

Living Martyr

by Wagdi Iskander

The speaker's journey from a life of extremism and hatred to one of forgiveness and faith through the power of Jesus Christ.

Duration: 55:28

Scripture: Matthew 10:32

Topics: "Persecution", "Evangelism"

Description

This sermon is a powerful testimony of a former Muslim who converted to Christianity and faced persecution, imprisonment, and the threat of execution for his faith. It highlights the journey of surrendering to Jesus, experiencing God's love and forgiveness, and the importance of praying for Muslims. The speaker shares about the impact of prayer rallies for Muslims and the need for Christians to stand up, pray, and share the gospel with boldness, especially in the face of challenges and opposition.

Transcript

Thank you, Pastor, for having me in your church. And in our churches, we start by saying, you know, praise God, and you reply back, Amen. So praise God.

Amen. Oh, that's good. It's better than in the morning.

It's getting good. Okay, can I say it again? Praise God. Amen.

All right. I'm fired up now. Well, it's good to be with you here, and I really enjoyed my time here in Regina.

And as I'm bringing my testimony, I pray that God will work in your heart. It's not a show, it's not just a story, but my heart desire is to bring you and take you to a prayer life, especially to pray for our Muslim friends and Muslim neighbors. They need Christ, and it's just that we need him, Amen? Well, I always kind of make some of the things that happened to me when I came to Canada.

I didn't speak any English, and I keep telling the people I know only two words, yes and no. That's all. And I was confused between both of them.

In fact, they held me in the airport for a long time, because they would ask me if my name is Wajdi. I would say, no, what's your name, it's Wajdi. And they get confused, you know, and I just pick up one of them, you know, I know two.

So the easiest one, I'll just answer it. Anyway, there is a student, his name is Brian, he felt sorry about me, because all my mark at the college was F. I see people doing that, maybe I'll go a little bit up, okay. I don't like to go up, but I see some people doing like this, so I don't, okay.

My light is enough, isn't it? No, I'm just kidding. So, yeah, I didn't want you, I didn't want you to have a stiff neck after that, you know, because I'll go down a little bit here. Well, so because my mark was all F at the end of the first year, and those who heard it they've been following me, I hope you don't get tired of my joke, but so I thought F stands for a full mark, and then they told me I failed.

So Brian felt sorry for me, and he kind of offered to help me and tutor me, and I didn't know what tutoring mean, and all these things. Anyway, he took me to his place, and he introduced me to his wife, darling, this is Wajdi, Wajdi, this is my wife, and I was there, darling, we need tea, and all these kind of things, and after we ended, I thought that her name is Darling. So as I left, I told her, thank you, darling, so, and he never invited me to his place anymore.

So he said, let us just study outside. Well, I'm originally from Sudan, and from Sudan, I am from the very northern of Sudan, it's from a desert area. My tribe is from there, and my father, his business is a camel trader, to put it in a kind of perspective to North America, he owned like an enterprise rental, but we don't rent cars, we rent camels, and we sell camels.

So this is my father's work, and I used to have my little camel, I chased him, and sometimes he chased me back. And this was my childhood. And the other things happened, actually, we, I memorized the Quran when I was six years old, the whole Quran from cover to cover.

Put it to perspective, your Bible is 66 books, the Quran is 114 books. I'm not smart, I'm not genius, but they take us to the Quranic school, they call it Khalwa, from sunrise to sunset, we sit in a circle, and the teacher will sit in the middle, and we recite the Quran, and we repeat after him. Let me pause and pray.

Father God, I pray for your spirit in this place, and I pray that your presence will be known. Father God, I pray for strength from you, and empower from you. Thank you, Jesus.

In your name I pray, amen. So, we were sitting in a circle, and he would recite, and we would recite after him, and this is how we memorized the Quran, and we go to the school from sunrise to sunset. And, in the area where we were, we don't have shops, we don't have anything, they would go to nearby cities to sell some of our camels and kettles, and bring us good.

One time, the tribe leaders were late, and we were wondering what's happened to them. So, when they came back, they introduced something new to us. Why not our children go to learn how to read and to write? So, they were a little bit worried if we leave to the city, we will not come back again.

So, they choose only those who memorized the Quran, and I was one of them. The journey, the last night, our journey before we start going to the city, they gather us together, and they give us advice about the city. And, what we're going to see in the city, they kind of tell us how buildings look like, because in that area we didn't have really buildings.

