

“It’s Unfair for God to Put Children in Muslim Families”

If salvation is free for anyone who receives Jesus Christ as his personal saviour, then how about a child who is born into a Muslim family. He or she will not have a chance to receive salvation because of the traditional faith from their parents. So it is not fair for God to put this child in the Muslim family.

The timing of your question is one of those “God things” that make me smile. I was ready to reply with what I know to be true, that God is bigger than and not limited by the circumstances of someone’s birth, when I had the pleasure of sitting down to talk with a man who grew up in Iran, the son of devout Muslim parents, but who became a Christian. Let me tell you his story.

Ibrahim (not his real name) was very depressed, assaulted by what he calls “evil thoughts” pushing suicide as his solution. One night he lay in his bed, looking at the ceiling and said to God, “What have I done to You? I’ve lost my wife, my children, my business, my fortune. I’ve lost everything. What did I ever do to You to deserve this mistreatment?”

Immediately, he heard God’s voice inside his head: “Don’t you see? I rescued you from that woman. She was trying to take your life.” (And indeed, he found out later that this same woman, before taking him to the cleaners, had poisoned her first husband.)

Ibrahim knew beyond a shadow of a doubt that he had heard from God, and he sat bolt upright in bed, swinging his legs onto the floor. At that moment, a single drop of sweat trickled from the back of his neck down his spine, and as it traveled down his back he felt all the energy and power drain out of

him. He was a limp dish rag, unable to stand, much less walk or do anything else. He was suddenly aware that he was physically as powerless and needy as he was spiritually.

He prayed, "I need help! Send me angels!"

Within days, as an answer to his prayer, he met a Christian woman who befriended him and shared her faith with him. She basically tutored him in Christianity, explaining that Jesus is the Son of God who died on the cross for Ibrahim's sins and was raised from the dead three days later.

One night, he had a dream. He was standing in a room with several other people when Jesus walked in and stood about 12 feet away from him, radiating strength and love and acceptance. Ibrahim was so excited! He said, "Jesus! What are You doing here?" and Jesus said, "I came to talk to you." All Ibrahim could think about—in his dream—was that he wanted Jesus to hug him. So he asked Jesus if he could hold Him and hug Him, but Jesus disappeared. . . and Ibrahim woke up.

The moment he awakened, he knew he was washed. He opened his heart to Jesus and became a Christian. He told all his friends of his experience, and they laughed derisively at him. But the reality that he had met Jesus and had become a new man—"a new, *joyful* man," he told me—was so much stronger than his friends' ridicule that it truly didn't matter to him.

Ibrahim delighted to tell me the differences between Christianity and Islam, how Islam is a "religion of the sword," full of force and fear, but Christianity is a religion of relationship, of receiving and returning God's love and delight. He loves the freedom that we have as Christians, freedom to make choices that are absent in Islam. He loves how Jesus has changed his heart, enabling him to forgive the people who hurt him deeply and love the people God brings across his path.

This is an illustration of how and why a child who grows up in

a Muslim home is not hopeless. God tells us in Ecclesiastes 3:11 that He has planted eternity in our hearts, and in Romans 1:19-20 He tells us that men are without excuse because He has given us clear evidence of Himself, both within ourselves (per Ecclesiastes) and in His creation.

So people are aware that there is a God to whom we are all accountable, and that God reveals Himself to people directly, through His children, and through His word.

In the Muslim world, we're hearing more and more stories of people coming to faith in Jesus through dreams and visions. Praise God!

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