

(The identity of the author has been concealed for his own security)

It took a while, but I located [Aman Mohamed] and went to see him with a friend, Ashagre, on Monday January 31<sup>st</sup>. By then, he was out of the hospital and already preaching the Word of God. His story is very long but I will tell you only bits and pieces. When I kept asking him the details of all the beatings he took several times, he kept skipping it and telling more about what God has done for him.

Meki, where Aman lives is 132 Kms from where I live. He lives alone in a one-room house where he sleeps on the floor and has a small kerosene cooking stove. Here is his story. He did not go into detail about all the beatings he received, but he talked more about his conversion, his Muslim family and friends, his love for Christ and the challenges ahead of him.

“On the day the beating happened, I remember seeing a massive guy punching me on the side of my face. I fell down. The next time I woke up, I was in a hospital some 150 Kms away from Meki. I was told that I was being beaten up and kicked continuously, and then a woman threw herself on top of me and screamed. People gathered and the attackers disappeared. There was a second wave of attackers who were hiding. They were there to make sure I was dead. They were among the crowd that gathered and left as they were sure that I was dead.

Two days later when I woke up in the hospital, I saw lots of people around me. There were children as young as seven kneeling and praying for me. They came all the way to the hospital to see me. I was overwhelmed by the amount of support. More than the medicine I was given, the care, love and courage of the Christians friends around my hospital bed gave me all the strength. That was enough for me to want to get up and tell my Muslim attackers about Christ. The attack is not the first time it happened and it will continue to happen. I am WANTED by the devil and as long as I talk about CHRIST, the devil will always be after me. I am not going to stop talking about Christ. Compared to what Christ has done for me, what happened to me is a very small price to pay.

I studied the Koran ever since I was 3 years old. I knew it inside out. I could recite it without looking at it. A friend from my school gave me a Bible at age 17. Since my whole family was Muslim, I hid the Bible but kept reading it. When my family discovered that I had a Bible, they asked me to destroy it. I was labeled unclean. My wife also really tried to advise me to give up reading the Bible. To make all of them mad, one day I said to them, ‘I have become a Christian!’ That shocked my family, the Muslim community and my friends. I did not really accept Christ but I said it to make them mad. The friend who gave me the Bible was not really a Christian himself so he could not explain how I could become a Christian. At 20, with a brand new daughter at home, I left home. I tried to convince my wife to leave the community with me. She refused. I told her that even if she remained a Muslim, I would still stay with her. She still refused.

I left home hoping to find Christians who could help me. I could find none in my area. I went to the closest city but no one could get close to me as I still had my Muslim outfit and a Koran. I was on the street for a month before finding a Church. The Church people were very uneasy to have me around because of my wardrobe. I finally changed my style of clothing and was accepted.

My family and my wife constantly sent for me to come back and leave this new found faith. I refused. To really upset me, my wife was given to another man. As sad as it was at the time, it gave me more reasons to have a heart for these lost people. My heart kept burning for my family and Muslim community. As they were trying to convert me back, I shared the truth about

the Bible, Christ and life after death. I was threatened several times. I was poisoned once and beaten up several times. But I will not stop from telling the truth. They can not kill me unless God gives them permission. I know also that they could only hurt or kill my body but not my soul. The Koran never made sense to me but it helped me understand how easily people can use a little bit of the truth and deceive millions. The Koran never connects stories and it is very confusing. Written by several people, the Bible on the other hand, flows together. I am happy that God gave me the opportunity to understand both and choose the true one. I will keep telling the truth and no one is going to stop me.

It is lonely at times as I miss my family, my wife and my 7 year old daughter I see from a distance once in a blue moon. I am told that my daughter is asking to know more about me. I pray that someday I would be able to tell her about me, my faith and where she should be. I am a travelling evangelist, killers are after me and I live in a single room. I do not think this is the time to bring my daughter to be with me. I pray for her and my ex-wife daily. “

My heart sank when I went to see Aman's place. A one room house with a mat on the floor. How lonely that must be when his daughter and ex-wife are elsewhere. I found Aman to be very genuine follower of Christ. He does not let a single day go by without telling someone about Christ. He goes to some Mosques dressed just like other Muslims and hears their plan to spread Islam across Ethiopia. He finds these messengers of Islam and witnesses to them. He told me that he heard in one of the Mosques that Libya's president recently gave 32 Million U.S. dollars so that these messengers could spread Islam effectively in Ethiopia. Aman had been offered money by these messengers to convert back to Islam. After he was released from the hospital, he was also offered money if he kept quiet about the beating. His attackers were identified and have appeared in court. When the money offer was not working, some Orthodox elders were sent to be mediators. He refused and said that the law must deal with these criminals. “Tell them that I have forgiven them or I will tell them myself once the law deals with them.” He said that he would sit and talk with them once the court process was finished. They offered to pay all his hospital and court expenses. He refused. Aman also told us that both the Orthodox and Muslim religions work in the same way by taking people away from the truth, which is Christ. Both use stories from the Bible but mix them with some lies, to deceive many. When he was a Muslim, he was sent to Eastern Ethiopia, close to Somalia, to learn the tricks of the devil. He was trained to change dirt to gold and sell it. He was trained how to call different kind of demons to do incredible things for him. He learned many secrets of Islam before he left. His prayer and wish is that for all Muslims in Ethiopia to hear the truth, which is the Gospel.