

AMINAH ASSILMI, EX-CHRISTIAN, USA (PART 3 OF 4)

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Description: Ameenah discusses the various trials she faced after accepting Islam, from having her children taken away from her to losing all friends and family.

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How Islam changed my Life

“How much more we love the light...If once we lived in Darkness.”

When I first embraced Islam, I really did not think it was going to affect my life very much. Islam did not just affect my life. It totally changed it.

Family life: My husband and I loved each other very deeply. That love for each other still exists. Still, when I started studying Islam, we started having some difficulties. He saw me changing and did not understand what was happening. Neither did I. But then, I did not even realize I was changing. He decided that the only thing that could make me change was another man. There was no way to make him understand what was changing me because I did not know.

After I realized that I was a Muslim, it did not help matters. After all...the only reason a woman changes something as fundamental as her religion is another man. He could not find evidence of this other man...but he had to exist. We ended up in a very ugly divorce. The courts determined that the unorthodox religion would be detrimental to the development of my children. So they were removed from my custody.

During the divorce, there was a time when I was told I could make a choice. I could renounce this religion and leave with my children, or renounce my children and leave with my religion. I was in shock. To me this was not a possible choice. If I renounce my Islam....I would be teaching my children how to be deceptive, for there was no way to deny what was in my heart. I could not deny God, not then, not ever. I prayed like I had never prayed before. After the thirty minutes was up, I knew that there was no safer place for my children to be than in the hands of God. If I denied him, there would be no way in the future to show my children the wonders of being with God. The courts were told that I would leave my children in the hands of God. This was not a rejection of my children!

I left the courts knowing that life without my babies would be very difficult. My heart bled, even though I knew, inside, I had done the right thing. I found solace in Ayat-ul-Kursi.

“God! There is no god but He - the Living, the Self-subsisting, Supporter of all. No slumber can seize him nor sleep. His are all things in the heavens and on earth. Who is there can intercede in His presence except as He permitteth? He knoweth what (appeareth to His creatures as) Before or After or Behind them. Nor shall they compass aught of His knowledge except as He willeth. His Throne doth extend over the heavens and the earth, and he feeleth no fatigue in guarding and preserving them for He is Most High, The Supreme (in Glory).” (Quran 2:255)

This also got me started looking at all the attributes of God and discovering the beauty of each one.

Child custody and divorce were not the only problems I was to face. The rest of my family was not very accepting of my choice either. Most of the family refused to have anything to do with me. My mother was of the belief that it was just a phase and I would grow out of it. My sister, the ‘mental health expert’ was sure I had simply lost my mind and should be institutionalized. My father believed I should be killed before I placed myself deeper in Hell. Suddenly I found myself with no husband and no family. What would be next?

Friends: Most of my friends drifted away during that first year. I was no fun anymore. I did not want to go to parties or bars. I was not interested in finding a boyfriend. All I ever did was read that ‘stupid’ book (the Quran) and talk about Islam. What a bore. I still did not have enough knowledge to help them understand why Islam was so beautiful.

Employment: My job was next to go. While I had won just about every award there was in my field and was recognized as a serious trend setter and money maker, the day I put on hijab, was the end of my job. Now I was without a family, without friends and without a job.

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