to go alone. They all told me that they couldn't take me and I didn't understand why. They said they would have to find a woman to take me, but no one ever followed through or took me seriously. I then asked them to teach me how to pray...same thing, no one took me serious.

More time goes by, and in the end of 2005, I had purchased a restaurant and during the spring of 2006 I was defrauded by a person that was trying to "steal" my restaurant from me because I wouldn't sell it to them. It was a totally devastating for me because I was losing everything I worked really hard for and couldn't stop the man that was trying to steal it right out from under me. I was having a nervous breakdown one day because I was having other issues compounding my agony. I was crying all day long, and I wanted to talk to a professional counselor. I didn't go to my restaurant that day, and stayed at home because I was an emotional roller coaster of tears and anger. I knew that if I didn't talk to someone that I might hurt or even kill myself because all my issues piled up together were extremely overwhelming. I was thinking in my heart that it was wrong for me to kill myself...I believed I was created by God, but didn't know what to do. I asked God to please show me what He wanted me to do, because I was lost and couldn't find my way anymore because I knew I couldn't get through this by myself.

I got the phone book out and called many psychologists, and psychiatric doctors' offices but no one could see me without an appointment and even if I made an appointment, the earliest appointment was more than a month away. No one was available to talk to me on the phone either. I told the secretary that answered the phone at one of these clinics that if I didn't talk to someone "today" that I might do something dangerous because I had reached the end of my rope. She told me to call a number that she gave me and that someone there should be able to counsel me over the phone. She didn't tell me what the number was for. I thought it was just a hotline number. I called it and a woman named Jameelah answered the phone right away. I didn't know what company/organization she was with, and didn't ask, because she answered right away. She asked me if I could come to her office that same day, and I told her I could and when she gave me directions, I realized she gave me directions to a mosque. I asked her if it was correct because a mosque was at that location. She responded in the affirmative and informed me that she worked there. I was nervous to go alone, and I asked her if she could meet me outside, which she did. I was once again amazed at the chain of events that led me back to Islam. *SubhanAllah.*

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