And, how cars look like, they will tell us there's this big box with four wheels, there's cars, and then there is, they call it a rope. You will see a rope in the wall, this is electricity, don't touch that rope. And, until now, I call it rope.

So, as they were introducing us to the city, we couldn't kind of imagine what they're telling us. It's something we cannot really picture it. So, I didn't pay much attention to what they're saying.

And then, suddenly, our elders, the biggest elders of the tribe, he stood up, and he had a long stick, and he shook it in front of our faces. And, he said this, be aware of the Christian. Burn them before they burn you.

And, what he meant that the Christian, they're not going to hell, but they're the firewood of hell. Until that time, I never saw a Christian. So, when I heard this, a great anger and hatred entered my heart toward the Christian.

And, I said to myself, when I go to the city, I'm not going to learn how to read or to write. I'm going to finish these Christians. When I went to the city, between elementary and high school, I was spelled out of eight schools.

I will make a fight with a Christian. I will cut their notes. I will make trouble, and they will just kick me from the school, and I will go to another school, and I will do the same things.

Until I go to university, in our country, the only place you have a freedom of speech is the university. You will say anything you like to say against the government. But, the second you step out of campus, you will be arrested.

So, I found there's a number of political groups that were there. I never saw they existed. And, one of them, the communists.

So, when I went there, they were recruiting the new students, and the closest organization I felt to join, and they recruited me, is called the Muslim Brotherhood. The Muslim Brotherhood is kind of an equivalent of these nice names you hear in the news. Al-Qaeda, Hamas, Hezbollah.

I don't know if you heard these nice names in the news. This is part of them. And, their objective is to defend Islam and the Quran.

So, within four months, I became one of their leaders. Not all the Muslims memorized the Quran. So, they said they can learn something from me.

So, I became their leader, and when I was there, something else happened. I met my Christian friend, who later on led me to the Lord. And, he will come and tell me about Jesus.

And, every time he will tell me about Jesus, I don't like to hear about Jesus of the Bible. I will beat him, I will punish him, literally. Sometimes, his nose or his mouth is running blood, because I don't want to hear about the Jesus of the Bible.

It's not the same Jesus in the Quran. So, one time he decided to bring a preacher to the university. To tell us if the Bible is the word of God or not.

Muslims, they don't believe that the Bible is the word of God. When they organized it, they booked the smallest lecture room at the university. By the time the event got closer, they went and they booked the biggest lecture room.

Because many students, they sign, they want to know if the Bible is the word of God or not. And, the majority there are Muslims. We felt very threatened.

So, we sent threat notes to the Christians, this lecture has to be cancelled. They never listened to us. We sent them another threat notes.

And, then we told them that this preacher of yours, when entered to the university, the first foot will step in, will cut off his leg. They didn't listen to us. Finally, we had our emergency meeting.

What are we going to do with these Christians? As we were sitting and thinking, and a lot of ideas, one idea came up, and he said, let us kill one of them. When we heard this, all of us, we started to shout. There is a shouting, or there is a word, they say it, only in two kinds of things.

Whether for prayer, or whether for Jihad, for holy war. And, that word is called Allahu Akbar. So, all of us, we shouted, that means we agree, we are going to kill one of the Christians.

And, then they said, okay, who are we going to kill? They decided to kill my friend, the one who is witnessing to me. I am the one who started to shout even louder. Finally, I can get rid of him.

And, then the third question, who is going to do the killing? In our culture, when you are having a hard question, you cannot answer it. You put your face in the ground. So, all of us, we have our face in the ground there.

And, then, one of us stood up and said, why don't you do the killing? So, we lift up our head to see where he is pointing. He was pointing toward me. I told him, sorry, I don't do any killing.

He said, well, you are complaining about him. I said, no, I am not going to kill him. Oh, he is your friend.

No, he is not my friend. You became a Christian. I said, no, I am not a Christian.

So, they were doing this to me until I agreed I will kill him. And, then they started to recite some of the scripture from the Quran, which is talking about Jihad and Holy War. Like, it kind of excites you.

At that time, our country was very poor. The electricity would go off by midnight, except hospitals and government buildings. So, we said, okay, when the electricity will go off, we will march to his room.

He was already staying in the dorm at the university there. And, we will go to his room and we will attack him there. We waited for the electricity to go off.

I went and I picked a very heavy metal stick. My idea was, I am going to break every single bone in his body. There were two people came to help me.

