

Aminah Assilmi, Ex-Christian, USA (part 4 of 4)

Description: "True, God has tested me, as was promised, and rewarded me far beyond what I could ever have hoped for."

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In all this, the first light was my grandmother. She approved of my choice and joined me. What a surprise! I always knew she had a lot of wisdom, but this! She died soon after that. When I stop to think about it, I almost get jealous. The day she pronounced Shahadah, all her misdeeds had been erased, while her good deeds were preserved. She died so soon after accepting Islam that I knew her 'BOOK' was bound to be heavy on the good side. It fills me with such joy!

As my knowledge grew and I was better able to answer questions, many things changed. But, it was the changes made in me as a person that had the greatest impact. A few years after I went public with my Islam, my mother called me and said she did not know what this 'Islam thing' was, but she hoped I would stay with it. She liked what it was doing for me. A couple of years after that she called again and asked what a person had to do to be a Muslim. I told her that all a person had to do was know that there was only ONE God and Mohammed was His Messenger. Her response was: "Any fool knows that. But what do you have to do?" I repeated the same information and she said: "Well...OK. But let's not tell your father just yet."

Little did she know that he had gone through the same conversation a few weeks before that. My real father (the one who thought I should be killed) had done it almost two months earlier. Then, my sister, the mental health person, she told me that I was the most 'liberated' person she knew. Coming from her that was the greatest compliment I could have received.

Rather than try to tell you about how each person came to accept Islam, let me simply say that more members of my family continue to find Islam every year. I was especially happy when a dear friend, Brother Qaiser Imam, told me that my ex-husband took Shahadah. When Brother Qaiser asked him why, he said it was because he had been watching me for 16 years and he wanted his daughter to have what I had. He came and asked me to forgive him for all he had done. I had forgiven him long before that.

Now my oldest son, Whitney, has called, as I am writing this book, and announced that he also wants to become Muslim. He plans on taking the Shahadah at the ISNA Convention in a couple of weeks. For now, he is learning as much as he can. God is The Most Merciful.

Over the years, I have come to be known for my talks on Islam, and many listeners have chosen to be Muslim. My inner peace has continued to increase with my knowledge

and confidence in the Wisdom of God. I know that God is not only my Creator but, my dearest friend. I know that God will always be there and will never reject me. For every step I take toward God, He takes 10 toward me. What a wonderful knowledge.

True, God has tested me, as was promised, and rewarded me far beyond what I could ever have hoped for. A few years ago, the doctors told me I had cancer and it was terminal. They explained that there was no cure, it was too far advanced, and proceeded to help prepare me for my death by explaining how the disease would progress. I had maybe one year left to live. I was concerned about my children, especially my youngest. Who would take care of him? Still I was not depressed. We must all die. I was confident that the pain I was experiencing contained Blessings.

I remembered a good friend, Kareem Al-Misawi, who died of cancer when he was still in his 20's. Shortly before he died, he told me that God was truly Merciful. This man was in unbelievable anguish and radiating with God's love. He said: "God intends that I should enter heaven with a clean book." His death experience gave me something to think about. He taught me of God's love and mercy. This was something no one else had ever really discussed. God's love!

I did not take me long to start being aware of His blessings. Friends who loved me came out of nowhere. I was given the gift of making Hag. Even more importantly, I learned how very important it was for me to share the Truth of Islam with everyone. It did not matter if people, Muslim or not, agreed with me or even liked me. The only approval I needed was from God. The only love I needed was from God. Yet, I discovered more and more people, who for no apparent reason, loved me. I rejoiced, for I remembered reading that if God loves you, He causes others to love you. I am not worthy of all the love. That means it must be another gift from God. God is the Greatest!

There is no way to fully explain how my life changed. Alhamdulillah (All praise is due to God)! I am so very glad that I am a Muslim. Islam is my life. Islam is the beat of my heart. Islam is the blood that courses through my veins. Islam is my strength. Islam is my life so wonderful and beautiful. Without Islam, I am nothing, and should God ever turn His magnificent face from me, I could not survive.

"O God! let my heart have light, and my sight have light, and my hearing (senses) have light, and let me have light on my right, and let me have light on my left, and let me have light above me, and have light under me, and have light in front of me, and have light behind me; and let me have light." (*Saheeh Al-Bukhari*)

"Oh my Lord! Forgive my sins and my ignorance and my exceeding the limits (boundaries of righteousness) in all my deeds and what you know better than I. O God! Forgive my mistakes, those done intentionally or out of my ignorance or (without) or with seriousness, and I confess that all such mistakes are done by me. Oh God! Forgive my sins of the past and of the future which I did openly or secretly. You are the One who makes the things go before, and You are the One who delays them, and You are the Omnipotent." (*Saheeh Al-Bukhari*)

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