

Jim Cate, Ex-Christian, USA



I was raised as a Christian and went to a fundamentalist Bible believing church. I made a profession of faith to Jesus in 1969. In all of my years as growing up Christian, I read and studied the Bible regularly. Later on, I enlisted in the US Marines and led Bible studies with my troops. In 1988, I started my own church reaching out with a special Spanish ministry to the Hispanics. In 1990, I got out of the Marines and joined the US Navy reserves.

In 1991, I was ordered to active duty for operation Desert Storm. I remember being impressed with the Arabs worshipping 5 times a day and I never forgot about hearing the Athan (call to prayer) 5 times a day over the many loud speakers in the deserts of Saudi Arabia. I purchased several prayer rugs while I was there.

As I continued in my Christian faith, when I got home, I started to become unsettled regarding it. I went to several different churches and faiths over the years and studied their doctrines. I studied and read the book of Mormon quite a bit and became fascinated with the Mormons. However, I eventually found many conflicts between the Bible and the book of Mormon.

I later joined a 7th Adventist Church and thought this was the true path. I studied and read several of Ellen G. White's books concerning the 4th commandment of keeping the Saturday Sabbath. However, I eventually saw some conflicts between the Bible and one of Ellen G. White's vision of heaven.

I stayed home from all churches after that and got a job working for the Kansas City Star newspaper. I came across a couple of Muslims at work and observed them daily, becoming impressed with their humble and pious character. One day, I went to my favorite used book store and saw an English translation of the Noble Quran in Jan of 2008. I took it home and began reading it. I started to feel a drawing to the Islamic faith after about 4 weeks of reading it daily.

One January early morning, I was looking up on the internet on how to convert to Islam. I found and repeated the Shahada very prayerfully and did this 2 or 3 times while meditating on it and with a prayerful attitude. I suddenly felt a great

weight lifted from my shoulders as I discovered that God had forgiven me of all my past sins. This website (www.IslamReligion.com) then sent me several books on Islam from Saudi Arabia. Since saying the Shahada, I immediately began performing *wudu* (ablution) and *salah* (prayer) 5 times daily. It has now been 9 weeks since I converted to Islam and I am reading the Quran and studying the Islamic books daily.

On a side note, my wife has become upset with me over my conversion and has been trying to get me to renounce Islam. I tell her I can never turn my back on God and continue to lead a humble Muslim life before her and being patient with her in the hopes of her one day embracing Islam. I am now mentally, spiritually and physically feeling my best since converting to Islam.