We went to his room, we entered quiet, and there was somebody laying there. And, suddenly, that anger and hatred entered to my heart in my childhood, came back again. And, I started to beat him up.

I can hear his bone crashing, until he stopped moving. The two who were helping me were holding him. They said, he is finished, let us get out of here.

There was a car there waiting for me. And, they took me off the campus. And, they hid me in one of the places there.

The next day, they came and they said, well, we have bad news. I told them, what is the bad news? They said, the person that we beat up last night, it was the wrong person. And, he is a Muslim.

And, he is still alive. And, every time I think about it, I left a paralyzed person in the world. They said, now your job is to finish two.

The paralyzed person and the Christian. I told them, sorry, I cannot do it. But, go and take the responsibility for it.

When you hear from this kind of organization, like the suicide bomber and others like this, they will not tell who did it. But, the whole organization will take the responsibility. So, I told them, can you go just and take responsibility.

And, it was in the news. And, they said about the attack at the university. And, then I was free to go out.

I went back to the university. I finished my study. I studied commercial and economy.

And, then I worked as an accountant in a French company. We specialize in hotels and restaurants and tourism for the Western people. It's called Meridian.

I worked for them. I was the accountant. While I was working for them, it was their anniversary.

And, they invited all the representatives from all over the world and the managers. They have about 52 branches all over the world. One of them is from Saudi Arabia, from Riyadh.

I said, oh, this is my opportunity now. To ask him if he will transform me from Meridian Khartoum to Sudan, to Meridian Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. My idea wasn't to go to make money.

But, I wanted to go there. And, once I arrived in Saudi Arabia, I would escape. And, I would go to the holy site, Mecca.

And, I would stay there. And, I would look for the tomb of Muhammad. And, I would be there the rest of my life.

And, this is how I used to be loyal to him. The anniversary was there. It was French style.

They were serving alcohol to the guests. Alcohol is one of the biggest sins in Islam. They call it Akbar al-Kabir.

The biggest of big. We're not allowed to buy it, to sell it, to touch it, or to drink it, or to associate with it. If you've done any of these, you'll be considered unclean.

So, while I was talking with the representative from Saudi Arabia, the tray came by. He picked a glass. I picked one.

I didn't know it was alcohol. I thought it was a juice. So, while I was talking to him, he was drinking.

And, he's a Muslim. He's not supposed to drink. So, after that, I brought the glass close to my mouth.

I was about to drink it. And, I smelled the alcohol. I felt so offended.

I didn't know what to do. Should I condemn him? Should I plead a favor from him? So, I didn't know what to do. So, I just put the glass of alcohol, and I left.

I went to my cousin, who is my friend and was with me at the Muslim Brotherhood. And, he was surprised to see me early. And, he said, what happened? Why are you early? So, I told him exactly what happened, and he jumped away from me.

He said, you're unclean. I told him, no, I didn't drink it. He said, no, you hold it.

I said, well, I didn't know. I thought it was a juice. He said, no, you're unclean.

Our weekend there is Thursday, Friday. So, most of our weddings and parties and all these things happen on Thursday, because Friday is a holiday and is a day of prayer for the Muslims. So, I told him, tomorrow is Friday.

Can you give the announcement in the mosque on my behalf? The mosque I belong to is only for the Muslim Brotherhood. Nobody else is allowed to come to that mosque. And, the announcement we give is not like your beautiful announcement you hear in your church.

If the president of the country said anything against us, we need to teach him a lesson. Whether we go out for a riot, whether we burn some of his cars, or do anything violently so he will not touch our group. And, this is the announcement I used to give.

So, we went there and in the mosque we don't sit in chairs, we sit on the ground. And, those who are participating and some of the leaders are in the front there. And, so he gave all the announcements and he said, there is one announcement that is not written here.

Let us kick out all the Westerners from our country. Because they are corrupting our young people. And, they are bringing alcohol to the country.

When they heard that, they did that shout I told you about earlier. He got very excited. And, he said in the first example of this and he mentioned my name.

In Islam, there are three stages of faith. If you see something wrong and you are a very good Muslim, according to the Islam, you act by your hand. That means violently.

The second stage is to speak loudly if you see something wrong. The third one, if you are outnumbered like I was in that anniversary, I will just keep quiet and walk away. The mosque I attended, as I told you, all Muslim brotherhood.

They are all strong Muslims. So, when they heard that I did something wrong, all of them they want to suppress their faith on me. That afternoon, I was beaten by 800 people.

