

‘The Devil Was Preparing Me to Become a Terrorist, But God’ ...

“The devil was preparing me to become a terrorist, but God’s plan for me was to become an evangelist for Jesus Christ,” Rabi says.

Rabi grew up in the typical Egyptian Muslim home. While his father loved him, he clearly favored Rabi’s siblings. Longing for a God who would love him, Rabi delved deeper into Islam. He joined groups to learn the Quran and practice Islam to please God—groups run by the Muslim Brotherhood that taught what Rabi calls “the real Islam.”

Disillusioned by Islam, many Muslims are crying out for God to reveal Himself to them—and the Lord is answering their prayers daily. This is just one of their stories.

As his group was preparing to send him to Afghanistan, Rabi learned from a sheikh that “Allah is the Humiliator.” Rabi was repelled by this concept. As an early teen, he denounced Islam altogether, turning to the world in search of happiness and love.

But decades later, Rabi’s desire to know the one true God would be inescapable.

Searching for Truth

As a married adult with two young children, Rabi renewed his search for truth.

It was obvious to him that Islam was humanly composed to accommodate the desires of the original author. Desperate, Rabi cried out to God.

"I don't know You," Rabi prayed, "but You created me and know me. I want You. Maybe I make no difference to You, but You do to me."

As he prayed, his heart replied: *Jesus*.

Rabi was startled. This couldn't be right; he was sure Jesus could not be God—only a prophet. So he tried another approach.

All religions agreed that Abraham existed. So Rabi called out, "O, God of Abraham, I want to know You. Let me know You. Reveal Yourself to me."

Rabi's heart again said, *Jesus*.

No! Rabi was sure this could not be right. He went with someone more guaranteed: Adam. The God of Adam who created Abraham.

"O, God of Adam. I need to know You, and I want You."

Rabi's heart resounded once again: *Jesus*.

No! Maybe Adam himself was a lie; maybe there never was an Adam.

"O, Creator of this universe, Creator of heaven and earth, I need to know You, and I will not let You go until You reveal Yourself to me. I am at a loss," Rabi cried out.

But again and again his heart whispered, *Jesus*.

Rabi was in tears. Who was this Jesus who could shake his whole being, making him weep? Was Jesus really God?

He still did not know the gospel story; he had no Bible and obtaining one took a long time. All Rabi knew was that the name of Jesus brought him joy—and his life started to change.

Persecution and Family Rejection

Rabi's wife Azhara, however, was afraid of the changes she saw in Rabi. Though the changes were for the better—he treated her with kindness and patience and stopped beating her as is the right of the Muslim man over his wife—Azhara was suspicious.

When a Bible was brought into the house, she could no longer bear it. She shared her troubles with Rabi's family, who confronted him and then beat him, leaving him with scars, hearing loss and other permanent bodily damage. Azhara left Rabi, divorcing him and taking their two sons to live with her father.

Azhara recalls, "I agreed because I thought this was something for God—as if it was a sacrifice to God."

An infidel, Rabi was now dead to them.

Sorrow May Last for a Night ...

Rabi was tormented with loneliness during that time.

"The devil used to attack me with thoughts like, 'You lost your home, your possessions, your wife and children. Now you are all alone. Who has helped you?' Frankly, no Christian had helped me. But God was with me."

God provided for Rabi in every way, financially and emotionally. Rabi clung to the verse, "But David encouraged himself in the Lord his God" (1 Sam. 30:6). And not knowing if he would ever see his wife and children again, he prayed.

... But Joy Comes in the Morning

While Rabi was away, things were no better for Azhara living with her family. She could no longer participate in the Islamic prayer rituals like she used to. She wrestled with what she believed in. Her brother tortured her sons "lest they become blasphemous like their father," Azhara says.

"Although I could not stand Rabi, I called him and told him I

wanted to meet him," Azhara said. "He talked to me so happily and without fear. I asked him why he was so happy. He told me he knew I was going to call; it was a feeling he had. I asked him if he was afraid. What is this joy?"

They agreed on a meeting place. She gathered the children and left.

Azhara struggled for a long time, wrapped up in her thoughts about the opinions of her family and Rabi's siblings. But her husband's Christian witness began to shine a light of hope into her life.

"At that time, Rabi was praying and having his devotional time. He would spend maybe two hours or even the whole day. He played hymns," Azhara says. "When he told me to sit with God, I would go into the room and sit quietly, maybe say a word or two. I was accustomed to the Islamic prayer rituals—I wasn't used to just talking [to God]. Finally, I decided that this [kind of] prayer is good. I would spend my whole day praying and worshiping God while working or tidying up the house."

God had touched Azhara's hardened heart so that she, too, found joy in the love of Christ. "I became alert and felt as if a heavy burden fell off my back," she says. "At that time, I thought of nothing—no fear or anything else. I was so happy."

Equipped to Share

Rabi and Azhara were baptized and remarried on the same day. Together they endured persecution and poverty, relocating regularly and struggling to find housing even from Christians, simply because they were former Muslims. But they continued to grow in Christ. Rabi says that the teachings of Leading The Way's 24/7 satellite TV channel THE KINGDOM SAT were instrumental in his spiritual growth.

"I used to sit and learn in front of THE KINGDOM SAT. It was

like seminary for me,” he says. “The programs are so focused on the Bible, and that is why I watched it. I had a deep need to study the Bible.”

Though Christianity has brought with it persecution, Azhara has no delusions about what she has gained:

“Life in Islam was miserable. We were living a very comfortable life financially and in every aspect. But there was no happiness. ... I am happy that I accepted Christ and that we are now living by grace, and my children are now learning the true religion. I am very happy with that because there is no guarantee in life. But the eternal life is guaranteed. Thank God. God is good.”

Today, Rabi and Azhara see God’s faithfulness in their lives. They are passionate about discipling others and continue to testify to God’s goodness.

“The devil was preparing me to become a terrorist, but God’s plan for me was to become an evangelist for Jesus Christ,” Rabi says. “I want everybody to taste the same good taste that I am enjoying.” {eoa}

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