

**BIBLE COULD NOT SATISFY MRS. ALIMA BILAL AS IT WAS FULL OF FAIRY STORIES AND CONFLICTING TEACHINGS. THE BEAUTY OF THE HOLY QURAN IMPRESSED HER MOST AND IN IT SHE FOUND A CODE AND A DISCIPLINE BY WHICH MAN COULD LIVE AND A WAY TO BRING RELIGION INTO EVERY DAY LIFE. IN HER STORY TOLD BELOW SHE PUTS HER FEELINGS FOR THE HOLY QURAN INTO A QUOTATION FROM CHAPTER 2, "THIS IS A PERFECT BOOK, THERE IS NO DOUBT IN IT, IT IS A GUIDANCE FOR THE RIGHTEOUS." SHE SAYS :**

*Like many people before me I discovered the need for true religious belief only when I had experienced great personal unhappiness.*



*religions, and the one which offers the only possible solution for the continuance of mankind. Having read the Holy Quran many times and finding it increasingly beautiful each time, I can put my feelings for this wonderful book into a quotation from Chapter 2—"This is a Perfect Book, there is no doubt in it, it is a guidance for the righteous."*

*I was fortunate enough to have a really wonderful mother—my father had died just before I was born—and she is what I believe is a true Christian, not the sort who go to church every Sunday and then forget all about it, but the sort who practise their beliefs no matter what day of the week it is. Even against this background I cannot recall as a child having any very deep religious feelings but looked on many of the Bible Tales as fairy stories, and that is how many of them still appear to me even now. This is partly why I have never been able to read the Bible all through, another being that my mind could not accept that something having so many contradictions and deficiencies could be called the word of God. It is a fact, and I admit it quite freely, that I have learned more about Christianity and the Bible since becoming a Muslim than I knew in all the years previous to my conversion.*

*Here is a code and a discipline by which man can live, and a way to bring religion into your everyday life, and by so doing you feel that in a very small, humble way you are thanking God for all the miracles He has sent down, and which He continues to send down for the benefit of mankind,*

*So in December 1958, together with my second husband, I asked the Imam, not if we could accept Islam, but if Islam could accept us. If I were given one wish I would ask that in my lifetime I could see peace established throughout the world, and I know that this happy state could come about through the acceptance of Islam by all peoples. It is essentially a religion of peace, kindness and goodwill among nations and individuals, and only in Islam have I come across a religion where there is no discrimination regarding colour and how many times I had come across some form of colour bar in the Christian church.*

*My first marriage was a failure and ended in a divorce which made me very unhappy. So began my search for God and the true religion, and I am glad to say that the road I had to travel was not too long. It led me first to a Presbyterian Church, the simplicity of which at first appealed to me, but later came disillusion in many forms. Questions were received in stoney silence or else I was told that one must believe without question. What the church stood for seemed to mean little or nothing to them, and there was no fellowship such as one might expect in a community of this sort. When they found that my financial position was such that I was unable to meet their ever-increasing demands they had no further interest in me, and this completely materialistic attitude seemed so at variance with the teachings of Christ that I felt at a loss to know where to turn.*

*Another aspect of Islam which appeals very strongly to me is the very personal relationship one has with God. You feel He is your friend and your protector, your teacher and your guardian, your comforter in times of sorrow and the One who guides you when you otherwise might stray. If your love for Him is great, then His love for you is infinitely greater, and all your efforts are made so that He may be pleased with you.*

*In Islam there is no baffling Trinity, but an insistence on belief in the Oneness of God, and the God of Islam, unlike the wrathful Jehovah of the Old Testament, desires above all to be kind and just.*

*Then I heard a talk by a very learned Muslim on Islam and was deeply impressed both by the sound reasoning behind each point made and by the sincerity which this religion obviously inspired in its followers. He spoke with such passionate conviction that it was easy to see that it was not just a speech he was making, his whole heart and soul were in what he was saying in an attempt to reach his listeners and tell them the wonderful truth as he knew it, and as he felt they also should know it. Although much of what he said, and the facts he advanced, were completely new to me, yet the more I thought about them the more reasonable they appeared, and eventually they seemed not only possible but distinctly probable. One which I remember in particular concerns the supposed death of Christ on the cross. It had never occurred to me before to doubt that he did die, but having heard the Islamic view I came to believe it much more likely that he was not allowed by God to die the death of an accursed. Not only this, but to me it seems so much more wonderful that he lived to spread his teachings, because it had always appeared wrong to me that Christians should glory in the fact that he died on the cross to save them.*

*So I found my God, the God whose word was revealed some 1400 years ago in Arabia to the Holy Prophet Muhammad, on whom be the peace and blessings of Allah. To study the life of our Holy Prophet shows us the wonderful example he set. He is the personification of Islam, and the nearer we become to being like him, the nearer we will be to perfection.*

*My belief in the Promised Messiah, the Great Founder of our Movement, seemed to follow naturally on my acceptance of Islam. When he came, the followers of Islam were themselves deviating from the truth and needed some one to place their feet again on the right path. The fact that he did re-establish the word of God in the world is enough to make anyone who is God-loving and God-fearing a follower of his.*

*Islam appealed not only to my aesthetic sense, but also to my mind, and I came to see it as the fulfilment of all previous*

*I can truly say that I have found more happiness through my belief in Islam and Ahmadiyyat than I ever thought possible in this life, and in all my prayers I ask God to make me worthy of the name "Muslim".*