I fainted. They took me and they threw me out of the mosque. My cousin even didn't touch me.

He went and told my family. They came and collected me. When I got back to conscious, I asked what happened.

And, they remind me what happened. I went to our leader. I told him, why did you do that to me? He smiled and he said, aren't you glad we didn't kill you? But, the punishment is still there.

For 40 days, you are not allowed to come here. For 40 days, you are not allowed to touch the Holy Quran. For 40 days, you are not allowed to say the name of Allah in your lips, God.

For 40 days, you are not allowed to pray or to do any religious activities because you are unclean. It is a very harsh punishment for a religious person. So, I didn't know what to do at the beginning.

The company I work at is all Western. They have the second floor. There is a big hall there.

And, they rent it for something called disco. And, we hear that loud music up, but we don't know what they are doing in this disco. So, one of our colleagues, he goes there from time to time.

So, I asked him if he would take me there. He said, no, you are a Muslim brotherhood. I told him, don't worry, I am on a holiday.

You can just take me there. So, he took me up there and I kind of enjoyed it. That's all.

And, then we are not allowed to go to theater or movie. So, he took me to the theaters. And, then to parties and all these things.

So, he started to introduce me or kind of introduced me to the city life, which I enjoyed. When the 40 days finished, I am supposed to go and to wash myself in a certain way. And, I will go to the mosque.

I will bow two times to greet the mosque. I will bow two times to greet Allah. I bow two times to greet Muhammad.

I bow two times to greet the Quran. I will do about, in the group I came from, about 42 bowing. I said, no, I am not going there.

So, I went back to Meridian, where the Western people are. And, I went to the place where they have alcohol. I told them, can you give me a bottle of alcohol? He said, what do you want from it? I said, just bring it out.

So, they brought it out for me and I held it. I said, another 40 days. So, whenever the 40 days finish, I will go and renew it.

After 40, after 40, after 40, after 40. I driven away from Islam. I became a very corrupt person.

It came a time I didn't like myself. But, I didn't have anybody to blame, except God. If He forgave me, and He forgave me that time, I would not be where I am now.

So, whoever will ask me, I will just blame God. One time, I was sitting at my work. And, a doorman came and he said, there is somebody outside there who would like to see you.

So, I went to see who is there. It was my Christian friend, the one I am supposed to kill. I told him, what do you want? I thought he is looking for a job.

He said, no, I have been asking about you and they told me you work here. I just came to see how you are doing. And, then he saw me, I am changed.

If you are part of the Muslim Brotherhood, or a very religious person in Islam, when you talk Arabic, you talk a very high, classic Arabic, like the Quran. So, I was speaking in normal Arabic. And, I was dressed

normally.

I used to have a very big, ugly beard. And, I shaved it all. So, he said, what happened to you? I told him exactly what happened to me.

And, then I told him, I am looking for forgiveness. He said, there is one person who can forgive you. I told him, who? He said, Jesus.

And, he went a little bit back before I hit him. And, that was the first time he mentioned the Jesus of the Bible and I didn't hit him. And, he told me a story about Jesus forgiving sin.

I loved it. I told him, can you come back again and tell me more about this Jesus? And, from time to time, he will come and tell me a story from the Bible about Jesus forgiving sin. One time, he came to me and told me this.

I never heard it before at that time. He told me that God asked him to ask me to go with him to church. I told him, God asked you to ask me to go with you to church? He said, yeah.

And, he was very serious and convincing. I said, okay, I will go with you. And, I had never been in a church at that time.

I was scared to go to church. We have a lot of stories about church and it's almost like a haunted house. So, we were scared to go inside.

So, I went with him and I was scared. And, I got inside the church and I grabbed the first seat close to the door. I said, if this Christian starts to do any weird things, I'm out of there.

So, I sat in the back and there was nothing. The only thing was a cross in front of the building and far away from me, so I'm doing okay. And, they were singing.

I didn't understand what they were singing about. And then, one of them stood up and asked for a prayer request. Later on, I found out I was in a prayer meeting.

One of the students, he said, pray for me. My teacher fell on me because I'm a Christian. Will you pray that I might love him? Another one, he said, they gave me the dare to work at the company because I'm a Christian.

Will you pray that I might love them? And, all the prayer requests like this ended by may I love them. And, as you know, that's how Sudan treats Christians, like a second class. I was sitting there and I said, no way.

These people in front of me, one of the two things. Whether they're angels or something up here is not right. And, then I remember about this God, you know, talking to him, talking to me to go there.

