

War on the Rocks Editor's Note: This conversion essay was penned by Elton "Ibrahim" Simpson, who was killed while attacking a "Draw Muhammad" event in Garland, Texas on May 3, 2015. This text is revealed here at [War on the Rocks](#) for the first time, courtesy Amarnath Amarasingam of the University of Waterloo.

From darkness to Light

Ibrahim S's Story

Bismi Allahi Ar-Rahman Ar-Rahim

(In the Name of Allah, The Most Gracious, The Most Merciful)

While I was attending Phoenix College a question came to my mind and it was, "Why Am I a Christian?" Now, please understand this, I am not a Nationalist, or racist, so just bare with me. I have always known that Christianity has been forced upon my people (i.e. African slaves who have evolved to be African Americans) before coming to the "Land of the Free" from watching documentaries, movies, etc so why am I following this way? This was something that I just started seriously thinking about. My father once said to me, "How can Christians say that they are Christians while after going to Sunday Church and asking God for forgiveness for their sins, then come back the next day and treat our people they way they did?" So with this I understood that I was a christian only because it was taught to me since I was little. No proof was there to look at for me to be convinced that this was the truth. This act was merely me following my forefathers blindly.

"Nay! They say: "We found our fathers following a certain way and religion, and we guide ourselves by their footsteps."(Chapter Az-Zukhruf verse 22)

Keep in mind, my father (May Allaah SWT guide him, ameen) does not have a religion that he follows but he believes that God exists; yet I was still sent to "Sunday School" as a child. Maybe this had to do with the

choice from my mother (May Allaah SWT guide her ameen), who is a catholic. Also keep in mind that I wasn't too much of a "practicing" christian, nor was I studious in it. I basically just stuck with the "Jesus loves me" and "Jesus died for my sins" concept and tried my best to be a good person.

Abu Hurairah (ra) reported Prophet Muhammad (peace and prayers be upon him as saying, "Every child is born on the fitrah (i.e.Muslim) and it is his parents who make him a christian or a jew,,,"(Al-Muwatta 16.53)

Anyway, when my father mentioned that statement to me, I had nothing to say in return.

Now, just from this, doubt set in about the religion of Christianity. I also read some information regarding the Creed of Nicea. Roman Emperor Constantine and his members got together and decided on their own that Prophet Jesus (peace be upon him) was divine, yet Jesus (peace be upon him) never said this himself. For me, I didn't think that Jesus (peace be upon him) was God. I have always thought that they were separate. Honestly, they say one must pray through Jesus (peace be upon him) to get to the Father, but I did this only a few times in my life. 95% of the time, I prayed directly to God. Moreover, this was some scriptural confusion that only led to me doubting this religion even more, to the point I started feeling stressed out.

As I sat in the deep thoughts of confusion regarding Christianity the pains of my heart suffered dramatically. My nerves ready to burst, stress dominating my mind. Belief should not consist of any doubt. It is 100% confidence that what one believes in is correct. This was not the feeling that I had any more. Depression set in. Fear set in! The Whispers of Shaiton (Satan) attacked me from left and right. I would say to myself, "What if I die not believing that Jesus died for my sins? Would God be pleased with me?!" Tears began to fall like rivers down my face heavily. The pain from confusion broke me apart! Who did I take my problem to? My father!? No! My Mother!? No! My brother, sister (May Allaah SWT guide them all, ameen)! No! I took this weighty problem of my soul to The One Who created it. God! I made a very sincere supplication to Him saying,

"O, God! I am so confused and I don't know what to do! I seek Your help! Guide me to what You want me to follow. I will not listen to the words of men. I Put my trust in You and only You."

Crash: Turning Point

Later on that week, I was running late for basketball practice at Phoenix College, so I tried getting on the freeway to speed things up. I'm on it, driving about 60mph in the carpool lane (even though I was the only

one in the car) and there were 2 cars ahead of me. All of a sudden I noticed the car in front of me slammed on its breaks! So I slammed on mine! I slid all the way to the car in front of me but not hitting it. Phew! Then another shock occurred. A car appeared out of no where like a sniper's bullet on my rear side, driving about 45 to 50mph. BOOM! I'm hit! The car in front of me is hit! I'm feeling ok, no one was seriously injured, to my knowledge. They say that whiplash pain usually comes the next day after such an event takes place. Unfortunately, I didn't make it for basketball practice that day due to the accident. Also when I woke up the next day to attend practice, I felt pain in my lower back.

I went to the trainer because the pain was intense and annoying. The trainer would lay me on my stomach and feel on my back (i.e. spine) down to my tailbone area to see what places caused discomfort to me. I told the trainer what spots bothered me. Every morning I had to come in, lay on my stomach with a heating pad on it; try to practice, then after that come back and have an electric pulse massager connected to my back to relieve me of some pain, ice my back, then go to class. Unfortunately, some bad news was told to me. The trainer said that I have a "bruised vertebrae in my tailbone area." A specialist agreed with the trainer and he (i.e. the specialist) added that I had a "rotated pelvis" as well. Ouch! Rehab was a must for me, but God had other plans for me.

Now being on campus I went to the College Library where I would use the internet. Now keep in mind, at this time I was still thinking about my ancestry, so guess what? That led me to take an interest in a sect of Islaam called "The Nation of Islam". My barber (in the past) was from N.O.I. and he mentioned The Qur'aan to me. He was telling me how our people worshipped Allaah before coming into slavery, and how Allaah sent Elijah Muhammad to teach us about Islaam in America.

