

Indrani and Chandara, Ex-Hindu, Singapore (part 2 of 3)

Description: As her husband becomes increasingly involved with Islam, Indrani at first rejects Islam but later reads the Quran and starts to see strange dreams.

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Still, Chandara could no longer bring himself to pray to so many gods. He could worship only one God spiritually and worship the other idols physically, but he did not know who the One God was. Chandara occasionally still got into a trance.

Chandara had curious Malay friends asking him about Hindu worship. They did not tell him about Islam but they told him that unlike him they pray to one God: God.

Chandara, who was the leader among his working mates, would go along with Malays when they performed their Zuhr prayer, waiting while they prayed. At the same time, he would pray to God in his heart, and ask for the right path.

Chandara was very impressed with the adhan, which had a soothing effect on this. The adhan touched his heart so deeply, especially when it was followed by the prayer that his friends and other Muslims never failed to fulfill. He felt like it was so simple to recognize the true God. "Just worship him. Why does one need all these idols and mediators?" It did not take long before he felt it was Islam and God that he had been searching for.

After their marriage, his wife Indrani was still quite active in her temple activities. She became puzzled when her husband, a more pious Hindu than herself, used to hint repeatedly at the existence of one Almighty God, about praying to one God and that a true religion should not have many gods. Her mother-in-law felt that her previously pious son might have offended the gods.

Even after marriage, Chandara continued his search for enlightenment. He was trying to search for his One God in Hinduism, trying to know the One God he was praying to spiritually. He was no longer interested in any of the temple activities, no longer got into a trance. His mother, while in a trance, pointed out that her son's change in behavior was due to his being under a charm.

Chandara did not know anything about Islam except that in Islam, God is One. He would meditate daily and Uthrachamale (... rosary) Usually, he would be chanting the various god's names. However, this time when he called out their names he felt something was wrong so he just said in English, "Almighty God, Almighty God..." In his meditation, he knew Muslims are praying to the true God.

Chandara's biggest problem in practicing Islam was Indrani. She didn't like Muslims

and was active with her temple activities. He tried to influence his wife on the teachings of Islam by turning on to the Malaysian Islamic programmed on televisions, like "Pedoman." Indrani would complain that it was not necessary for her husband to take so much interest in Islam. He took this opportunity to express to her that he no longer believed in Hinduism, reasoning that it does not have a holy book and a basis of belief. Failing to find out how Hinduism started it merely seemed a culture full of complexity brought down by their ancestors.

He bought a translation of the Quran by Yusuf Ali and was deeply impressed when he read about the Prophets, of the beginning of mankind and of heaven and hell. He found many things that are necessary for every human bring to know and he encouraged Indrani to read it. When he read that idol-worshippers will be thrown to hell, he had all the idols and pictures removed from their home.

Chandara now concentrated on learning more about Islam from various sources. He tried to learn more about Islam from his Malay friends. However, they usually could not give him answers to his questions. They suggested that he should seek help from ... a religious teacher.

Chandara started bringing home books on Islam, as well as on Christianity, Sikhism and Hinduism, telling his wife to read and make a comparison of these religions. Indrani was not interested she was very satisfied with her belief and with Hinduism. She told herself that there no way he could influence her with his idea of One Almighty God and swore in her heart that she would bring him back to her way.

Indrani had no intention of reading the books her husband brought home. Yet when she had trouble sleeping at night, something made her pick up the Quran and read it. Again and again, when she could not sleep, it was the Quran that she picked up and read. She felt so lost because since her husband removed the Hindu deities from their home, she could no longer pray to them.

Indrani began to have dreams. During her first pregnancy, she dreamt of the Kaaba. She related her dream to one of her Muslim colleagues, who the related Indrani's dream to her father. He told her that she was fortunate to have dreamt of the Kaaba.

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