I said, oh, God wants me to go to help them. So, when they finished, I get to learn they're really finished. I walked to the front.

I told him, what are you talking about? He said, what is it? I told him, well, that teacher, let us beat him up. That company, let us burn it. And, I was giving them kind of ideas.

And, he said, sorry, we don't do these kind of things here. I said, why? Are you scared? He said, no. I said, I can train you.

I've been trained. He said, no, we don't do these things here. I said, why? And, he opened the Bible and showed me the Sermon on the Mount.

Love your enemy and pray for those who persecuted you. I told him, who said this? He said, Jesus. I told him, the prophet? He said, yeah.

I told him, can I have this book? I'm allowed to have it? He said, yeah. So, he gave it to me. I was wearing my Arabic clothes.

The white robe, the long one. And, I hide it inside so nobody will see I have a Bible with me. And, I went back.

And, I waited for the electricity to get off. They cut off the electricity. And, I got a small gasoline light.

We call it fanous, you know, like a candle. And, I opened the Bible. And, he marked where he read for me.

Because, I want to know what else Jesus said. I was reading the Bible until I was interrupted around 4 o'clock in the morning by the call of prayer. If you've been in the Middle East or if you've been in an Islamic country, there's something called a call of prayer.

They wake up everybody in the morning to go to pray. So, I was interrupted at that time. One thing just took in my mind.

And, I kept asking all the Christians. How does the Christian practice this book? This book is very hard to practice. It speaks about forgiveness, love, holiness, and peace.

I started to go from church to church, from Christian to Christian. How do you practice this book? They gave me all kinds of answers I didn't accept. Finally, I went by a church.

I went inside. I found a pastor. I told him, How do you practice this book? He said, Oh, I heard about you.

And, I was waiting for you. And, he started to tell me how to practice this book. And, then he told me this.

Unless you receive Christ in your heart and allow his spirit to work in your life, you cannot practice what is written, even us Christians. He was so convinced me. He was about to convert me.

So, I have to run away before he will convert me. A few months went by. My friend came back again and invited me to his church.

I told him, Did he talk to you again? He said, No. We have a big lecture. And, the one is going to tell us about how to practice this book.

Later on, I found that big lecture was a revival meeting. So, I went to the church. And, the church was packed.

There is no way you can get in. The only way, we stood outside under one of the windows, listening to the preacher. I don't know if you have this experience or not, or you heard about it.

The preacher kind of like talking to me personally. After they finished, we walked back. It was about two hours walking toward the city.

In Sudan, we have this big river Nile. And, we have a bridge over the river Nile. And, we walked until we got to the bridge there.

And, in the middle of the bridge, because we were talking all about the sermon, we reviewed the whole sermon, the two hours. We reviewed over and over and over and over and over. And, every single sentence, we just reviewed it.

So, in the middle of the bridge, my friend looked at me and said, Why don't you just do it? I told him to do what? He said to become a Christian. I said, No, no, no. You understand me wrong.

Now, I get to learn that Jesus is the Jesus of miracles. He can perform a lot of miracles, right? He said, Yeah. I told him if he can perform this miracle right now, if he will bring the sun and put it in my right hand, and the moon in my left hand, and I can see both of them in my hand, I will never convert.

I was born Muslim. I live Muslim. I will die Muslim.

Very strong statement, right? But, inside me, I was scared. He said, There is one person who would like to see you. I told him, You arrange it.

I will go with you. He did arrange it, and we went to this house, and have a lot of rooms, and one of the rooms we knock, and we get in, there is an old lady sitting there. The minute I lay my eyes on her, every bad word, every curse I know in my life, I just give it to her so strongly.

I told her, I know who you are. She is from the same tribe I came from. We don't have it anymore.

Like our tribe, we used to have some mark in our face to know what tribe you are coming from. So I knew her, and they told us about her. I told her, You brought shame to our tribe.

What happened to her, we used to have a doctor coming from the city, looking after the Bedouin and the people outside in the desert. And he is a Christian. And she was helping him like a nurse.

And he would tell her, every time, a story from the Bible. And she would tell the story to the tribe. And they didn't like it.

They would try to silence her, but they couldn't. At the end, they decided to burn her alive. And they did.

She was 14 years old. And that doctor actually came and rescued her and took her to the city. He looked after her.

At the end, he didn't know what to do with her after she got well. He married her. That's what is allowed in our country.

