



I would like to inform my respected readers about what I was and what I have now become.

I am a born Muslim, alhumdulillah. However, I did not grow up in a Deeni (Islamic) environment.

My parents separated when I was in grade 11. My mum moved out, and a few weeks later, my dad moved out as well. I stayed with my granny (father's mother) who was non-Muslim. I felt as if my whole world came crashing down. I had to make my own decisions in life. I used to see my mum very seldom after school and things weren't the same.

I changed a lot. I became aggressive, always pushing away people that cared about me. I lived with my granny for a few months and then moved in with my aunt who is also from my father's side (my dad was a revert so his entire family was non-Muslim). At the time, I thought that living with my aunt was the best decision, because every teenager wants their freedom to do what they want without having anyone to answer to, right?

Well, that's how my life was... I was allowed to go wherever I wanted and didn't have to worry about a curfew. That's the reason why I didn't take my religion so seriously. I didn't have any guidance. I was so engrossed in doing things that were completely against Islam that I never even thought of how it would affect me later on in life and what consequences I'd be facing.

As a youngster, you generally don't really take life seriously until something bad happens, and only then do you realize that what you're doing is wrong. I never wore Islamic clothing because I was embarrassed and always worried about what people would think of me or whether they would mock me... I never had khauf (the fear of Allah Ta'ala).

I was a Muslim just by name and I had nothing else that would say, "I'm a proud Muslim". I was not particular about many aspects of Deen - especially my salaah!

My Deen and its commandments had no place in my life. When the azaan was called out while I was watching TV, I would press pause, and when it was finished, I would continue watching. This continued for a very long time and I didn't feel guilty about anything. I was enjoying life and never thought of even sitting and praying for at least a few minutes. Months had passed, and one day I got a call from my mother saying that she wants me to come and stay with her, and she had remarried.

I hesitated at first, but agreed to go after speaking to my aunt who I was living with. When my mother saw me, she was absolutely shocked at how much I changed. She would complain about my dressing and would always try to encourage me to do good and read my salaah. She tried very hard to get Deen into me but was not successful. I did what made me happy and didn't care about my mother or what anyone else thought. I would even participate in festivities that were against Islam.

A couple of months later, alhumdulillah all that changed ...

I started reading authentic Islamic books and got into contact with an aapa that was active in Da'wat and Tableegh work. I told her everything about the condition that I was in and told her that I wanted to change completely. She was delighted and happy to teach me and help me. I also joined her on Tuesdays for ta'leem. For me, this was all new because my mum's family isn't jamaat inclined, and I had a different perspective on what Tableegh work was about...

Truth be told, I actually thought very negatively about the people who were involved in the work, but all that changed when I saw with my own eyes how much of sacrifice these people make to spread the work of Deen, and realized that I was too quick to judge them.

The things that I used to hear at ta'leem amazed me. I learnt so much in such a short while, alhumdulillah. I now knew what was right and wrong, and I could differentiate between what was an innovation and what was not. I started feeling this sudden urge to learn more. I was determined!

After attending a few ta'leem programmes, I decided to go into purdah. After hearing so many benefits of being in niqaab, I was eager to become a better Muslim and follow the commandments of Allah Ta'ala. Allah Ta'ala honours those women who are in purdah and I also knew that it was compulsory to wear it. Allah Ta'ala has mentioned it in Surah Noor and Surah Ahzaab.

It's like I was given a second chance by Allah Ta'ala to be a better Muslimah. I started reading my five daily salaah, Quraan Majeed, etc. and through all of this, I had already felt a change in me. My imaan grew stronger.

I'm now a proud Muslimah, and shukr to Allah, I'm in purdah and married in a wonderful family. I've learnt so much about Tableegh work in this short while and how important it is for us, as an Ummah of Nabi (sallallahu 'alaihi wasallam), to do this work.

The Sahaabah (radhiyallahu 'anhum) sacrificed their lives and their family for the effort of Deen. Nabi (sallallahu 'alaihi wasallam) went through so much of hardship and torture. He used to be pelted with stones until his shoes would become clogged with his blood. Yes! That is our beloved Nabi (sallallahu 'alaihi wasallam) who never gave up on his Ummah. He made so much of du'aa for us, and even till his last breath, he worried about us. So, my dear mothers and sisters, let us not disappoint our Nabi (sallallahu 'alaihi wasallam).

We just have to sacrifice a little of our time and wealth. It is only when you go out in the path of Allah Ta'ala that you will realize that your situation is nothing compared to what others are going through. We have a lot to be grateful for.

If we want this Deen to spread to the four corners of the world, we have to make an effort. In this time of fitnah and fasaad (evils and trials), it's very difficult to stay steadfast on Deen. You will get people who will try to bring you down by speaking negatively, but remember that you are doing everything to please Allah Ta'ala and you will be rewarded insha-Allah. Also, stay in the company of the righteous and make du'aa every day, not only for yourself but for the entire Ummah. Who knows when we will be given a second chance! Remember, death can come at any time. So, now is the time to start preparing.

Remember this slave in your du'aas.