

DARRICK ABDUL-HAKIM, EX-CHRISTIAN, USA

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Description: How he developed the monotheistic understanding.

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My name is Darrick Abdul-hakim. I am a 20-year-old Muslim brother living in the United States. I currently attend Cupertino University, which won't be for long since I am transferring to a University that suits my major. I am going to major in Old Hebraic and Arabian Literature and History, the fancy name for this study is Semitic Literature.

I converted to Islam on Oct 12, 2001 at Isha Prayer. So far I must say, the Islamic quest has been exhilarating. There is nothing novel about my conversion, but it's an interesting one at that.

I grew up as a Christian who had a good deal of information. I was very excited to express my Christian belief to my friends, co-workers and colleagues. However, at the age of 17, life became a bit more complicated than before. I began to observe my fellow Christians in more depth. I was shocked how most didn't practice the Christian faith to 100% expectation.

To make matters worse, I became increasingly dissatisfied with the Biblical scriptures. For example, the belief that Jesus claimed to be God was a church addition. Jesus certainly never asserted that he was the God of the world.

I tried to save my faith in Jesus, but, it was time to go, I needed a more realistic understanding to the world. So, I prayed to Jesus, trying to see if there still lies an answer. But, as time went on, I began to notice that the Church life was not it.

I wondered what would happen if I were to become more religious, but that never happened and instead I left the Christian life and bid it farewell. Not only that, but also my faith and belief in God, slipped quietly out the door. I was now an agnostic, not knowing what faith to follow, or knowing if we are surrounded by God or not, I was just lost in a chaotic world. I wasn't an atheist, I was just confused about who, or what God really was.

Things didn't pick up. Immediately following my rejection of the faith and church, my grandma died. If I didn't question life before, I certainly did now. I began to have thoughts about the Universe whether we are really humans at all. I began to ask why I

should remain moral (I refused to drink because I felt it was a sin, interesting for someone who didn't have a faith or believed in a God!). I began to question my own existence. I began to contemplate whether I should be here or not and on account of this, I had seriously considered suicide. I wanted to quit my job because I was coming under stress, by this time I was 18 years old.

Alhamdulillah, I had the comfort of friends to keep me from committing such a catastrophe. But, I was still without a faith, life couldn't get much better from my end, and I still didn't know how to cope with my grandmother's death.

Eventually, I began to read for myself. I ran across a book, which was discussing the world's faiths, and I came across Islam. I simply never had given Islam any thought at all. On the following day, when I was on my way to work I saw a man with a copy of the Quran in his hand so I asked him if I could see it, Alhamdulillah (all praise is due to Allah) he not only let me see it, he gave it to me! I was stunned, excited, and compelled. I went to read it and was amazed by its literature; the things I didn't notice before struck me. It was comprehensible, and lucid for the layperson like myself.

On September 11th, I saw the world trade centers go crashing down. I wondered to myself, could the teachings of Islam have provoked such an act? Could Islam be this bad?

But, the more I read, the more I found out that Islam was a faith that denounced all forms of extremism. Islam by all means is peace. We certainly wouldn't judge Christianity by the barbaric abortion clinic bombings, or we wouldn't describe Judaism as an ethnic faith that just wants a Jewish world from the Israeli who assassinated the Israeli prime minister in 1995 because he felt the Prime minister was an apostate of God. Why must we do the same to Islam? 9/11 compelled me to learn more about Islam. I bought and read a total of 10 biographies on Prophet Muhammad, may the mercy and blessings of God be upon him. I was amazed by his life. I didn't look at Muhammad from a Christian perspective, but from a Historical, Political and cultural perspective. After my readings into Islam, I decided to convert. I was on a quest for the faith, and I found it. Alhamdulillah.

Now, after my conversion, I have read a large number of books on Islam. I still am currently reading the Biographies of Prophet Muhammad. I can truly say that life now is much better!

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