Anyway, so, after she finished, very slowly, she lifted the blanket from her leg. And all that I saw, a burning flesh, sticking to her bones. I told her why.

She said, I'm willing to be burned for Jesus. I kept thinking about her. And now this is an Arabic man thinking.

I said, if a woman can do it, a man like me cannot do it? So finally, I went to my friend. And I told him, I'm ready to become a Christian. He started to jump up and down and saying, Praise God! Hallelujah! And he was so, you know, excited.

And I didn't know what he's doing. I thought this is maybe the way the Christians do it. I thought, can you slow down? Tell me which foot to lift first.

He said, no. They give up on you. In fact, the churches, they told us not to bring you anymore because you're disturbing them too much and you ask too many questions.

After that, he gave me a small talk. And then he said, do you trust me? I told him, yes, I trust you. He asked me to kneel down.

And I knelt down. And then he asked me to close my eyes. Which I did.

And then he asked me to ask Jesus to forgive me. And I asked Jesus to forgive me. And then he asked me to ask Jesus to come to my heart.

And I asked Jesus to come to my heart. And then he asked me to ask Jesus to be my helper. I asked Jesus to be my helper.

And then he asked me to say Amen. And then he asked me to open my eyes. I told him, no, I'm waiting for an earthquake.

I changed from Islam to Christianity. Something has to happen. He said, no, just open your eyes.

I told him, if my skin color changes, I have to be whether light or dark. Because the Christians in my country, whether they're dark or light, they call us the brown people, we're the Muslim people. I said, I have to become one of them.

He said, just open your eyes. I opened my eyes, nothing happened. I don't look the same.

But when things happened, a great peace entered to my heart. And I want to assure you, I have this peace until now. My life started to change.

My family and my people started to recognize it. They thought I came back to my senses. They asked me to go to the mosque to pray.

I told them, no, I'm not going back to the mosque. They said to pray at home. I will not pray at home.

They will ask me to do a lot of things. I refused. Finally, I told them I became a Christian.

My father slapped me in my face and he said, get out, you're not my son. I went to my friend. I told him, I'm ready to get out of Christianity.

Can you tell me how to get out of it? He brought the Bible. He said, I will show it to you. He opened the letter of Paul.

How many times he was beaten and put in prison. And all the things that happened to him. And then he went to the book of Acts.

When they stone stuff on us. And then he went to the gospel where they put Jesus on the cross. And then he asked me, are you greater than any one of these? I told him, no.

He said, welcome to Christianity. At that time we were governed by the Islamic law in our country. It's against the government and it's against Islam to change your religion from Islam to Christianity.

They arrested me. And they tried to convince me to get out of Christianity. At the end, when they couldn't convince me, they asked me to stretch my hand like this and start counting.

I didn't know what I was going to be counting for. And then I was counting my tooth in my hand. They were taking punch out of me in my mouth.

They kept me there for a while until my court time. I went to the court. And I met other two Muslims that were converted to Christianity.

We were sitting there. And the judge, he said, well, I don't want to hear your story. I don't want a counselor.

I don't want anybody to defend you or anything. It's only one thing. Renounce Christianity, embrace Islam, you're free to go.

I was about to stand up. One of them held me down. He said, just sit down.

So the judge said it a number of times. And we didn't move. So he left us in the court to think about it.

When he left the courtroom, they looked at me and they said, you're new. I said, yeah. He said, well, we don't have too much time to explain to you.

But let us pray that three of us will be in the same cell. They were praying and I was looking at them praying. And they finished their prayer and we waited for the judge and then he came back.

He said, anyone ready to renounce Christianity and embrace Islam? We didn't move. He started to scream and shout at us the same sentence. With anger he said, remove them.

Take them. They took us to one of the awful, roughest prisons in Sudan. God has answered that prayer.

Three of us were in the same cell. That cell was so special to me. Because inside that cell I had my first Bible study.

I get to learn all that I need to know about Jesus. They will take us at night and they will beat us and they will do a lot of things to us. And we cannot wait to come back so we can continue the Bible study.

It was the longest seven months I ever had in my life. Every day we were beaten, every day we were tortured and all kinds of things. At the end the sentence came.

That three of us will be executed according to the Islamic law. At that time the country was governed by the Islamic law. If you steal, they will cut your hand from here.

If you steal again, they will cut the other hand. If you are caught with alcohol in your mouth, in your body, you will be whipped 80 times in your back. If a woman is caught in adultery, she will be shot by a gun in her head.

