

Below is a testimony from one of our Aglow ladies who is an ex-Muslim. Her name has been changed for safety reasons.

### Testimony of Anna

Why do I have to read and learn the Quran in a language I don't understand? Why is it so important to one's righteousness? Why are the penalties for forgetting ones lines so severe? These were some of the many questions which tortured me as a child. Nobody it seemed wanted to or was able to answer them. I come from a strict Muslim background and my parents were prominent figures in the Islamic community in my country of Malaysia. All my life, I was surrounded by the so called wise men. My hunger for knowledge was not fulfilled as they refused to answer most of my questions. You don't have to understand it, you just learn it, it's our tradition that has been passed down through the generations, they told me.

Then one day I managed to obtain a Quran in a language which I could understand and began my study. I soon realised that the rituals we practised were simply religious traditional rules known as the Hadith and that very few were actually derived from the Quran. I became confused when I compared the differing rituals practised by the various Muslim denominations but remained trapped in this religion out of fear because the penalty for changing faith could even be death: Al-Bukhari Hadith Vol 9.57. says: Whoever changes his religion, kill him.

My parents arranged a marriage to a Moslem man for me, but we divorced and for many years I was a single parent caring for my two children. I became acquainted with a foreigner who had problems relating to his religion. He had been punished on many occasions for breaking religious rules. Under Sharia law, it would have been impossible for us to be married and so Peter had to say he would become a Muslim. During this process, we came across verses which questioned the traditional Hadith and also stated that one should only practice what was taught in the Quran. We also discovered the name Jesus (Ise) many times with the details of his birth, life, death and the day he ascended to God also importantly the mention that he is the Spirit of God (Rohullah) and the Word of God (Kalimatullah) and that on judgement day that it was he who would be the judge. Best of all, we found verses which gave approval for us to study previous scriptures (the bible).

My constant prayer during this period was that God would reveal the truth to me concerning the word son of God, the name Lord for Jesus Christ, the meaning of the Trinity, the secret of the cross and the Holy Spirit. This request was answered when I came across a bible in a hotel room whilst accompanying my husband on a business trip. It was at this point I opened my heart to the Lord and insisted that my husband get hold of a Christian to pray with me! This proved to be a challenge as it was in the middle of the night, but we finally found one that was willing! I was so insistent because I was afraid that if I died in the night, my name would not be in God's Book of Life. Upon my return home, I came into contact with other believers and joined an underground church. Peter, my husband remained supportive throughout

even though he was an unbeliever at that time.

One day, the group were called to go to the hospital to pray for a young man who had been very seriously injured in an accident. He lay unconscious being kept alive by machines. The doctor's prognosis was that he would probably only live for one more day. The group prayed and then left. The next day they went to pray again but the bed was empty. The group were told that just after they had left, the young man had recovered. When Peter saw the mighty power of God at work, he surrendered his life to the Lord.

Eventually, we decided to open our home. As more and more people joined us, our house became full of praising, praying people on a daily basis and we baptised new believers in our swimming pool. We were introduced to people from all walks of life including high ranking government officials and royalty - all part of the thousands of members of the network of the underground church. A church was opened with the help of a Pastor, but when the authorities got to know of our activities, they closed it down with threats of imprisonment. Most of us were too afraid to meet together for a time. We found a fairly remote building which was in an area where dogs roamed. Dogs are unclean to Muslims so this afforded us some privacy for a further period. Sometimes, we continued to praise and worship all night. Our contact with other Christians grew and we started to teach them how to talk to Muslims about Jesus. My father who was an Imam and my mother disowned me and severed all contact with me. Without the protection of my influential family, the authorities had a green light to investigate. We were put on a list as 'troublemakers'. We had both had our employment severed and my husband was unable to renew his permit. A warrant of arrest was issued and we realised that for safety reasons, we must leave the country. We prayed and the Lord promised that he would keep us safe in the palm of his hand. We asked God where in the world we should go and he confirmed to us that we should go to the UK. Someone gave us our airline tickets and on the way to the airport, we were given an envelope containing money. It was very difficult for us to leave our home, daughters and Christian brothers and sisters but our wonderful God strengthened us.

To our great surprise, on our arrival at Heathrow, there was someone to meet us who helped us find a bed and breakfast. It was really hard living in a strange country with little or no funds and knowing no one. There followed periods, when we had no money, and no place to call home but these trials served only to increase our faith. We even had to live in someone's garage for two months during the very cold weather. Our cries did not go unnoticed. Our God never forgot or abandoned us and ultimately we found employment. We feel very blessed now as we have the privilege of practising our faith without prosecution and we are continually praising him for his strength and we give him all the glory. Our two daughters will join us soon – both have become believers. We are praying that one day we will be able to return to my country to share our faith without prosecution. While we are here, we hope to help others who are being persecuted for their faith and to help the church in the UK to wake up!