"Muhammad(peace and blessings be upon him) is not the father of any of your men, but he is the Messenger of Allaah and the last(end) of the Prophets. And Allaah is Ever All-Awar of everything"
(Chapter Al-Ahzab verse 40)

So I decided to check this group out using yahoo searches. In this sect they teach a lot about how "special" African American people are. I saw so much emphasis. "The black man is the original man" and that "white people are the devils." This is what I was reading in their book by Elijah Muhammad "Message to the Blackman". This book would build the spirit of a black male or female without doubt, but at the same time it promotes Nationalism, Racism, and Shirk (adding partners to Allaah) to the utmost degree. I read that they

believe that a “Big Headed Scientist” created the white race (1)! This was complete nonsense and it didn’t make sense to me. Good thing God led me to someone who knew about this sect plus more.

“O mankind! We have created you from a male and a female, and made you into nations and tribes, that you may know one another. Verily, the most honorable of you with Allaah is that(believer) who has At-Taqwa{i.e. He is one of the pious.} Verily, Allaah is All-Knowing, All-Aware.”(Chapter Al-Hujurat verse 13)

Turning Point # 2

“ ..He whom Allaah guides, he is the rightly guided....” (Chapter The Cave, verse 17)

One day I was coming to the campus after hanging out with a friend and as we were walking my friend started talking with some guy out of no where. He wore a white dress shirt with slacks and I didn’t really pay him too much attention until he said, “I am a muslim.” I don’t know what my friend said to him to make him say that but it definitely caught my attention. I asked him about Islaam. He said, “Meet me back here tomorrow. I will bring you some Information.”

Am I Blind Following?

That day came, we met at the same place, and he gave me da’wah (i.e. calling me to Islaam). He understood that I was christian influenced, so he brought some information regarding Jesus (peace be upon him) and contradictions in the bible. He asked me,

“The Christians say that the bible is the Word of God, so should there be any contradictions (i.e. errors) in it?”

I said, “No, of course not.” So he showed them to me.(2) He also showed me scientific evidences which COULD NOT BE KNOWN by a man 1500 years ago while modern scientists have just learn about these discoveries about 100 years ago!(3)For example, Embryology and knowledge of the Oceans(Atlantic Ocean and the Mediterranean sea)etc.

“Do they not then consider the Qur’aan carefully? Had it been from other than Allaah, they would have found therein many a contradiction.”(Chapter An-Nisaa verse 82)

“O mankind! If you are in doubt about the Resurrection, then verily We have created you(i.e. Adam) from dust, then from a Nutfah (mixed drops of male and female sexual discharge i.e. the offspring of Adam), then from a clot(a piece of thick coagulated blood) then from a little lump of flesh, some formed and some unformed(as in the case of miscarriage)- that We may make(it) clear to you(i.e. to show you Our power and Ability to do what We will.).....”(Chapter Hajj verse 5)

“And it is He Who has let free the two seas (kinds of water): this is palatable and sweet, and that is salt and bitter; and He has set a barrier and a complete partition between them.”(Chapter Al-Furqan verse53)

Now after this great, influential conversation built upon proofs by this muslim man, I found myself motivated and enthusiastically coming to Phoenix College only to read Al Qur’aan in the library where I would spend most of my time. I could not stop reading this Great Book. Class time would come up, yet I didn’t feel the need to go to that class because I was reading Al Qur’aan or I would show up late. That muslim brother ended up leading me to Islaam, Walhumdulillaah (and All praise be to Allaah). I took my shahadah(testification of faith) just 3 weeks since hearing about Islaam through this muslim man after being a so called Christian for 18 and a half years. This led to me becoming a muslim on Friday, Jummu’ah prayer. When I received my first Qur’aan, I would spend most of my time in my room, in seclusion, reading until I fell asleep. I would then wake up about 5-6am just to continue reading it. I recognized my priorities have changed. I was seeking an athletic full scholarship to a University with my talent with basketball. I was being recruited by the University of Miami, Eastern Michigan, and other schools but this was put to an end with my injury. Now I am seeking to get closer to Allaah SWT and His Messenger(peace and prayers be upon him) by following The Qur’aan and The Authentic Sunnah(way) of Prophet Muhammad(peace and prayers be upon him) and the way of his Sahabah (i.e. Companions){May Allaah SWT be pleased with them all}

“,, Whoever disbelieves in Taghut(i.e. false deities, idols, stones, sun, stars, angles, human beings, rulers, etc) and believes in Allaah, then he has grasped the most trustworthy handhold that will never break. And Allaah is All-Hearer, All-Knowing.” (Chapter Al-Baqarah verse 256)

Remember when I asked Him sincerely...,

“O, God! I am so confused and I don’t know what to do! I seek Your help! Guide me to what You want me to follow. I will not listen to the words of men. I Put my trust in You and only You.”

Allaah Glory and Praise be to Him says,

“... I respond to the supplicant when he calls on Me(without any mediator or intercessor). So let them obey Me and believe in Me, so that they may be led aright.”(Chapter Al-Baqarah verse 186)

Thus,

“Allaah is the Wali (Protector or Guardian) of those who believe. He brings them out from darkness into Light. But as for those who disbelieve, their Auliya (supporters and helpers) are Taghut{False deities and false leaders}, they bring them out from light into darkness. Those are the dwellers of the Fire, and they will abide therein forever.”