A man will be beheaded by a sword. And this is happening in Iran, Sudan, and Saudi Arabia. When they were performing that, every Friday after prayer, we would run to the justice yard to watch that.

That used to be our entertainment. But I never thought that the people would come and watch us. According to the Islamic law, they will not kill more than a convert on Friday.

So the first Friday was Mahmood. And they took him. And they put him up on the platform and they wanted him to say the Islamic creed.

And he shouted with all of his voice, Jesus, here I come! And the anger was so angry, he just finished him. The second Friday came. It was the longest week again.

Imad was strengthening me. He was telling me, Mahmood is with Jesus now. And he started to tell me how heaven looked like.

Friday came and they took him and we thought that he got mad. He was calling the guard and the police, hurry, quickly! I want to go to see Jesus. They decided also to hang him.

Before he stepped on the platform, he held my hand. He said, promise me to come. I told him, I cannot promise you.

But whatever you are going to be doing with Jesus up there, pray for me down here. And they took Imad and they put the rope around him. They wanted him to say the Islamic creed.

And he shouted and he said, Jesus, here I come! And the anger finished him right away. They took me back again. Many times I want to shout that I am a Muslim.

But I couldn't. How could I deny Jesus? The one who loved me. The one who died for me.

The one who forgave me. I cannot deny him. Friday came.

I was supposed to hang on that day. It was in 1985. This one Gaddafi attacked Sudan.

It was a big war between Libya and Sudan. And Gaddafi's idea was to cripple the economy of Sudan. So he bombed some of the industrial areas.

Our prison was outside there. And it was hit as well. In the middle of confusion, all of us prisoners, we started to run in a different direction.

And we escaped. I was running toward the city. I can feel the bullets in the air.

I was praying to God, for sure if I didn't die by a rope, for sure I'm going to die by a bullet. But God has saved me. I got to the city.

I went to that elderly lady. She allowed me to get in. And I told her that the Libyans attacked our country.

And I'm not going to stay until the war ends. After the war ended, she said, What are you going to do? I said, I don't know. She said, you know, your family doesn't want you anymore.

I said, I know, they disowned me already. She said, I'm going to name you Wajdi. Wajdi is coming from a root name in Arabic.

It's called Shawqi. It's a desire. Wajdi is a desire to follow God.

And she gave me the doctor's name, Iskander. And this is how I became Wajdi Iskander. There were two mission organizations in our country, OM Operation Mobilization, George Worwer, and Brother Andrew Open Door Ministry.

And they were following the situation there. And they smuggled me out of Sudan. And I got in a ship and I got to Italy.

I joined another ship. It's called Dulos. It's an OM ship.

I was there for 14 months. It was a healing time for me. I woke up in the middle of the night with nightmares.

They were coming to hang me. I spent these 14 months, they were just working in me. And finally I got off in London, England.

I applied for religious refugees. I was refused because at that time, Sudan had just got their colony, and it was a British colony. Until the 80s, they still had a connection with England.

And they had this agreement that they would not accept any political or religious refugees. They would deport me back to Sudan. And they told me, if you found another country, we will not deport you.

At that time, God was working in Canada. At Prairie Bible Institute, there was a scholarship for seven years laying there for a Muslim convert from a third world country who was interested in mission. And they sent to all mission organizations working among the Muslims, no answer.

They remembered and they called Prairie. They said, yeah, the scholarship is still there. They said, we have this young man in the heart of London, we don't know what to do with him.

And this is how I came to Canada. Not knowing any English, not knowing anything. As I told you, I failed all my courses.

But one course, I got A+. That was mission. I would go every weekend to Calgary to knock on the door of the Arabs and the Sudanese and tell them about the love of Jesus.

And this is how I started the church in Calgary. In 1995, I went to Edmonton. I wanted to start a church.

Accidentally, I started two churches. An Arabic church and a Sudanese church. And then Vancouver.

In 1997, I was called by Campus Crusade to help them with the refugees in Europe. Accidentally, again, I started 25 groups across Europe. And then they sent me to Australia, to India.

And then I was the pastor of the underground church in the Emirates. And God has kept blessing me. And recently, with all the ministry I'm doing, also I'm working in a satellite TV station.

I don't know if you know Joyce Meyer. I'm working for her. She has a TV station and she opens some of the airtime to broadcast Arabic programs.

