

# How a Muslim Boy Came to Meet Jesus

Imagine what it would be like if your decision to follow Jesus made you an outcast from your family and even a target for death.

That's what happened to a man named Abdu. But the power of love broke down the barriers and brought him and his family back together.

These days Abdu and his father, Suleman, spend time praying and studying the Bible together. Some might call that a miracle since the two did not speak for nearly 20 years.

In fact, Abdu's father once tried to kill him. Why? Because at the age of 16 he decided to leave Islam and follow Jesus.

## **An Unexpected Visit**

The young man's journey of faith began with an unexpected visit.

"I was sleeping and Jesus woke me up, and it was like a dream or revelation," Abdu recalled.

Abdu gave his life to Christ after reading from a borrowed Bible. His decision made his family angry because in their Muslim community, leaving Islam brings disgrace.

"We didn't know what kind of belief he brought," Suleman said. "We were fundamentalist Muslims and were very upset. That is why we were against him."

"Our neighbors also told us he brought a foreign religion here which is not good, and they said, 'Attack him and don't accept him,'" he said.

His mother, Semira, was also very upset when she learned her

son became a Christian.

"I had deep, deep sorrow in my heart because I thought I had lost my boy," she said. "I thought we can't even be buried together when our days are over. It was a big sorrow at that time."

Village leaders tried to intimidate Abdu by ordering a gang of young men to attack him.

"As I was walking to school, they met me on the road and they beat me very badly with a rope and made me suffer," Abdu recalled. "They [asked] me, if this was my final decision. If I continued to be a Christian, they said they would take the full measure and would kill [me]."

Still, Abdu refused to renounce Jesus, and his father became so angry that he tried to kill him.

"We chased him out from our home because we didn't want to be against our neighbors. He brought different things [here] so we chased him out and he went to another village," Suleman said.

During his years in exile from his family, Abdu worked at a church as a security guard and grew stronger in his faith. He read more than 100 Christian books and began discipling other former Muslims who had come to Jesus.

### **Thawing Hearts**

But Abdu's mother missed him terribly, and after many years of separation, she slipped away to visit her son.

"During the six years, I had heard that he wasn't drinking alcohol and doing bad things," she said. "But the boys who were his friends here were doing those things, so I decided to see him secretly."

Impressed by the changes in her son's life, Semira began to consider Christ. However, it took 10 years before she too

would leave Islam to follow Jesus.

"I believed that the faith of my son was true and correct, but now I had a big problem with my husband," Semira said. "But I still decided to follow Jesus and tried to bring [my husband] to Christ. We showed big love to him and big changes in our character. This influenced him."

About a year later, Suleman's heart softened under the influence of God's big love. Now, he and the rest of his family, about 40 of them, are all Christians.

A hut on the family property is now a place of worship to the Lord and for hearing the gospel.

"I'm very happy that my family has come to Jesus," Abdu said. "But the biggest thing that makes me excited is that near the home [where] I grew up is a place being used as a church. People are coming and praying and giving their lives to Christ!"

### **A Missionary to Muslims**

Abdu is now a missionary to Muslims in areas that are hostile to the Gospel.

With help from the Voice of the Martyrs Canada and Scotland, Abdu oversees a tentmakers' project for six other former Muslims who are sharing their faith.

"Our way of bringing people to Christ is not only telling them the Bible, but we show them big love and share our things with them and also show them the good life we have in Christ," Abdu said.

That approach has been very effective, with thousands of former Muslims responding to the Gospel.

As for Suleman, while he and his family are persecuted for the faith, he said he's not about to return to Islam and he looks forward to eternity with the Lord.

“The fundamentalists can do the worst they can to us,” Suleman said. “The last option for them is to kill us. We don’t mind if they kill us because some believers will bury us.”

“For us, it is better with Christ than to live in the community without Christ,” he said. “We don’t feel fear. These days for us are not a threat.”