

I read the whole Koran in one sitting. Right from the start it grabbed me.

So right off, it was speaking directly to me as an individual. Right off, it wasn't just some ancient 1400 years old text.

"Oh my God! This is from God" It really was the Word of God! Well, needless to say, I was floored. I knew there was something very extraordinary here.

The Koran opened up to me an entire new universe of meaning. There was nothing that gave me pause. I kept saying "yes" to all that I read.

One thing pulled me up short and that was that Jesus (pbuh) did not die on the cross. But by that time, the evidence was so overwhelming to my heart, my soul and my mind that this Book was indeed exactly what it claimed to be that I had no trouble accepting this as the truth from God Himself. I am not sugar-coating or embellishing my story to make it more attractive, or pious sounding, or dramatic, or whatever, I am telling the truth.

I am especially struck by how contemporary the Koran is - remember my academic background. Everything about it is just absolutely brilliant! I don't know why Muslims are so afraid of contemporary philosophy, psychology criticism. There is nothing to fear. The Koran is very "today, it is very "tomorrow".

Two weeks later I declared in public that I bear witness there is no deity but God and I bear witness that Muhammad is a messenger from God.

Islam is truly the best and I say this coming from a background of formal study in religious issues. I am rarely at a loss for words, but I am when it comes to describing how I feel and think about Islam, the Koran and the sunnah of our beloved Prophet (pbuh). What can be said but praise be to Allah.



DR. JEREMIAH'S SPIRITUAL JOURNEY



Story of Dr. Jeremiah

I was raised Catholic and went to a Catholic grade school in the U. S. I am from an upper middle-class background.

I was always interested in religion and psychology.

At the same time, as I grew, I was rather wild: "sex, drugs, rock 'n roll" scene as the saying goes.

In college, I studied philosophy and focused on areas such as philosophy of religions and existentialism. I also studied Buddhism. I very strongly considered being a priest, would visit a particular monastery once in a while and have twice begun the entrance procedure into a seminary for the priesthood.

(Indeed, I was in this process when I accepted Islam. Isn't that ironic?)

I ended up going to University in Pittsburgh.

I studied what is called Formative Spirituality. I have a Master of Arts degree (M.A.) and a Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.)

I was religious as a child and read the Bible, which often Catholics do not actually do, relying on the priest for the interpretation and understanding. In college, I practiced yoga and Buddhist /Hindu styles of meditation for about two or three years. Near the end of my first year in college, I made a vow to "go all the way" with religion. To find God.

It was rough to know what to believe. Later I prayed like this: "I am sending this prayer out to the One True God, the God of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Moses and Jesus. If You are there guide me."

I remember one time with particular clarity. When it came time to write my dissertation for the Ph.D. I had to include a section about a religious tradition that was not my own. I chose Islam. Believe it or not, it was the one religious tradition I knew nothing about! This struck me as somewhat odd. But I noticed I did indeed have a prejudice against it. I felt somewhat repulsed by it, actually. (Stuff left over from the Crusades). How could there be revelation after 'The Jesus Event (pbuh)'?

It was difficult finding decent books on Islam. I had to get most by mail-order. There was an Islamic Center here so I began to go there and learn some things. The people at the Islamic Center were very nice. Not really what I expected. No one put the slightest pressure on me to convert. It was nothing like being around born-again or evangelical Christians, which was what I half expected.

Well, they weren't like that at all. They simply presented the information and answered my questions. No one bothered me. Nothing resembling pressure to convert. Just a warm openness.

This went on for a few years. I was reading a lot about Islam, but did not read the Koran. Slowly, my prejudices and repulsion faded away as I learned true stories about Muhammed (pbuh), as well as Muslim history, beliefs and theology.

My life and total worldview changed. I myself would be changed.