And it's shown all over the world. Even when I preach in my country, they see it and they cannot be interrupted because the signal is from Tel Aviv, from Israel. And you cannot interrupt anything in Israel.

So they cannot interrupt that channel. Between 1997 to 2004, I didn't count before, I stopped counting after. Only by the grace of God, I was able to baptize 700 worldwide to the Kingdom of God from the Muslim background.

And all this because I said yes to Jesus. One of my responsibilities now, with my domination, is to start Muslim ministry. Not looking to our own churches, but to all churches.

It's to pray for the Muslims. To reach the Muslims. And to share the love of Christ with them.

I was speaking in one of the Pentecostal conferences in Edmonton. There is one of their leaders named Bob Gill. We were sitting together and talking about how we can move the church to pray for the Muslims.

And as we were talking, he answered his own question. He said, Wajdi, we need a martyr for the church to move. I went back home and I sat on the couch and I was in a kind of a long trip like this trip and my children around me and my wife sitting in front of me and they said, what's wrong with you? I told them I was talking to Bob and this is what he told me.

And I started to look to my children and my wife and I told them, I'm willing to be that martyr if that will move the church. A few weeks ago I was in at the golf, at the Billy Graham Center. I was speaking there and I was sitting with someone, he's called Ralph.

And we were talking about Islam. He said, how do you see it in Canada? I told him the Canadian, they like hockey and I will tell this to the Canadian. Jesus and Muhammad in the arena.

Who is going to win in Canada? We have over a million Muslims here. The largest mosque in North America between the states and Canada. It's in Canada, it's in Calgary.

They just elected the first Muslim mayor in our city. The biggest Islamic training center is in Canada in Halifax. Two years ago I was in a conference where Jamal Badawi, one of the leaders of the Muslims in Canada.

He was speaking in a conference. And he said, as we're going to bring this center to Calgary as well, this is our goal. Are you ready to hear their goal? He challenged them every year to convert 50 young people, 30 families and 20 clergymen from the church.

So you're one of them. I was called last year to Silver Lake and I met a youth pastor. He became a Muslim.

I went to Slave Lake and there a Baptist minister is thinking about Islam. Islam is in our churches. Will you stand and pray for the Muslim? We started, and I'll close with this, we started three years ago as a ministry for me and this is my prayer for Canada and my prayer for my visit in Regina.

We started in Calgary a prayer rally at the end of Ramadan to pray for the Muslim. The month of Ramadan when the Muslim they fast the whole month from sunrise to sunset they don't even swallow their own saliva. At the end of the month it's called the Night of Power, Laylatul Qadr.

And this is the only night the Muslim they seek God. The only night the people they seek God. And that night I don't know if you heard about this testimony you can go to the internet and listen to some of the convert.

And I'm going to shake your theology here. That Muslim they have come to know the Lord most of them they have seen Jesus in vision or in dreams. And that is the night where they see Him.

If we continue to pray. So we started in Calgary. Now we have the prayer rally in Edmonton and we have it in Montreal and we have it in Vancouver.

And my goal and my prayer that you here in Regina will pick up this prayer rally. And to pray for the Muslim. We have seen an answer of prayer.

We have seen thousands of them coming to know the Lord. In fact now one of my pastor is the pastor of the MBB's. MBB's standing for Muslim Background Believer.

I will go around the world and meet with them, challenge them, train them and get them to ministry. If there is any bold people in the world they can preach the gospel to the MBB's, the Muslim Background Believer. Because they are not scared to share the gospel.

They are willing to die for Christ. And I can tell you story after story about how they stand for Christ even in front of death. This is the people we want to win them to the Lord.

Will you pray for them? Let us pray. Are you willing to pray for them? Are you willing to stand for Christ? Let me back up a little bit in your prayer. Today as you are praying, have you denied Him before? Have you worked away from Him because of little challenge in your life? Today I am asking you to come back to Him.

If you have not received Him, I invite you to experience His love, His forgiveness and His peace. You can have that peace that He gave it to me and I have it until now. Maybe you need to visit back your prayer life, your connection with Him.

Maybe there is Muslim around you, you hate them, you are afraid of them, you have Islamophobia. Today I am asking you to pray for them. If you are a pastor or you are from other churches, will you lead your congregation to pray for them? They are here to listen.

They want to know the truth. And you have the truth. Will you commit yourself? Canadian, Jesus and Muhammad in the arena.

Who is going to win? Who is going to win?

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/21/SID21672.mp3>

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