



Muslim

Tribal Chief

is Bringing Jesus to His People

MIR-IBN-MOHAMMAD

Like most people in my tribe, when I was a young boy I went to the madrasah (Islamic school) for training in the Quran and preparation for jihad (holy war). As I read the Quran, I noticed that it talks about Jesus in ways that are different from other prophets; I was curious and confused. I left the madrasah and went to another city. There a friend of mine introduced me to a committed follower of Jesus who taught from the Bible. I liked his stories about Jesus and saw that he prayed to God in Jesus' name, but I didn't really think that it was for me. I didn't see how Jesus could be for Muslims.

A couple of years later, my school class went on a picnic outing by the sea. As part of the field trip, we went out boat-

ing, and many of the students were jumping in the water to swim. I didn't know how to swim. But I thought, "My

people are from the mountains; we are the bravest people. Why are all these other, weaker students not afraid to go in the water, but I am?" To prove my bravery, I jumped in the water, too. Because I didn't get too far away from the boat, I was fine. Then I decided to jump in a second time. This time I jumped farther. I quickly realized that I wasn't okay—I was sinking! I called out, praying in the way I learned as a boy, and nothing happened. Then I remembered how that teacher prayed in Jesus' name, and I thought, "I have nothing to lose; I'm about to drown." So I cried out "Jesus, save me!" Then I

blackened out. When I woke up again, I was back on the boat. My friends said that they had seen me sink, but they knew they couldn't reach me in time. But then they said that something had held me up until they could get to me. I knew that was Jesus.

As soon as possible, I went back to meet the man who taught about Jesus and told him what had happened to me. I said I wanted to commit my life to Jesus. I studied more in-depth about Jesus and the Bible with him for two years and even changed my religious identity. I liked my new life, but I felt like God wanted more for me. As I prayed and sought the Lord, I felt him calling me, "Go back to your own people and village to tell them about me." I explained

to a friend how God was calling me, and he agreed to pray for me. I went back to my home village, my tribe. I shared about Jesus with many in my tribe on various short trips. At first, it was hard work. Then,

after I had shared many times with the tribal leader, he finally had a dream about Jesus and decided to follow him. Later, when this leader was on his deathbed, he called me to his bedside. He took off his turban from his head and put it on mine in front of everyone there, which meant that I was the new tribal leader. I was shocked. I thought the next leader would be one of his sons. But, after the period of mourning was over, the other leaders confirmed that it was me, so I accepted the responsibility.

I wanted to lead the tribe in a way that everyone could see that devotion to Jesus had made a difference in my life. So, whenever there were issues that came up, I used the Bible in my rulings. One time a woman was brought before me who was going to be

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Mir-ibn-Mohammad is a Muslim tribal chief in the Middle East who is devoted to Jesus.

stoned for adultery. I based my ruling on a passage from the Gospel, and challenged her accusers, "If any of you are without sin, you be the one to strike her down." None of them could do anything, and the woman was saved.

Over time, the other tribes heard that I was using the Bible to lead my tribe, and that I was telling others to trust in Jesus. Some of the other leaders were very upset, and they set an ambush for me. When I walked by where they were waiting for me, they began shooting at me with machine guns. I started to run. I could feel bullets hitting my body, but I kept running until I was far away. When I stopped, I saw the holes in my shirt, and felt pain where the bullets had hit me. But, as I looked closer, I saw that the bullets had only wounded the surface of my skin. Only one had fully entered my body, into my leg. I understood that God had protected me. I was also reminded so clearly that it is only because of the God's work in my heart that I am not violent like the men shooting me. It made me so grateful for His protection and His provision.

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While I was recovering in the hospital, the men who had set the ambush found out that I had survived. They became afraid for their lives. They knew that I had the right in our tribal culture to send men after them to kill them. But I knew that the Bible teaches that you should forgive your enemies. After I had left the hospital, I called them to me and told them, "Because I follow the teachings of Jesus, I forgive you." They were so relieved. Through this, I was able to share more with them about Jesus. Today,

their tribe is one of our most passionate groups of Jesus-followers.

As I have continued leading my tribe in a biblical way and share with others about Jesus, we have seen more and more put their trust in him.

There are now thousands of home groups of those who have given their lives to Jesus, with each group serving about ten families. It is my passion to see all Muslims following Jesus within Islam. Starting from our tribe, we have shared our story with many other tribes in our country, and are trusting God to continue to spread the good news about Jesus throughout the rest of the Muslim world. We want to see Jesus welcomed into his rightful place within Islam. This is my greatest dream. f

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